



Wolfgang Grassberger, 1952, *From the Realm of Our Work*, 400 x 180 cm (Haus der Natur, Repro: H. Auer). Commissioned by E. F. 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



Monday, 3 Nov. 2025, Vienna (approx. 1:00 pm – 9:00 pm)

Evolution, Mythology, Hybridity in Science and the Arts (~ 1–5 pm)

VENUE: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAired BY: ACHIM SAUPE (LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FÜR ZEITHISTORISCHE FORSCHUNG)

- Katrin Vohland (Natural History Museum Vienna) on “Envisioning Natural Histories”
- Werner Michler (University Salzburg) on “Natural History – Evolution – Literature”
- John Holmes (University Birmingham) on “The Protean World of Erasmus Darwin”
- Billie Gavurin (University Birmingham) on “Darwinism and the Mythic Hybrid”
- Isabel Davis (Natural History Museum, London) on “Jenny the Talking Fish”

Shapeshifting and Reworlding: On Mixed Forms and Meanings

VENUE: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAired BY: N.N.

- Janine Rogers, Cody Barton (Mount Allison University, Canada) & Anna Pasco Bolta (artist, Munich) in an academic and artistic dialogue
- Artistic interventions with Anna Pasco Bolta (artist, Munich) and Brigitta Schmid (Natural History Museum Vienna)

Tuesday, 4 Nov. 2025, Vienna (approx. 8:30 am – 4:30 pm)

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Revisioning Representations – Women in Science and Prehistory

VENUE: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA, LECTURE HALL

CHAired BY: SABINE VON MERING (MUSEUM FÜR NATURKUNDE, BERLIN) AND KARINA GRÖMER (NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA)

- Janet Stott (Oxford Univ. Museum), Anita Hermannstädter (Museum für Naturkunde Berlin), Luisa Kapp (Senckenberg Naturmuseum Frankfurt), Laurence Talairach (Alexandre-Koyré Center for the History of Science and Technology, Toulouse) on “Invisible Women in Natural History”
- Katharina Rebay-Salisbury (Austrian Academy of Sciences) on “Images of women in prehistory”

Revisioning Representations – New ways of Envisioning Natural Histories

VENUE: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM VIENNA, HALL XVI, DECK 50

CHAired BY: N.N.

- Caroline Posch, Mathias Harzhauser & Julia Landsiedl (Natural History Museum Vienna) on “Re/Envisioning prehistoric times in the new hall ‘Ice-Age-Children and their World’”
- Iris Ott (Natural History Museum Vienna) on “Envisioning Natural Histories on Deck 50”
- Anton Zwischenberger (Natural History Museum Vienna) on Envisioning Natural Histories in Social Media

Wednesday, 5 Nov. 2025, Salzburg (approx. 9:00 am – 7:00 pm)

Natural History Museums – Past, Present and Future

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAired BY: JOHN HOLMES (UNIVERSITY BIRMINGHAM)

- Jack Ashby (Cambridge University Mus. of Zoology) on “Nature’s Memory: behind the scenes at the world’s natural history museums”
 - Paul Smith (Oxford University Museum) on “Natural history museums – repositories of scientific memory”
 - Robert Lindner (Haus der Natur, Salzburg) on “A museum for everyone”
 - Stefanie Jovanovic-Kruspel (Natural History Museum Vienna) on “Visualising historicity – Natural History Museums as built ‘timescapes’ ”
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Illustrating Natural Histories – Art meets Science

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAired BY: JANINE ROGERS (MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY)

- Hans Walter Lack (Botanical Garden Berlin) on “Botanical illustrations in Vienna c. 1800”
 - Kurt Chytil (teacher, Vienna) on “Paul Pfurtscheller, biologist and teacher between science and art”
 - Christoph von Hagke (University Salzburg) on “Analog processes in geology and art”
 - Martin Gredler (artist, Salzburg) on “Printing from copperplates and stones”
 - Kamile Jadevičiūtė (artist, Salzburg) is “Following the stones”
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Thursday, 6 Nov. 2025, Salzburg (approx. 9:00 am – 7:00 pm)

Contested Images – Decolonising Natural History

VENUE: HAUS DER NATUR, LECTURE-HALL

CHAired BY: N.N.

- Laurin Blecha, Marius Müller (University Salzburg) on “Decolonising Salzburg”
 - Jack Ashby (Cambridge University Museum of Zoology) on “Giving credit and acknowledging violence: researching the colonial histories of Australian zoology”
 - Sabine Eggers (Natural History Museum Vienna) on “Tsantsa realities: fakes, myths and art”
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(Story) Telling natural histories

VENUE: ARCHABBEY OF ST. PETER

CHAired BY: N.N.

- Wolfgang Wanko (Archabbey St. Peter) on “The Cabinet of Art and Wonders”
- Eva-Maria Troelenberg (Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf) & Matthias Bruhn (Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design) in a dialogue on “Art/Nature: Making Natural Histories”
- Mara-Daria Cojocaru (writer, London) and Jan Wagner (writer, Hamburg) on “Poetry, naturally?”

Friday, 7 Nov. 2025, Innsbruck (approx. 9:00 am – 2:00 pm)

Schloss Ambras – the first museum in the world

VENUE: SCHLOSS AMBRAS, INNSBRUCK

- Guided tour through Schloss Ambras, which describes itself as the first museum in the world that is still found in the same place where it was established in 1564