

Media Release, 22 March 2023

## Special exhibition: Out of Use – Everyday Life in Transition

**A major new exhibition by Basel Historical Museum called «Out of Use – Everyday Life in Transition» is to open at the Barfüsserkirche on 23 March 2023. From quill pen to typewriter, from litter to balance bike, from money stocking to crinolines and trousseau lists – this array of everyday objects sheds light on past ways of life. The exhibition is to run until 17 September 2023.**

The over 300 objects on display show how everyday life has changed. They include household items, garments and means of locomotion and help explain the many technical and social changes of the past three centuries. Grouped into categories such as hygiene, fashion, mobility and dining culture, the objects reveal not just technical advances, but also social and historical developments. Those changes are presented in depth in the sections devoted to more general themes: our use of natural resources, life in times of scarcity, changes in society and mentalities, as well as the shift to more respect for animals.

The world is in a constant state of flux, and technical advances like digitalization are greatly accelerating this process. That the exhibition has space for only a fraction of our now obsolete appliances, goes without saying; hence the focus on items for use in private households. When selecting the exhibits, an effort was made to find a thought provoking balance between utterly unknown objects and those that some visitors will remember well, and that may still be in use here or there. Whether or not an object falls out of use also depends on its age and the geographical as well as social origins of those using it.

Almost all of the objects on display in the exhibition come from Basel Historical Museum's own depots. To help save resources, we have re-used the exhibition architecture created for last year's show, «Elegant Imbibing».

«Out of Use» will be accompanied by a full programme of talks, tours and events. Our wide-ranging programme for schools is tailored to the needs and interests of each age group from pre-school to secondary. In addition to our popular family tours, there will also be classic guided tours as well as interactive tours for adults. Visitors are also invited to join us on walks around the city in search of architectural evidence of the past ways of life described in the exhibition. These walks can also be booked by private groups. The «Erzählcafé» («Story-Telling Café») is to host three «Stories Written by Life» sessions in which people come together to share personal anecdotes and experiences inspired by the objects on display in the exhibition. These events organised in collaboration with the «Netzwerk Erzählcafé».

Another participative project, called «Was ist denn das?» («What on earth is that?»), invites people to share digital images of curiosities from past times. The next days to determine the use of everyday objects are 7 May and 10 September 2023. Admission to the Barfüsserkirche will be free on these days. Curators

will be present to help visitors identify whatever everyday objects and household appliances they have brought along, and to explain how these mysterious and wonderful things worked. The objects will then be photographed and the images included in the exhibition itself and on the website.

«Out of Use» will be accompanied by a richly illustrated catalogue published by the Christoph Merian Verlag.

The opening event will take place in the Barfüsserkirche at 6.30 p.m. on 22 March 2023.

Historisches Museum Basel – Barfüsserkirche  
Barfüsserplatz 7, 4051 Basel  
Tue–Sun 10 a.m.–5 p.m.  
hmb.ch  
aussergebrauch.ch

For press photos and information on the exhibition and catalogue:

[www.hmb.ch/service/presse](http://www.hmb.ch/service/presse)

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