

# BUNDESKUNSTHALLE



## Media Information about the Exhibition

### GOETHE'S GARDENS

#### **Green Worlds on the Roof of the Bundeskunsthalle**

until 15 September 2019

*Goethe's Gardens* on the roof of the Bundeskunsthalle reflect the writer's lifelong interest in gardens, nature and botany. The roof garden complements the exhibition *Goethe. Transformation of the World*. Developed especially for Bonn, the roof garden brings together central motifs of Goethe's two gardens in Weimar: the garden in the idyllic Ilm meadows with its famous garden house, where Goethe lived in his early Weimar years, and the garden of his much grander house on the Frauenplan in central Weimar.

In the spring of 1776, when Goethe moved in to his first Weimar home not far from the river Ilm, he was particularly interested in the extensive garden and immediately set about its redesign. Not only did he establish a kitchen garden to supply fruit and vegetables for his table, he also laid out a small garden in the fashionable English style with winding paths and shady, intimate spots to rest. The garden also served him as a test field for his botanical observations and studies, the results of which informed his scientific treatises, among them the *Methamorphosis of Plants* and the *Theory of Colours*.

After his return from Italy, Goethe moved into the spacious house on the Frauenplan in central Weimar. Once again, he devoted a great deal of attention to the garden. As he had done in the Ilm meadowland, he used the space for a kitchen garden as well as for botanical experiments. A pavilion on the southside of the garden was furnished to house his extensive collection of minerals, rocks and fossils from all over the world.

Like Goethe's Weimar gardens, the garden on the roof of the Bundeskunsthalle will bring together aesthetic, scientific and economic considerations. As the exhibition runs from May to September, the appearance of the garden will change over the course of the summer, beckoning visitors to come more often, to enjoy a leisurely stroll, to linger, to delight in its beauty and to explore its underpinnings in the natural sciences.

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