



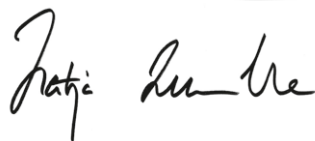
Foreword

“In the 17th and 18th century, museums and libraries were quite idiosyncratic institutions, because they were expressions of the prevalent taste of their age. The idea of accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place, this whole idea belongs to our modernity. The museum and the library are the actual heterotopias of our culture.”

M. Foucault, Les Hétérotopies – translated from the French by Jay Miskowiec (web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf, p. 7).

Multidisciplinary institutions are back in fashion! The Landesmuseum Hannover, the State Museum of Lower Saxony, with its different worlds dedicated to nature, human development and art (NatureWorlds, HumanWorlds and ArtWorlds) fits this trend perfectly, because it combines under one roof the apparently incompatible, thus inviting visitors to discovery and contemplation. After more than 15 years, a new guide to the museum is now being published; in contrast with its predecessors, it focusses less on the museum’s history and its various departments but on the topics and objects on display. In this instance, though, “objects” refers not merely to the inanimate: a major attraction in our NatureWorlds are the fishes in the aquariums and the land animals in the terrariums. Alongside superb works of art from eight centuries, other highlights include the historic dioramas illustrating the history of humankind. This broad spectrum offers the opportunity for interdisciplinary research as well as for the inclusive communication of knowledge – more than 100,000 visitors each year are living proof of that.

Many colleagues at our museum have contributed to this book to ensure the appropriate presentation of its heterotopias. Contributors to the section on NatureWorlds are Annette Richter and Christiane Schilling, to the section on HumanWorlds Andrea Spautz (evolution), Babette Ludowici and Stephan Veil (archaeology) as well as Alexis von Poser (ethnology), and finally to the section on ArtWorlds Reiner Cunz (coin collection), Antje-Fee Köllermann (Old Masters) and Thomas Andratschke (New Masters). We thank Ursula Bohnhorst and Kerstin Schmidt for the photographs. The transformation of this diversity into unity is the work of the publishers Sandstein Verlag and their staff. Christine Jäger-Ulbricht’s revision ensured the presentation of heterogeneous objects and different departments in easily readable texts. The beautiful layout of this catalogue was designed by Simone Antonia Deutsch. We thank Herr Stellmacher for his confidence in and support of this project.



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