

# Universalmuseum Joanneum Press

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## The Folk Life Museum at the Universalmuseum Joanneum

Folk Life Museum, Paulustorgasse 11–13a, 8010 Graz

Opening hours: April 10<sup>th</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2021: Mon–Sun and public holidays, 10 am – 6 pm,  
from November 1<sup>st</sup> 2021: Tues–Sun and public holidays, 10 am – 5 pm

Information: +43-316/8017-9899, [www.volkskundemuseum-graz.at](http://www.volkskundemuseum-graz.at)

A new exhibition, a museum cafe, a renovated events room, plus green zones waiting to be discovered – since April 2021, from the start of SHOWING STYRIA, and following just one year's closure, the Folk Life Museum has showcased itself as a new cultural venue for the city, pursuing a major goal with its unusual and multifaceted range of spaces on offer: a vibrant and socially relevant location.

The museum itself has been housed in the former Capuchin monastery in Graz' Paulustorgasse since 1913. Viktor Geramb, founder and long-time director of the Folk Life Museum, laid the emphasis of collection, research and educational activity on agricultural-peasant society of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. Today, the Folk Life Museum is concerned with the life, environments and experiences of people in times of change and social shift, and in the charged zone between the regional and the global. How is the modern world created? And how has it become so, and by whom?

*How it is. Worlds – Changes – Perspectives* is the title of the new semi-permanent exhibition in the Folk Life Museum, which was opened as part of the SHOWING STYRIA and will continue beyond this.

The exhibition is divided into four main modules: 'The colour of Styria', 'We're fine!', 'My world, your world and how do we converge?' and 'What will be?'. Each module functions like an exhibition within the exhibition, can be visited independently of the other and will be continuously altered in the next few years. The exhibition also takes into account the building, its history, the historical rooms and its relations to the exterior world. The Smoking Room (Rauchstube), transferred to the Museum from the Pack in 1914, is integral to the museum and open to visitors, as is the Traditional Costumes Room (Trachtensaal), planned during the 1930s and opened in 1938. In the near future the Traditional Costumes Room will be updated in terms of content, taking into account Geramb as a collector and researcher.

### The building in Paulustorgasse

Not only the exhibition shapes the new beginning for the Folk Life Museum, the group of buildings itself has been renovated, too, according to the stipulations of the Monument Protection law, with individual parts of the site now more closely connected with one another. Underlying all the measures is the goal of establishing in Paulustorgasse a vibrant and socially relevant venue, one that is an important hub for many people due to its conveying of knowledge, its discourse and varied cultural offerings. For this reason the 'Café Grün' has also been set up; part of the exhibition, it invites visitors to linger a while in the museum and guests' garden. The Homeland Room (Heimatsaal) has been revitalised and now offers barrier-free access and is available for events.

St. Anthony's Church with paintings by Pietro de Pomis and Hans Adam Weißenkircher likewise belongs to the extended museum complex. Every year since 1916 this has been the venue for the 'Styrian Shepherds' and Manger Songs'. These concerts combine traditional songs from the museum's collection with new arrangements by Styrian musicians. Moreover, artists and partners from science and education are invited to hold lectures in collaboration with the museum. Thus readings, concerts, lectures and discussions take place enabling additional perspectives on museum-related themes, as well as general cultural and social issues.

The museum therefore also pursues the goal of creating a vibrant and socially relevant venue by opening its doors to and inviting the largest possible number of people.

### Research and Archiving

With some 12,000 single volumes, along with 80 current specialist journals, periodicals and publication series, the specialised folkloristic library is available to users as a reference library (i.e. non-borrowing). In the folklore studies department archive attached to the library can be found comprehensive source material of historical research into daily-life culture: regional collections of fabric, inventories and survey results on such subjects as the course of the seasons and of people's lives, work, tools, medicine, songs, dance, music or religious practices.

The museum's extensive photographic archive with around 20,000 colour slides, as well as the many historical photographs, offer illustrative material on the general themes mentioned above. The Folk Life Museum sees itself as a platform for a topical and critical engagement with questions of historical and modern-day cultural processes and aims its exhibitions and activities at interested persons of all ages.