

Universalmuseum Joanneum Press

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Schloss Eggenberg More than just a Palace

An impressive architecture, magnificent premises and a romantic park - enjoy all these in one to the full when visiting Schloss Eggenberg. And: the Schloss to the west of Graz has yet more to offer. Behind its ancient palace walls and in its spacious grounds you will discover a whole universe of natural history and art treasures from the art collections of Universalmuseum Joanneum!

Schloss Eggenberg, as it is called, owes its name to its builder - Duke Hans Ulrich of Eggenberg (1568 - 1634). He established the impressive building from 1625 onwards. By then, he himself had become one of the central figures at the Imperial court. As the closest confidant of Emperor Ferdinand II and companion of the famous military commander, Wallenstein, it was he who controlled the political fortunes of the Empire early on in the Thirty Years War. The architecture of Schloss Eggenberg is an expression of the Duke's powerful position, while at the same time mirroring in a most symbolic way his humanistic conception of world, every detail following an ingenious programme. Created as a copy of the universe, everything is characterised by natural historic concepts of cosmic harmony. The progress of time and celestial mechanics, worldly hierarchy, world history, religious concepts and value systems find their expression here, as do the most sophisticated alchemical and astrological ideas concerning the workings of the universe.

Planetensaal

The splendid Planetensaal is the core of the architectural design programme of Schloss Eggenberg. The cycle of paintings by the Eggenberg court painter, Hans Adam Weissenkircher, unites the planets and the zodiac, the star signs and elements, making them into one complex apotheosis of the ducal house of Eggenberg. In this way, astrological concepts of planets and signs of the zodiac as rulers of time and fate are linked up with hermetic pictures describing the purgation of the human soul.

Bel étage

Adjacent to the Planetensaal is a circle of 24 state rooms fitted out with precious original designs. The Bel étage thus hosts over 600 ceiling paintings, magnificent wall tapestries and decorations, stoves and pieces of furniture as well as three East Asian rooms with valuable china and Chinese silk paintings. The Eggenberg Bel étage has remained unchanged since the 18th century and, when illuminated by candle light, allows for an exceptional journey back in time.

Schloss Gardens

The ample, romantic landscaped garden counts among the most precious garden monuments of the Province of Styria. A long-term park maintenance concept has been established with a view not only to securing the preservation of the gardens, but also to reconstructing what has been lost over the last 100 years. A first step in this direction was made in 2005 with the historic, so-called „Herrschaftsgartel“, a rose garden at the back of the Palace dating back to the Biedermeier. It is faithful to the original in style and is open to all visitors.

Planetengarten

The Planetengarten playfully builds on the ancient system of the “Theory of Signatures”, according to which each planet has its “children”, not only among humans, but also among plants, colours and shapes. It is these ideas that have given rise to poetic garden spaces that are subject to the character of the seven classical planets. Against this background, the Planetengarten, which was newly constructed in 2004 according to the plans of Helga Maria Tornquist, creates a direct link with the Schloss and its universal scheme.