

Press Release: Hamburg, 16. November 2022

Museum of Nature Hamburg

Exhibition "The Whole of Nature": Science Meets Art

From 30 November 2022 to 27 August 2023 at the Museum der Natur Hamburg

From the medieval "Wimmelbild" to the representation of digitally simulated natural phenomena: The special exhibition "The Whole of Nature - Forces, Orders, Boundaries" at the Museum der Natur Hamburg shows historical and current examples of how nature can be meaningfully ordered and represented as a whole. The combination of scientific and artistic representations encourages a change of perspective. The exhibition is a joint project of the Museum der Natur Hamburg and the University of Hamburg. It will be open to the public from 30 November 2022.

The exhibition is an exemplary ride through the history of European science over the past centuries. In reproductions of important historical and contemporary maps, pictures, family trees, diagrams and other representations, it reflects the knowledge and understanding of nature of the different epochs. Visitors discover both familiar principles of order, such as the family tree, and innovative presentations of data in striking images.

For example, the Ebstorf world map with its Christian cosmos sketches a point of orientation for society in the Middle Ages, while the modern "Mappa Mundi" takes up a topical theme by depicting land area in relation to population size. Charles Darwin's famous sketch on the theory of evolution and Carl von Linné's table from his work *Systema Naturae* are limited to a sober representation. The contemporary artist Ward Shelley, on the other hand, uses the scientific diagram as an art form to depict the avant-garde art movements in time.

The Museum der Natur Hamburg also becomes an exhibition object in some places: the so-called biodiversity showcase is an example of how we can present biodiversity in the museum.

Anne Merker, Exhibition Concept, Museum der Natur Hamburg (LIB): *"The exhibition is primarily intended to inspire further thinking. Visitors are invited to discover similarities and changes in the representations. They can playfully order nature in their own way and find details in the big picture."*

Prof. Dr. Frank Fehrenbach, Co-Speaker of the DFG Research Group "Imaginarities of Power", University of Hamburg, Department of Art History: *"In the scientific examination of nature, pictures also offer the advantage of being able to look at many details at the same time. One of the aims of our exhibition is to show how the 'artistic' always intrudes even in seemingly purely factually oriented diagrammatic representations."*

Dr. Dominik Hünninger, research associate at the DFG Research Group "Imaginarities of Power", University of Hamburg: *"In the exhibition, we pursue the question of what people at certain times and in certain places intended with the order they chose in each case. What does this say about their relationship to nature, diversity and the place of people in it? We want to encourage people to discover the mechanisms and ideas behind the orders."*

The exhibition "The Whole of Nature - Forces, Orders, Boundaries" was created as part of the activities of the DFG Research Group "Imagines of Force" at the University of Hamburg in cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change (LIB). Students from the University of Hamburg prepared the content of the exhibition in two seminars and supported the choice of exhibition objects. Until 27 August 2023, "The Whole of Nature" will be on display in the zoological exhibition of the Museum der Natur Hamburg.

Exhibition venue: Museum der Natur Hamburg - Zoology, Bundesstraße 52, 20146 Hamburg.

Exhibition period: 30 November 2022 to 27 August 2023.

Further information: [Special exhibition "The Whole of Nature" : LIB \(leibniz-lib.de\)](https://leibniz-lib.de)

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About the LIB

The LIB is dedicated to researching biodiversity and its changes, the results of which are disseminated to the wider society in an educational manner. In order to better understand the current mass extinction of flora and fauna, researchers are looking for connections and causes of – often – man-made changes. The goal is to develop solutions for the preservation of ecosystems and species in order to maintain the basis of current life.

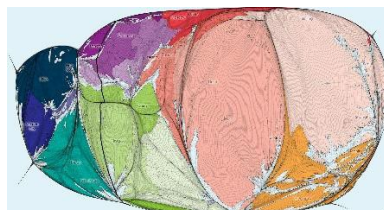
About the Leibniz-Association

The Leibniz Association combines 97 independent research institutes. Their focus ranges from the natural, engineering, and environmental sciences to the humanities and the business, space, and social sciences. The Leibniz institutes focus on relevant social, economic, and ecological issues. They perform knowledge-oriented and applied research (also among the cross-disciplinary Leibniz research alliances), are or support scientific infrastructures, and offer research-based services.



Caption: The exhibition reflects different perspectives of scientific and artistic representations of nature. The exhibition poster shows a collage with images from the exhibition.

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Caption: In this world map, the area of the countries is distorted in proportion to the size of the population. The oceans, which are not populated by humans, disappear and the most populous countries stand out. Such a modern "Mappa Mundi" is primarily to be understood as a thematic map, not as a means of concrete geographical orientation.

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