

St. Gallen Museum of Natural History Park

The park: paradox nature and artificiality



From possible approaches to the theme of Nature, the project focuses on a few simple, yet significant topics. The professional contribution of the project is that of an experiential space. Next to today's common callings of landscape architecture to address ecology, politics or education, we see the calling of personal, atmospheric experience designed to spark curiosity, imagination and sensual experience in terms of Merleu-Ponty's "participatory perception", as equally significant.

The park is a space of artificial naturalness or natural artificiality – an atmospheric backdrop within which three themes are exhibited: the intermingling of nature and culture, three significant geological epochs of Eastern Switzerland and the dialogue between Science and Faith. Hammered out in 30cm high letters or molded into the concrete are quotes from Darwin, Max Plank and the Bible, local scientific geological terms sounding more like humorous children's nonsense, local fossils and exotics strewn uncommented throughout the park, setting them off from the pedagogical approach within the museum. The aim is to touch visitors of all ages with curiosity and a sense of the seemingly infinite timeframe and transformation processes of natural history.