Project Description

With its extensive collections of art and cultural history as well as natural science, the Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, which was founded in 1820, is among the oldest public museums in Germany. The temporary closure of the museum in 2007 marked the start of an intensive seven-year phase of renovation of the building, which was designed in 1906 by Alfred Messel, one of the most significant architects of the early 20th century. This was a very large project that after more than 100 years offered the first opportunity to present the museum’s unique collections in a modern, newly structured exhibition.

The Berlin engineering and planning office Schiel Projektgesellschaft was commissioned with the general planning and implementation of this complex project, which encompassed everything from the development of the new exhibition concept and the spatial and visual concept including media and graphic design to the planning of functional spaces such as the shop, cash desks, restaurant facilities, and depots.

A special challenge for the exhibition design and lighting planning was the wide thematic variety of the museum, which encompasses approximately 12,000 objects in 13 different departments, from fields such as archaeology and natural science to handicraft topics and the fine arts. With a special eye to the historic substance of the building, with great love of material and detail and use of state-of-the-art LED lighting technology, the interior designers and lighting planners succeeded in placing the former purpose of the museum in a new, contemporary context. Now, it is more than a conventional art and natural science museum; it has been transformed into a visionary universal museum that unites the entire scope of collectable objects from nature and art – and thus the impressive totality of fields of human research.

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