Peace Museums

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Peace museums can be traced back to 1900 when the Hague Peace Palace in Geneva was founded by Andrew Carnegie to serve as a “living museum” hosting conferences on international law as well as exhibiting art dedicated to peace. It was soon followed by Jean de Bloch’s International Museum of War and Peace founded in Lucerne, Switzerland in 1902 which focused on the negative impacts of war with the idea that “war itself testified against war.” After the Second World War, it was Japan who took the lead in the development of modern peace museums when in 1949, on the fourth anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb, Hiroshima was enshrined as a memorial city of peace. Since that time, peace museums have developed quite a bit, however they still fall within certain frameworks. Terence Duffy has defined four types of peace museums; self-described peace museums, event or issue based museums, international law museums, and galleries. Kazuyo Yamane has focused on the museums’ perspectives which can either be anti-war (negative peace focused) or pro-peace (positive peace focused).

Below is a far from exhaustive list of peace museums meant to inspire further inquiry and exploration. Please add on to it with your own favorites by replying here.

Self-Described Peace Museums

Pasos Peace Museum
NYC Peace Museum
Envision Peace Museum
The Peace Museum
Peace Museum Chicago
Museum on the Seam
Nicholas Roerich Museum

Event or Issue Based Museums

Sierra Leone Peace Museum
Kyoto Museums for World Peace at Ritsumeikan University
Museum of Peace: Attari-Wagah Border, Amritsar
Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
US Holocaust Memorial Museum
National Civil Rights Museum
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
Museum of Tolerance
Eastern State Penitentiary
International Slavery Museum

International Law Museums (or dedicated to heroes)
International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum
Florence Nightingale Museum
Nobel Peace Center
Dayton Peace Museum
Peace Museum Vienna
Jane Addams Hull-House
The King Center

Galleries - Museums or cultural institutions not explicitly dedicated to peace whose exhibits explore topics related to social justice, positive and negative peace, and/or peace education
International Center of Photography
Dialogue in the Dark
El Museo del Barrio
Networks

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and their 200+ institutional members

International Network of Museums for Peace

Social justice Alliance for Museums

Suggested Reading

