



Wolfgang Grassberger, 1952, *From the Realm of Our Work*, 400 x 180 cm (Haus der Natur, Repro: H. Auer). Commissioned by E. P. Traz, founder of the Haus der Natur, this painting depicts different ways how a museum visualizes natural histories. Ignorant of his and the museum's role during the Nazi regime, the picture is also testimony of Traz's urge for permanent self-expression. He can be seen three times in the surroundings of this 'museum'.

SYMBIOSIS 2025

Austria: Vienna, Salzburg & Innsbruck

# Envisioning Natural Histories

November 3–7, 2025

naturhistorisches  
museum wien

HAUS  
DER  
NATUR  
MUSEUM  
FÜR NATUR  
& TECHNIK  
SALZBURG

WISSENSCHAFT  
W&K  
KUNST

Natural history museums are institutions where histories of nature are constructed and communicated. Since their inception, museums have employed artistic means to create compelling visual representations of nature and its history in visitors' minds. These representations have evolved over time, reflecting different institutional approaches that range from emphasizing 'pure science' to engaging in the popularization of knowledge.

By rendering the invisible visible, art not only enhances scientific communication but also challenges established visualizations of natural history. We seek to explore the epistemological potential of artistic imagery in a museums context, deepening our understanding of the relationship between art and science in shaping natural histories.

SYMBIOSIS 2025 will take place in Vienna, Salzburg, and Innsbruck, offering a unique opportunity to engage with different historical and contemporary perspectives.

We invite you to participate in SYMBIOSIS 2025, jointly organized by: *Haus der Natur* (Salzburg), *Naturhistorisches Museum Wien* in cooperation with "Figurations of Transition"/"Arts & Knowledges" (Paris Lodron University and Mozarteum University, Salzburg) with the support of the Archabbey of St. Peter and Literature Forum Salzburg "Leselampe".

**Nov 3–4 (Mon–Tue):** Conference opening at the *Naturhistorisches Museum Wien*

**Nov 5–6 (Wed–Thu):** Continuation in Salzburg at the *Haus der Natur* and other venues

**Nov 7 (Fri):** Final excursion to "the world's first museum" at *Schloss Ambras* in Innsbruck

Initial information on the program see following pages.

The conference is free of charge. We kindly ask participants to organize their own travel to Austria and accommodation in Vienna and Salzburg. We gladly offer logistical support and will arrange transport from Vienna to Salzburg as well as from Salzburg to Innsbruck.

If you are interested in participating, please contact us by **September 30, 2025** at [symbiosis2025@hausdernatur.at](mailto:symbiosis2025@hausdernatur.at)

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

MountAllison  
UNIVERSITY

Museum of  
Natural  
History

for Nature  
MUSEUM FÜR  
NATURKUNDE  
BERLIN

Leibniz  
Value  
of the Past

salzburger literaturforum  
leselampe

# Monday, 3 Nov. 2025 (Vienna)

## *Envisioning Natural Histories*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

### **1:00–1:20 pm Conference Opening, Welcome Addresses & Organizational Remarks**

KATRIN VOHLAND (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA), ROBERT LINDNER (HAUS DER NATUR, SALZBURG),  
JOHN HOLMES (SYMBIOSIS NETWORK), ...

## *Evolution, Mythology, Hybridity in Science and the Arts*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAIR: ACHIM SAUPE (LEIBNIZ NETWORK, BERLIN)

- **1:30 pm** WERNER MICHLER (UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)  
Natural History, Evolution, Literature: Some Views from Austria

### **2:15–2:45 pm** Further discussion & Coffee & Tea Break

Info-Table: Mythical creatures in the Libraries and Archive with SARAH FIEDLER, LEAH KARAS,  
MARIO-DOMINIK RIEDL & JANA SCHAMALL (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)

- **2:45 pm** JOHN HOLMES (UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)  
The Protean World of Erasmus Darwin: Mythology, Epic Poetry and the Origins of  
Evolutionary Theory
- **3:05 pm** BILLIE GAVURIN (UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)  
Creatures approaching man: Darwinism and the Mythic Hybrid at the *Fin de Siècle*
- **3:25 pm** ISABEL DAVIS (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON)  
Jenny the Talking Fish: Monsters, Myth and the Imprinted Imagination

### **3:45–4:15 pm** Further discussion & Coffee & Tea Break

## *Shapeshifting and Reworlding: On Mixed Forms and Meanings*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAIR: ANDREAS KROH (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)

### **4:15–5:00 pm** Academic and artistic dialogue

ANNA PASCO BOLTA (INDEPENDENT ARTIST, MUNICH), JANINE ROGERS & CODY BARTON (MOUNT ALLISON  
UNIVERSITY, CANADA)

### **5:00–6:30 pm** Guided tours to the roof of the museum

STEFANIE JOVANOVIC-KRUSPEL, LEAH KARAS, MARIO-DOMINIK RIEDL (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)

## *Evening Event*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, HALL X / DINOSAUR HALL

### **6:30–8:00 pm**

- “Eat and Be Eaten” Artistic intervention by ANNA PASCO BOLTA (INDEPENDENT ARTIST, MUNICH)
- “Poetic & Musical Metamorphosis” poetry by BRIGITTA SCHMID (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
and music by IRMI WOLVIN (INDEPENDENT ARTIST, VIENNA)

### **8:00–9:00 pm** Finger food & chill out

## Tuesday, 4 Nov. 2025 (Vienna)

### *Revisioning Natural Histories (I): Invisible Women in Natural History*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAIR: ANITA HERMANNSTÄDTER (MUSEUM FÜR NATURKUNDE BERLIN)

- **9:00 am** LAURENCE TALAIRACH (ALEXANDRE-KOYRÉ CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF TOULOUSE JEAN JAURÈS)  
Drawn from nature': Jemima Blackburn's Self-Portraits and the Construction of a Female Scientific Self
- **9:20 am** LUISA KAPP (SENCKENBERG NATURE RESEARCH, GOETHE UNIVERSITY FRANKFURT)  
From Recovery to Reframing: Women's Hidden Histories at Senckenberg Nature Research
- **9:40 am** SABINE VON MERING (MUSEUM FÜR NATURKUNDE BERLIN)  
Hidden in Plain Sight – Identifying and Acknowledging Women in Natural History
- **10:00 am** RACHEL PARLE (OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY)  
Monumental Figures – a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Response to Victorian Statues

**10:20–11:00 am** Discussion & Coffee & Tea Break

### *Revisioning Natural Histories (II): Revisioning Prehistory*

VENUE: NHM VIENNA, VORTRAGSSAAL

CHAIR: KARINA GRÖMER (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)

- **11:00 am** KATHARINA REBLAY-SALISBURY (AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES)  
Preherstory: Women's Lives in Prehistory through the Lens of Archaeological Science
- **11:45–12:00 am** Discussion

VENUE: HALL XVI

- **12:00 pm** CAROLINE POSCH, MATHIAS HARZHAUSER & JULIA LANDSIEDL (NAT. HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
Re/Envisioning Prehistoric Times: The New Ice-Age-Children's Hall, Curatorial and Artistic Strategies

**1:00–2:30 pm Lunch Break (Lecture Hall)**

### *Revisioning Natural Histories (III): Uncomfortable Pasts & Possible Futures*

Venue: DECK 50

Chair: Jasmin Spreer (Natural History Museum Vienna)

- **2:30 pm** LIZ HIDE (SEDGWICK MUSEUM OF EARTH SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)  
*Telling Uncomfortable Stories: Dykes, Dinosaurs and Charles Darwin in the Sedgwick Museum*
- **2:50 pm** ANTON ZWISCHENBERGER (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
Natural Histories Reloaded: New Forms of Presenting History in Digital Realities
- **3:10 pm** KATRIN VOHLAND & IRIS OTT (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
Envisioning Possible Futures for the Natural History Museum Vienna

**3:30–5:00 pm** Further Discussion & independent visit of the museum

**5:15 pm** Departure to Westbahnhof (railway station)

Train to Salzburg: 6:08–8:38 pm Westbahn 968, Wien – Salzburg

# Wednesday, 5 Nov. 2025 (Salzburg)

## *Envisioning Natural Histories*

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

### **9:00–9:15 am Welcome Address & Organizational Remarks**

ROBERT LINDNER (HAUS DER NATUR, SALZBURG), ...

## *Natural History Museums – Past, Present and Future*

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAIR: JOHN HOLMES (UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)

- **9:15 am** JACK ASHBY (UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY, CAMBRIDGE)  
Nature's Memory: Behind the Scenes at the World's Natural History Museums
- **10:00 am** PAUL SMITH (OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSEUM)  
Natural History Museums as Repositories of Scientific Memory
- **10:30–11:00 am** Questions & Answers, Discussion

### **11:00–11:30 am** Coffee & Tea Break

- **11:30 am** ROBERT LINDNER (HAUS DER NATUR, SALZBURG)  
A Museum for Everyone - 101 Years Haus der Natur
- **12:00 am** STEFANIE JOVANOVIC-KRUSPEL (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
Visualising Historicity – Natural History Museums as Built “Timescapes”
- **12:30–12:45 am** Questions & Answers

### **12:45–1:45 pm** Lunch (Catering at Haus der Natur)

## *Illustrating Natural Histories – Art meets Science*

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAIR: JANINE ROGERS (MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY)

- **1:45 pm** HANS WALTER LACK (BOTANICAL GARDEN BERLIN)  
The Münch-Bellinghausen Collection of Botanical Illustrations in the Haus der Natur, Salzburg
- **2:15 pm** KURT CHYTIL (TEACHER, VIENNA)  
Paul Pfurtscheller, a Biologist and Teacher between Science and Art
- **2:45 pm** CHRISTOPH VON HAGKE (UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)  
Analog Processes in Geology and Art

### **3:15–3:45 pm** Coffee & Tea Break

- **4:00–5:30 pm** Guided tour to the exhibitions (ROBERT LINDNER, HAUS DER NATUR, SALZBURG)

## *Visit to the print workshop “Grafische Werkstatt”*

**5:30 pm** Walk through the old town of Salzburg to “Grafische Werkstatt”

- **6:00 pm:** Visit to the print workshop “Grafische Werkstatt”  
MARTIN GREDLER (GRAFISCHE WERKSTATT IM TRAKLHAUS): Printing from Copperplate and Stones  
KAMILE JADEVIČIŪTĖ (INDEPENDENT ARTIST, SALZBURG): Exhibition “Following the Stones”

### **8:00 pm** Joint Dinner at a nearby restaurant

## Thursday, 6 Nov. 2025 (Salzburg)

### *Contested Images – Decolonising Natural History*

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAIR: R. LINDNER

- **9:00 am** LAURIN BLECHA (UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)  
Decolonising Salzburg
- **9:15 am** JACK ASHBY (UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY, CAMBRIDGE)  
Giving Credit and Acknowledging Violence: Telling Honest Stories about Natural History Collections
- **9:30 am** BENJAMIN POLLITT (UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON)  
Timelines and Haloes: The Case for Indian Natural History Artists in Early Sydney Cove
- **9:45 am** SABINE EGGERS (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)  
Tsantsa Realities: Fakes, Trades, Myths and Arts
- **10:00–11:00 pm** Discussion, World Café (Coffee & Tea)

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**11:30–12:30** Lunch (Catering at Haus der Natur)

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- **12:30–1:00 pm** Walk through the old town of Salzburg to the Archabbey of St. Peter

### *Telling natural histories*

VENUE: ARCHABBEY OF ST. PETER, SALZBURG

CHAIR: ROMANA SAMMERN (UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)

- **1:00 pm** WOLFGANG WANKO (ARCHABBEY ST. PETER)  
The Cabinet of Art and Wonders of the Archabbey of St. Peter
- **1:30 pm** EVA-MARIA TROELBERG (HEINRICH HEINE UNIVERSITY OF DÜSSELDORF) & MATTHIAS BRUHN (KARLSRUHE UNIVERSITY OF ARTS AND DESIGN)  
Making Natural Histories – A Dialogue about Cabinets of Art and Wonders
- **2:30–3:00 pm** Questions & Answers, Further Discussion

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**3:00–4:00 pm Coffee & Tea Break (Romanesque Hall of St. Peter)**

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- **4:00 pm** SONJA FÜHRER (ARCHABBEY OF ST. PETER)  
Guided tour to the historical library of St. Peter
- **4:30 pm** NORBERT URBAN (ARCHABBEY OF ST. PETER)  
Guided tour to the mineralogical collection of St Peter

### *(Story)Telling Natural Histories*

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, DINOSAUR HALL

CHAIR: WERNER MICHLER (UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)

- **6:00–7:30 pm** Artistic Lecture: “Poetry, naturally?” by MARA-DARIA COJOCARU (POET & PHILOSOPHER, HAMBURG) & JAN WAGNER (WRITER AND POET, HAMBURG)

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**After that** Conference Dinner (HAUS DER NATUR, DINOSAUR HALL)

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# Friday, 7 Nov. 2025 (Innsbruck)

## *Schloss Ambras – The First Museum in the World*

VENUE: SCHLOSS AMBRAS, INNSBRUCK

**8:45 am** Meeting point: Salzburg Main Station: Departure by train to Innsbruck

Train to Innsbruck: **8:58–10:44 am** RJX 660, Salzburg – Innsbruck

**11:04 am** Bus to Ambras [travel time approx. 0:15]

- **11:30 am** KATHARINA SEIDL (SCHLOSS AMBRAS INNSBRUCK / KHM-MUSEUMSVERBAND)  
Guided tour through Schloss Ambras (self-description: the first museum in the world that is still found in the same place it was established, 1564)

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**After that** Refreshments (curtesy of Schloss Ambras)

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- **ca. 2:00 pm** End of Symbiosis 2025

### Trains back to Salzburg:

**2:16–4:03 pm** RJX 565, Innsbruck – Salzburg => continues to Vienna (arrival time 6:32 pm)

**3:14–5:02 pm** RJX 869, Innsbruck – Salzburg => continues to Vienna (arrival time 7:32 pm)

**4:16–6:03 pm** RJX 567, Innsbruck – Salzburg => continues to Vienna (arrival time 8:32 pm)