

IMPRINT

Published by: Mendelssohn Society e. V., Berlin
www.mendelssohn-gesellschaft.de
Texts: Hans-Günter Klein, Gerhild Komander, Thomas Lackmann, Felix Müller-Stüler, Elke von Nieding, Sebastian Panwitz, and Ernst Siebel
Design: buschfeld.com – graphic and interface design, setz it. Richert GmbH
Map template: Courtesy of Typoly Konzept&Gestaltung and www.panorama-berlin.de
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EXHIBITIONS

The Mendelssohn Family in Jägerstraße
Mendelssohn-Remise, Jägerstraße 51, 10117 Berlin (between Gendarmenmarkt and Hausvogteiplatz underground station)
+49 (0)30 81704726, mail@mendelssohn-remise.de
Opening hours: daily, 12 noon – 6 pm (Exceptions: see “Events” section on the website)
www.mendelssohn-remise.de

The Mendelssohn Family and Their Graves near Hallesches Tor
Friedhöfe vor dem Halleschen Tor (Dreifaltigkeit Cemetery), Mehringdamm 21, 10961 Berlin
+49 (0)30 6221080-2032
Opening hours: tinyurl.com/Mendelssohn-Remise
and by appointment: reservierung@mendelssohn-remise.de
www.evfb.de

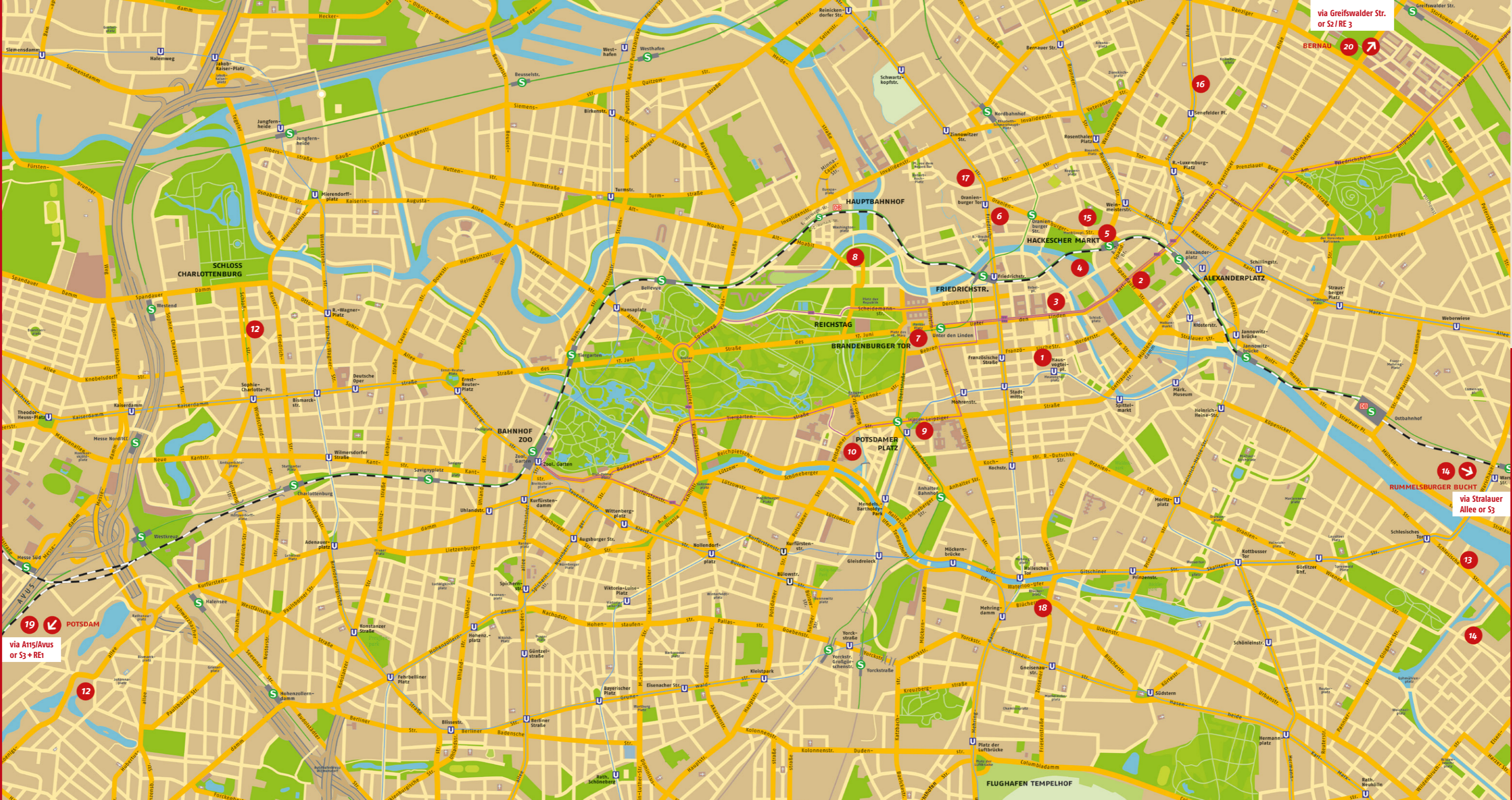
“Sorgenfrei”: The History of Villa Oppenheim and Its Residents
Museum Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Schloßstraße 55, 14059 Berlin
+49 (0)30 902924106
Opening hours: Tue – Fri: 10 am – 5 pm
Sat/Sun/holidays: 11 am – 5 pm
www.villa-oppenheim-berlin.de

EVENTS AND GUIDED TOURS

For details on events at the Mendelssohn Remise and on guided tours, please visit: www.mendelssohn-remise.de



Fig. Title: The crane motif is an ancient symbol of social responsibility. As early as the time of Joseph Mendelssohn, and later following the ennoblement of his grandson Franz (von) Mendelssohn in 1888, it was adopted as the family crest and the emblem of the bank.



MENDELSSOHN
SITES IN BERLIN

*Jewish Emancipation. Berlin Enlightenment.
Music, Art and Literature of the Romantic era.
The Bach revival. High finance and insurance.
Railway expansion. Patronage and philanthropic
foundations.*

*Over the course of five generations, a distinguished
bourgeois dynasty of bankers, artists, and scholars helped
shape the cultural and economic landscape of Germany:
the descendants of silk merchant and philosopher Moses
Mendelssohn. Twenty sites trace their paths to influence,
the religious divides they navigated, and the enduring
legacy of this eminent Prussian family.*

HISTORIC LOCATIONS

1 Jägerstraße/Markgrafenstraße In the Friedrichstadt district, along Jägerstraße – just off the Gendarmenmarkt – lay the central hub of the Mendelssohn family, who lived and worked here for over a century. In 1815, the Mendelssohn banking house relocated from the Ephraim Palace to the side wing of what was then the Apothecary House at Jägerstraße 51, strategically situated near the two state banks (the Royal Giro and Loan Bank and the Prussian Maritime Trading Company). Joseph Mendelssohn (1770 – 1848) moved in

with his family and purchased the building in 1840. In 1872, the neighbouring building at Jägerstraße 52 was acquired, mainly to for banking purposes. Between 1882 and 1884, the partner Ernst (von) Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1846 – 1909) built his city villa at Jägerstraße 53. With the construction of a new bank building at Jägerstraße 49/50 in 1892, the Mendelssohn family owned four adjoining properties in the same street. Numbers 52 and 53 were later sold to the Belgian Embassy in 1913 and 1938 respectively. The newest building at 49/50, along with the original headquarters at 51 – both of which survived the war – were taken over by the German Reich in 1939 following the liquidation of the bank. Directly across the street, from 1824 to 1863, the Mendelssohn family resided in the former home of the Humboldt family at Jägerstraße 22 – now the Berlin–Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Just east of this, the bank acquired the property at No. 29/31 in 1921, but was forced to sell it in 1938 to the state – controlled Diskont Company, which was involved in organizing gold transfers and the exploitation of Eastern Europe. Around the corner at Markgrafenstraße 48 (now No. 40), Abraham Mendelssohn (1776 – 1835) lived with his family until 1819; it was there, in secret, that his children were baptized in 1816. Today, the Mendelssohn Remise (at the courtyard building of Jägerstraße 51) houses the exhibition *The Mendelssohns in Jägerstraße*.

2 Spandauer Straße 68 One of the significant homes of the Berlin Enlightenment: At No. 68 (re-numbered No. 33 in 1913), a series of writers once lived – Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim, Karl Wilhelm Ramler, Christoph Mylius, and, with him, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Also residing here were the publisher Friedrich Nicolai, and from 1762 to 1786, Moses Mendelssohn (1729 – 1786) and his wife Fromet (1737 – 1812), together with their children Brendel (later Dorothea), Recha, Joseph, Henriette, Abraham, and Nathan. It was in this house that Mendelssohn, Nicolai, and Lessing gathered for their renowned conversations. Here, the playwright Lessing found inspiration for the

characters in Nathan the Wise. And here, Joseph Mendelssohn ran the commercial business that would later become the foundation of his banking enterprise. The original building at the southeastern corner of Spandauer Straße and what is now Karl–Liebknecht–Straße was replaced by a new structure after 1885. A commemorative plaque once mounted above the doorway is now part of the exhibition at Dreifaltigkeitsfriedhof I (Trinity Cemetery I, see Station 18). Today, the site is marked by a ground–level memorial designed by Micha Ullman, recalling the importance of the location.

3 Am Festungsgraben 2 The building of the Sing–Academy was constructed between 1825 and 1827 by Karl Theodor Ottmer using designs by Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Numerous members of the Mendelssohn family belonged to its choir; the director, Zelter, taught both Fanny and Felix. In 1828, Alexander von Humboldt presided over the congress of natural scientists here – an event celebrated by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy’s Humboldt Cantata. The following year, in 1829, Felix conducted a landmark revival of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion in this very hall.

4 Museum Island The eastern section of what is now Museum Island once belonged to Sarah Levy (1761 – 1854), widow of a banker and daughter of royal financier Daniel Itzig, whose Baroque palace stood opposite, on Burgstraße. A great–aunt of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Sarah Levy had studied under Friedemann Bach, played harpsichord in the Sing–Akademie, and was an avid collector of Bach autographs. Her villa once stood on the site where the Alte Nationalgalerie was built 1867 – 1876. Today, the museum houses frescoes from the Roman Palazzo Zuccari (Casa Bartholdy), commissioned in 1816 by Jakob Salomon Bartholdy, Abraham Mendelssohn’s brother–in–law. The artists included Philipp Veit, a grandson of Moses Mendelssohn and son of Dorothea Schlegel. Some of the museum’s masterpieces, such as Manet’s Winter Garden in the National Gallery, were acquired through Mendelssohn family donations.

5 Neue Promenade In the corner house No. 10, Brendel (Dorothea, 1764 – 1839), the eldest daughter of Moses Mendelssohn, married to banker Veit since 1783, ran a reading society until 1799. After her divorce, she lived on nearby Ziegelstraße before joining a commune of Early Romantics in Jena with Friedrich Schlegel. Her conversion and marriage followed in Paris in 1804, her conversion to Catholicism in Cologne in 1808. Dorothea’s sons became painters associated with the Roman group of the Nazarenes. House

No.10 was demolished in 1878 to make way for the city railway line. At No.7, the family of Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy lived as tenants of Lea’s mother, Bella Salomon, from 1819 to 1825.

6 Johannisstraße 2 (now No. 3) In a now–demolished tenement in the impoverished Spandauer Vorstadt, Moses’ youngest son, the mechanic Nathan Mendelssohn (1782 – 1852), spent his final years. These were overshadowed by the imprisonment and exile of his revolutionary son Arnold. Besides his official job as a stamp examiner, Nathan, the inventor, operated a polytechnical agency. In the neighboring house at Kalkscheunengasse 5/Johannisstraße 1a (from 1878 No.2, now known as the Kalkscheune), the mechanical works of Johann C. Hummel prospered – one of the first Berlin users of steam engines.

7 Pariser Platz 1 In 1918, the bank of Hugo Oppenheim (1847 – 1921), a grandson of Alexander Mendelssohn, acquired the *Haus Sommer* next to the Brandenburg Gate at Pariser Platz 1. The bank entered liquidation in 1932 and sold the property in 1936 to the Rheinische Hypothekenbank. Until 1939, banker Otto von Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1868 – 1949) used this address for his business affairs (see also Station 19).

8 Formerly Alsenstraße 3/3a From 1913, banker and art collector Paul von Mendelssohn–Bartholdy (1875 – 1935) had a three–winged mansion built here by architect Bruno Paul, featuring a music room and a Chinese salon. After his widow sold the house to the German Reich, it was demolished for the *Welthauptstadt Germania* project. The site – located beside the Federal Chancellery and the Swiss Embassy – remained undeveloped.

9 Leipziger Straße 3 The Reck Palace, built between 1735 and 1737, was purchased in 1825 by Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1776 – 1835), who lived there with his family and leased parts of it. There was a park celebrated for its beauty. During warm months, Fanny Hensel’s *Sunday Concerts* were held in the unheated garden hall which was crowned by a low dome. To the left was Wilhelm Hensel’s studio; to the right lived the Hensels. In 1851, the estate was sold to the state, which established the Prussian House of Lords here. The current building, now the Bundesrat (Federal Council) since 2000, was inaugurated in 1904. A plaque beneath the

right archway commemorates the works composed here, including Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

10 Potsdamer Straße 33 The – currently closed – Mendelssohn exhibition in the Staatsbibliothek (SBB) presents portraits, autographs, and prints from the collections of the Mendelssohn Archive and the Mendelssohn Society. The Archive (Unter den Linden 8), founded through a donation by Hugo von Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1894 – 1975), is continually expanded by acquisitions from the SBB and deposits from the Society.

11 Schlossstraße 55 (Charlottenburg) The Mendelssohn family summer residence, Villa Sorgenfrei, purchased in 1844/45 by Alexander Mendelssohn (1798 – 1871), was replaced in 1881/82 by an Neo–Renaissance–style villa. The new building belonged to Alexander’s daughter Margarete, married Oppenheim. Parts of the expansive complex were sacrificed for school construction after being acquired by the city of Charlottenburg in 1911. Part of the garden became Schusterhuspark. After war damage and reconstruction, original architectural details were restored in 1987. The site now houses the Museum Charlottenburg–Wilmerdorf.

12 Bismarckallee 23/Herthastraße 3–5 Franz von Mendelssohn’s Grunewald villa, built in 1896 by royal architect Ernst von Ihne in the English country house style, was damaged during World War II. From 1963 to 1967, a new building incorporating preserved elements was constructed, now the St. Michaels Home (run by the Johannisches Sozialwerk e.V.). The villa of his elder banker brother Robert, located at Koenigsallee 16 near the site of the Walther Rathenau assassination, was destroyed. Both villas were social hubs, adorned with heirlooms, antiques, and paintings by artists such as Manet, Monet, and van Gogh.

13 Schlesische Straße 28–34 In 1771, Daniel Itzig acquired the Bartholdy dairy estate outside the Schlesisches Tor. His daughter Bella Salomon later used the estate, as did her baptized son Jacob, who adopted the name Bartholdy. His sister Lea Mendelssohn enjoyed her youth here and later returned often with her family, who also took on the estate’s name *Bartholdy* as their Christian surname. In 1825, City Councillor de Cuvry acquired the estate. Nearby within the city wall was the *Luisenhof* park, also owned by the Itzigs. Until 2007, a mural commemorated the ruins of this country house, demolished in 1948.



14 Hauptstraße 13 (Rummelsburg)/ Jordanstraße 1–2 (Treptow) In 1867, Carl A. Martius and Paul Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1841–1880), a son of the composer, founded one of the first synthetic dye factories in northern Germany in Rummelsburg. In 1873, the booming company merged with Jordan’s dye works in Treptow, which led to the creation of the Actiengesellschaft für Anilinfabrication (Agfa). Paul’s brother–in–law Franz Oppenheim led the company during World War I. Until 1933, Paul’s namesake son served as a director of I.G. Farben, into which the global brand Agfa was incorporated in 1925. In Rummelsburg, early brick buildings still stand; in Treptow, administrative buildings remain – one still bears the Agfa name.

CEMETERIES

15 Große Hamburger Straße Located between the former Jewish hospital and a destroyed retirement home, this cemetery became a symbol of renewal for the Jewish community. It was purchased in 1672 by Model Riess. Philosopher and pioneer of Jewish emancipation Philosopher Moses Mendelssohn was buried here one day after his death (January 4, 1786). His gravestone has been renewed three times. After the cemetery’s destruction by the Gestapo, a reconstructed marker approximates the location of his grave – the only one still commemorated on–site.

16 Schönhauser Allee Joseph Mendelssohn, the son of Moses who remained in the Jewish faith and founder of the Mendelssohn Bank, was buried in 1848 against the rear wall of this cemetery, opened in 1827. He was followed by his wife Henriette, née Meyer (d.1862), his son Alexander (d.1878), and daughter–in–law Marianne, née Seligmann (d.1880). Her burial was the first contact with Jewish rites for many of her baptized relatives. The German– and Hebrew–inscribed gravestones were restored in 2007. In the Beer family grave along the side wall lies Rebecka (Betty) Beer, granddaughter of Moses, married to Heinrich – the *black sheep* of the Beers and brother to composer Meyerbeer. A plaque marks the unknown grave of her mother, Recha Meyer née Mendelssohn.

17 Old Catholic Cemetery/Catholic Academy At the first Catholic cemetery in Berlin since the Reformation, located near Oranienburger Tor, Moses’ youngest daughter, Henriette Mendelssohn,

was buried in 1831. An educator and salonnière, she converted in Paris in 1812 and lived from 1825 near St. Hedwig’s Cathedral in Berlin. Her grave, once marked by a tall cross with the inscription *Redemisti me Deus, Deus veritatis*, was transferred in 1878 to the new St. Hedwig’s Cemetery (Liesenstraße) and removed in 1955. Today, the former cemetery site, now occupied by the Catholic Academy, is commemorated in its sculpture garden.

18 Cemeteries at Hallesches Tor Here rest Moses’ middle son, City Councillor Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1776–1835), and his wife Lea, née Salomon, as well as their children – composers Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847) and Fanny Hensel (1805–1847). Also buried are Fanny’s husband, painter Wilhelm Hensel, and their son Sebastian Hensel (1830–1898), author of *The Mendelssohn Family Chronicles*. Others buried here include banker Paul Mendelssohn–Bartholdy (Felix’s brother), Franz (von) Mendelssohn, the first of Moses’ descendants to be ennobled, his sons Robert (1857–1917), and Franz von Mendelssohn (1865–1935), president of the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce. Numerous other members of Moses’s extended family are laid to rest here. A former chapel now hosts an exhibition about the Mendelssohn family.

PLACES OUTSIDE BERLIN

19 Bertinistraße (Potsdam) Banker Otto von Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1868–1949) acquired his Potsdam estate in 1900, comprising a manor house, gardener’s house, and stables. Around the time of his ennoblement in 1907, Otto expanded the main house considerably. Until 1933, he, a grandson of the composer, served on the supervisory board of I.G. Farben. In 1942, the family was expelled from the estate. In GDR times, it was used as housing for sports students (see also Station 7).

20 Börnicke near Bernau The senior partner of the Mendelssohn Bank, Ernst von Mendelssohn–Bartholdy (1846–1909), acquired this manor in 1892 as a country estate, four years before his ennoblement. From 1902, he was member of the Prussian House of Lords and he was Berlin’s highest taxpayer in 1908. His son Paul (1875–1935) had the estate remodelled from 1910 by architect Bruno Paul, a mentor of Mies van der Rohe. Though neo–baroque in its basic form, it features elements of contemporary reform architecture. The restored family tomb lies beside the village church.