

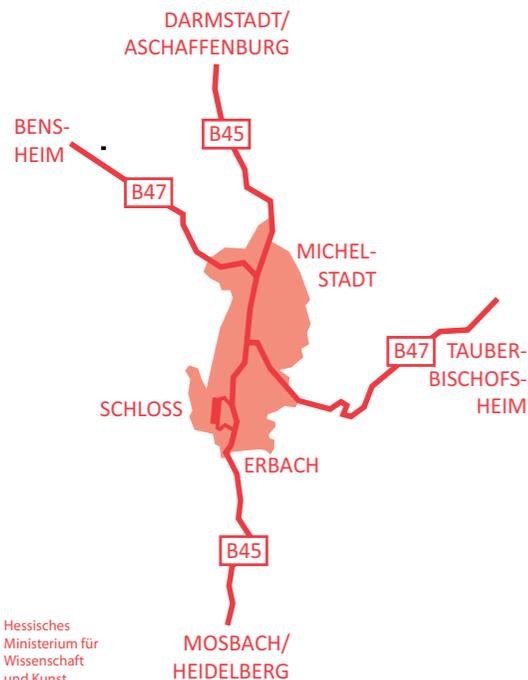
# DEUTSCHES ELFENBEIN MUSEUM SCHLOSS ERBACH

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## Opening hours

March to October: Daily 10.00 - 17.00  
November, December and New Year's Day:  
Daily 12.00 - 16.00  
Advent weekends (Fri - Sun): 12.00 - 18.00

Closed 24, 25 and 26 December



## The Exhibition

**1** Let's follow the chronological tour from the lobby into the black box, which should give us an impression of who Franz I was.

**2** Selected books demonstrate Franz I's universal interest: here we can get a feel for the enlightened, educated spirit of this man.

**3** In the large room of display cabinets are a number of caddies crafted by the Count himself in approximately 1783, which bear witness to his artistry and craftsmanship.

**4** This then leads on to a selection of noteworthy Erbach brooches of hunting scenes, hands and roses from the 19th century, crafted by Ernst Kehrer, Otto Stegmüller and Philipp Willmann.

**5** The historic cabinet room brings together in twelve display cases all the splendour and diversity of the art of ivory carving in Germany. Presented here is a cross-section of the most significant pieces from the 18th to the 20th century.

**6** Next, in the figure cabinet are Venus and Amor, elves and nudes dating predominantly from around 1900, produced by Otto Glenz – one of Erbach's most prominent artists.

**7** The room also houses nudes and female dancers by Ferdinand Preiss and Ludwig Walther from the first half of the 20th century.

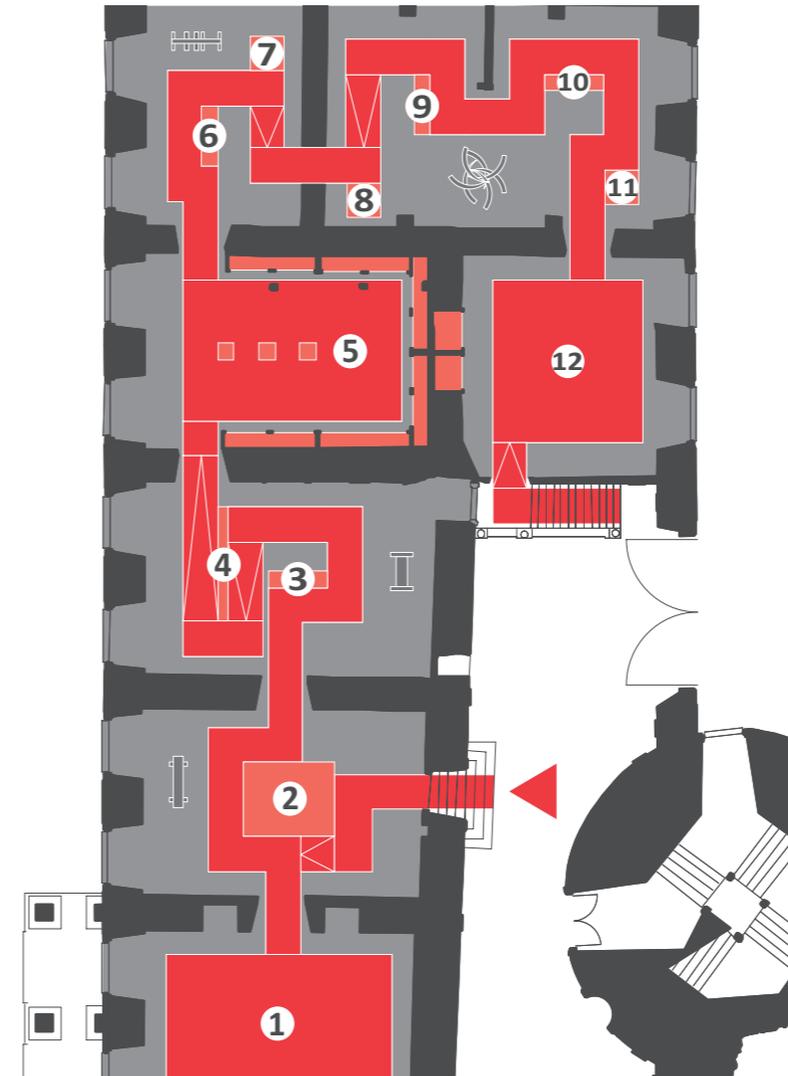
**8** From the same period date a selection of female statuettes by Emil Straub and Oswald Ammersbach. They are close to expressionism as well as the new objectivity movement.

**9** Animal figures from the 20th century by Emil Straub, Otto Glenz and other artists bear witness to the intensive studies of nature they undertook.

**10/11** The two ivory carvers Jan Holschuh and Wilhelm Wegel are representative of modern

ivory carving unlike any other craftsmen from Erbach. Their work dates from the period 1956 to 1979 and can be found in the last two display cases.

**12** The special exhibition room houses changing exhibitions showing selected exhibits, people, the historical backdrop and topical issues relating to ivory.



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## Count Franz I – Enlightened visionary and patron of the arts

During his six-year grand tour across Europe, which included both Vienna and Italy, Franz I, Count of Erbach-Erbach (1754-1823) discovered the fine art of carving ivory. When he returned to Erbach in 1775, he had a workshop installed and, under the guidance of a horn turner, he crafted his first ivory objects and passed his knowledge on to the people of Erbach. From this workshop originated the Erbach guild of turners, of which Count Franz I was the first head.

His grandson, Count Eberhard XV, promoted the guild in the spirit of his grandfather and thus established the basis for a flourishing culture of craftsmanship and industrial heritage, which to this day has economic significance for the whole region.



In 1873 the so-called “Erbach Rose” received a distinction at the Vienna World Fair. Overnight, Erbach became known around the



world, and the demand for Erbach carving increased rapidly.

The fate of this traditional craft was sealed when the international ban on the trade of ivory came into force in 1989. Many businesses and families lost their livelihood. Since then, only remaining stock which had been stored legally before 1989 has been carved. The main alternative materials used today are mammoth ivory, tagua nut and bone (cattle bones).

Before the Second World War a further industry for the region grew out of ivory carving: Bernhard Koziol, a skilled ivory carver, began industrial production of synthetic decorative motifs in 1935. His company name is renowned worldwide today.

And so the spirit and character of Franz I - the catalyst for social and economic reforms in his county - remain to this day through the history and tradition of Odenwald's ivory carving.

## The German Ivory Museum – A journey through Franz I's world of ideas

As a highly educated man who grew up in the climate of the European Enlightenment, to this day Count Franz I is the epitome of a principle he encountered throughout the leading courts of his time: education is the foundation for any kind of development of prosperity and social community.

The Count's lifelong enthusiasm for the ideals of antiquity and impressions gained from his encounters with prominent personalities, such as Voltaire, Diderot or Frederick the Great, formed the spiritual foundation for a new model of governance that was to guarantee economic security and social stability for many generations after him.



Creation as a means of representing ideas – education as a requirement for culture – enlightenment as a guiding principle of social activity: these are Franz I's teachings that are still current today. The wonderful products of the Odenwald region's carving could not have come about without this as a backdrop.



In light of Franz I's world of ideas, the focus in the exhibition is on aesthetic experience and joy in the beauty of things and the spirit that, through man's creativity, makes the same material into art itself.

Immerse yourself in Franz I's vision that found expression in Erbach's ivory and that pervades the whole museum. All in one place that, together with the palace's collections from generations of Counts, is unique throughout the world.