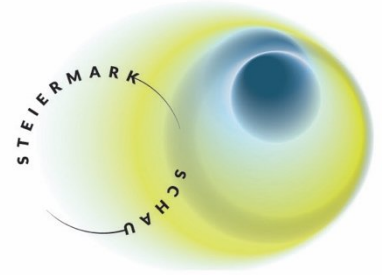


STEIERMARK SCHAU

Die Ausstellung
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SHOWING STYRIA

Universalmuseum Joanneum
Mariahilferstraße 4, 8020 Graz
www.steiermarkschau.at

presse@steiermarkschau.at
Telephone +43-664/8017-9211

how it was

A first glimpse

how it was. Space and History

SHOWING STYRIA at the History Museum

Sackstraße 16, 8010 Graz

Opening: 09 April 2021

Duration: 10.04.2021–31.10.2021

Project management: Bettina Habsburg-Lothringen

Curated by Ulrich Becker, Walter Feldbacher and Bettina Habsburg-Lothringen

Exhibition design: INNOCAD

Information: +43-316/8017-9800, www.steiermarkschau.at

Images are available on www.steiermarkschau.at/presse/museum-fuer-geschichte.

At the heart of the History Museum's exhibition for SHOWING STYRIA 2021 – *how it was. Space and History* – is the interplay between people and nature. The region's natural conditions have moulded the lives of those living here since the dawn of humankind. They, in turn, have tried to shape nature according to their needs – and this has left traces. Entire mountains have been carried off, rivers diverted and regulated, villages founded and towns systematically planned, borders drawn and then removed, tunnels bored through mountains, motorways built ...

The exhibition goes in search of these traces left by the past in the present. In a total of twelve sections that take the form of a walk across the regions of Styria, concrete examples reveal how each age or period has left its mark on the space and the landscape.

How is this all brought into an exhibition space?

Exhibitions are three-dimensional narratives. History museums traditionally convey their subject with the help of original objects and remains. This is also the case with the show at the History Museum. A wide array of found objects – gravestones and fragments from the Grazer Burg, the remains of a Gothic church organ, a medieval pillory, a confession booth, rails from Donawitz, parts of a 'Frankfurt Kitchen' or the skeleton of a cinema box office – are in part being shown in a museum for the very first time. The objects are accompanied by maps, designs and building plans, graphics and statistics. A range of experts report from the historical sites in video interviews. Alongside the texts, the exhibition design creates a unifying framework, directing the focus with its own coherent message.

Structural and individual models also play an important role in the exhibition. Whether as a record of spatial design, or as a way to visualise towns and villages, or to offer a precise view of monasteries and industrial complexes – these models show Styria in miniature, in a form that is condensed in terms of time and space. Their purpose is to make large, complex things clear and accessible, while inspiring closer examination and discussion. Many of the models have kindly been loaned by regional museums and history societies, municipalities, archives and businesses, model makers and architects. Thanks to their support, the castles of Deutschlandsberg and Ligist, the villages of Siebing, Lichendorf and Zelting, the monastery of Göss, the tabor in Feldbach, various churches in the Mur valley and alpine huts in the Ennstal, the headframe of the Fohnsdorf mine and the Mellach district heating power plant, motorway service stations and junctions, bridges, fire stations, schools, residential buildings, spas ... are all now to be found in Graz. Some models have been created especially for this exhibition and will afterwards become part of the Cultural History Collection.

In order to make the models exhibition-ready, a team of restorers has been working for months to clean and inspect them and to repair any damage. This intricate and detailed work allows us to conserve the pieces and keep them in the Cultural History Collection for future generations.

The supporting programme: a country outing

The history outlined in the show is the starting point for a supporting programme of events designed as a 'country outing'. Linked in with the various sections of this exhibition, our tours take visitors to the very places where history happened. We travel by bus and by train, ride a bike or hike through historic landscapes. What is illustrated in a compact form inside the museum expands into a physically immersive experience outside at the original sites. Each location of the mobile pavilion sets the direction of travel for a certain period of time.

The supporting programme has been developed with the partners who helped to put the exhibition together. They will be presenting and exploring their regions in hikes and city walks, guided tours of museums and archives, company visits and discussions with contemporary witnesses.

Statements

Bettina Habsburg-Lothringen, Director of the History Museum: 'The aim of our exhibition and supporting programme of events is to enhance the appreciation of cultural heritage and to sensitise our visitors to the presence of history.'

Christopher Drexler, Minister for culture, Government of Styria: 'The first SHOWING STYRIA is devoted to the development and transformation of Styria. It is a unique self-reflective exploration of the region. At the History Museum, the exhibition 'how it was' takes a look back into the past at the development of the province and the influences of the people who lived in the area of present-day Styria over the centuries. The exhibits we see here demonstrate very clearly that we cannot escape our history. Nor do we want to. Because only by engaging in an active examination of our past, its effects and its influences can we continue to develop in a positive way. What happened in the past has led to the current reality of 'how it is'. Our history is the foundation of 'what will be'. And, in a special way, it also shapes 'who we are'. We warmly invite you to join us on this journey, starting from the History Museum, at SHOWING STYRIA – 'The Regional Exhibition' from 9 April! The 'how it was' section contains models, finds and objects that make the history of Styria clear and accessible in an unprecedented way. Exhibits from the ample treasures of our regional museums are brought to Graz while in turn, starting out from the History Museum, historical developments are revealed in situ. We travel in search of history for a powerful experience of its traces throughout the whole of Styria.'