



Media Information, September 2026

No Way Home

Exhibition Venue	Jewish Museum Vienna, Museum Judenplatz Judenplatz 8, 1010 Wien
Exhibition Dates	September 30, 2026 to April 4, 2027
Opening	September 29, 2026 at 6:00 PM
Press Conference	September 28, 2026 at 10:30 AM
Opening Hours	Jewish Museum Vienna, Museum Judenplatz Sunday to Thursday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM (winter schedule), until 5:00 PM (summer schedule)
Press Images	https://www.jmw.at/presse

The Jewish Museum Vienna is a museum of Wien Holding.

No Way Home

Sometimes all that remains of a life is a letter. A passport. A photograph. A suitcase. These fragments tell entire life stories.

As of September 30, 2026, the Jewish Museum Vienna presents a new special exhibition at Museum Judenplatz: *No Way Home: Viennese Jews in Exile*. This show explores the life stories of Viennese Jews expelled from their home and their struggles to survive in exile.

Following Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria on March 12, 1938, Vienna became a model city for the disenfranchisement, expropriation, and expulsion of its Jewish population. Within a remarkably short period, the third-largest Jewish community in Europe was decimated through emigration, deportation and murder. Those who

succeeded in escaping lost not only their apartments, professions, property, and social standing, but were also forced to rebuild their lives and sense of belonging elsewhere. Jewish Viennese found refuge across Europe, North and South America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Australia, where they had to rebuild their lives far from home.

"This exhibition was developed in close collaboration with families of refugees and historians. Their memories, stories, and preserved documents open up new perspectives on the experiences of Viennese Jews in exile and illustrate the long-lasting impact of their persecution both in Austria and abroad."
Caitlin Gura, Curator

The Loss of Home

Exile did not begin upon arrival in a country of asylum. It was preceded by months of uncertainty, bureaucratic obstacles, and the hope to escape. Visas had to be obtained, assets disclosed, permits secured, and borders crossed. Some found refuge in London, New York or Shanghai; others were forced to flee repeatedly, were interned, or struggled to bring family members to safety. There was no single path into exile. Every story of escape was unique.

Nor did the experience of exile end with escaping Austria and arriving in a new country. Without language skills, professional prospects or social networks, Viennese Jews had to build new lives in unfamiliar surroundings. Many suffered from the loss of their homeland and developed an ambivalent relationship with Vienna, shaped by longing, pain, and disappointment. The majority never returned permanently to the city from which they had been expelled.

Fragments of a Life

The exhibition tells these life stories primarily through artifacts. Official documents such as eviction notices, asset declarations, and passports marked with the red "J" bear witness to the systematic disenfranchisement and expulsion of Viennese Jewish citizens. Letters, photographs, pieces of furniture, ritual objects, and personal keepsakes become testimonies of escape, loss, and new beginnings. They speak about the people to whom they once belonged, of their homeland, and of the incredible efforts to create a new home in exile.

Many objects, including personal documents and mementos, come from private family archives and were made available to the Jewish Museum Vienna by descendants of those who fled. Loans and contributions from Viennese Jewish families and internationally

renowned individuals, including Randy Schoenberg, Jane Kallir, the family of Marion Wiesel, Tonia Eckfeld, and Brendan Ciecko, great-grandson of theater producer Arthur Hellmer, can be discovered throughout the exhibition. Many of these objects are on display for the first time. Together with curator Caitlin Gura's research, the assembled artifacts reunite fragments of widely dispersed Jewish Viennese life stories and bring visibility to individuals whose fates remained hidden for decades.

Memory across Generations

The exhibition also highlights the lasting impact of exile across generations. For many families, only letters, photographs, and a handful of personal belongings survived. These remain the final testimonies of lives irreversibly transformed by escape and persecution.

Since the introduction of Paragraph 58c of the Austrian Citizenship Act, descendants of Austrian citizens persecuted during the Nazi era can reclaim Austrian citizenship. Many lenders to the exhibition now hold Austrian passports. For some, this raises the question of return, whether permanently or temporarily. More fundamentally, however, it raises the question of whether one can ever truly return to the place, where their families were violently uprooted.

With *No Way Home: Viennese Jews in Exile*, the Jewish Museum Vienna commemorates those who fled and highlights the profound loss Vienna suffered through their expulsion. The exhibition brings the fragments of individual life stories together to create a shared memory of exile, loss, and displacement.

Exhibition, App, and Catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by the Cuseum app, provided to the Jewish Museum Vienna as a sponsored contribution by Cuseum founder Brendan Ciecko. The app features an audio introduction by curator Caitlin Gura, additional background information, and more stories of exile, extending the exhibition beyond the museum's physical spaces into the digital realm.

The accompanying exhibition catalogue *No Way Home* will be published by Czernin Verlag. Drawing on letters, documents, photographs and everyday objects, it explores the multifaceted experiences of escape, exile, and the loss of home. Scholarly essays as well as personal contributions from descendants of Viennese exiles add further perspectives. Together, they examine how memory is preserved and how the experiences of persecution and exile continue to resonate in the present day.

Curator	Caitlin Gura
Exhibition Architecture	koerdtutech
Graphic Design	solo ohne – Studio für Gestaltung
Exhibition Organization	Christiane Rainer
Exhibition Catalogue	No Way Home: Viennese Jews in Exile, Caitlin Gura (ed.) on behalf of the Jewish Museum Vienna, catalogue for the exhibition at the Jewish Museum Vienna, September 30, 2026 – April 4, 2027. Czernin Verlag, 192 pages, EUR 32.90, ISBN 978-3-7076-0927-1.
Entry	Tickets are valid at both locations of the Jewish Museum Vienna, Museum Judenplatz and Dorotheergasse.
Visitor Services	info@jmw.at , www.jmw.at

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