



Germany: Hetty Berg Named New Director of the Jewish Museum in Berlin

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Dutch curator and museum manager Hetty Berg has been appointed the new Director of the Jewish Museum in Berlin.

Berg, currently the chief curator and museum manager of the Jewish Cultural Quarter in Amsterdam, will take up the post on April 1, 2020 — more or less coinciding with the opening of the museum's new permanent exhibition, currently under development and installation.

"With Hetty Berg, we have gained an internationally experienced museum expert," Berlin Museum Chairman of the Board, State Minister of Culture Monika Grütters, said in a news release issued by the museum. "[...] As chief curator of the Jewish Cultural Quarter in Amsterdam she has successfully demonstrated her leadership in complex organizations. Her appointment will give new impulses to the Jewish Museum Berlin, both inside and out."

She said, "It is important to highlight the strengths of the museum as a cultural institution and as a place of remembrance and dialogue."

Berg, 58, was born in The Hague and studied theater in Amsterdam and management in Utrecht, according to the news release. She began work at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam in 1989. In addition to the Historical Museum, the Jewish Cultural Quarter includes the Children's Museum, the Portuguese Synagogue, the National Holocaust Museum, the Ets Haim Library, and the Hollandsche Schouwburg Memorial.

She lives with photographer Frederic Brenner, whose works are represented in the collection of the JMB and are currently exhibited at the museum.

Berg is taking over at a delicate time for the Berlin Museum.

She replaces the Jewish studies scholar Peter Schäfer, who resigned under pressure in June, following sharp criticism by the Jewish community after the museum's Twitter account retweeted as #mustread a newspaper article critical of a Parliamentary motion that condemned the BDS movement as antisemitic.

Schäfer had held the post since 2014. The museum has also come under fire for a 2018 exhibition, *Welcome to Jerusalem*, which the Israeli government had slammed as having "reflected mainly the Muslim-Palestinian narrative."

The Jewish Museum was opened in 2001 and is considered to be the largest Jewish museum in Europe. Its main building is a dramatic structure designed by Daniel Libeskind.

Much of the Libeskind building is currently closed, during the development and installation of the new permanent exhibition, scheduled to open in Spring 2020.

The museum describes itself as "a place of active reflection on Jewish history and culture—on the diversity of Jewish perspectives as well as the history of the relationship between Jews and their non-Jewish environments. With this orientation as a starting point, we also focus on the topics of

migration and diversity, and questions of coexistence in contemporary society.”

Editorial remarks

Source: [Jewish Heritage Europe](#).