

The abbey of St. Paul

The power of the word

Benedictine monasticism mirrored in Europe

Words are milestones of history.- They can be destructive and constructive, they can move and transform. They reflect the knowledge of many ages. Knowledge is power! That's how it was and that's how it will always be. In Umberto Eco's novel 'The Name of the Rose' this world of knowledge and books is at the heart of a story which touches people deeply.

The Europe exhibition in the Benedictine abbey of St. Paul sheds new light on this struggle for knowledge and power and attempts to reveal all the aspects involved - from Austria's oldest book (dating back to the start of the 5th century) right through to the forbidden manuscripts which were subject to rigid censorship. Today visitors can see what they were forbidden to see in the 'dark' Middle Ages.

The covert becomes overt

The Merseburg Incantations, two magic spells which are the only surviving testimonies to Germanic heathen religiousness in Old High German, Aristotle's 'History of Laughter' and

old Irish magic spells will be on display at the exhibition as will magnificent Vatican codices and important astronomic ciphers. As a result the viewer has a chance of seeing what was refused to many generations in the past and can set off on the trail of monasticism mirrored in Europe.

Much of what shaped our history has its origins in monasticism. The impressive structures that were built still represent the travails of the search for God today. They depict a confession of faith which was turned into stone. Alongside outstanding works of European book art visitors can also admire treasures from the world of the decorative arts and painting. Names such as Albrecht Dürer, Peter Paul Rubens, Leonardo Da Vinci and Anthonis van Dyck rank alongside those of Ribera, Lucas Cranach or Kremser Schmidt.



Merseburg Incantations, Fulda, 10th C., Merseburg cathedral abbey library

A world of amazement

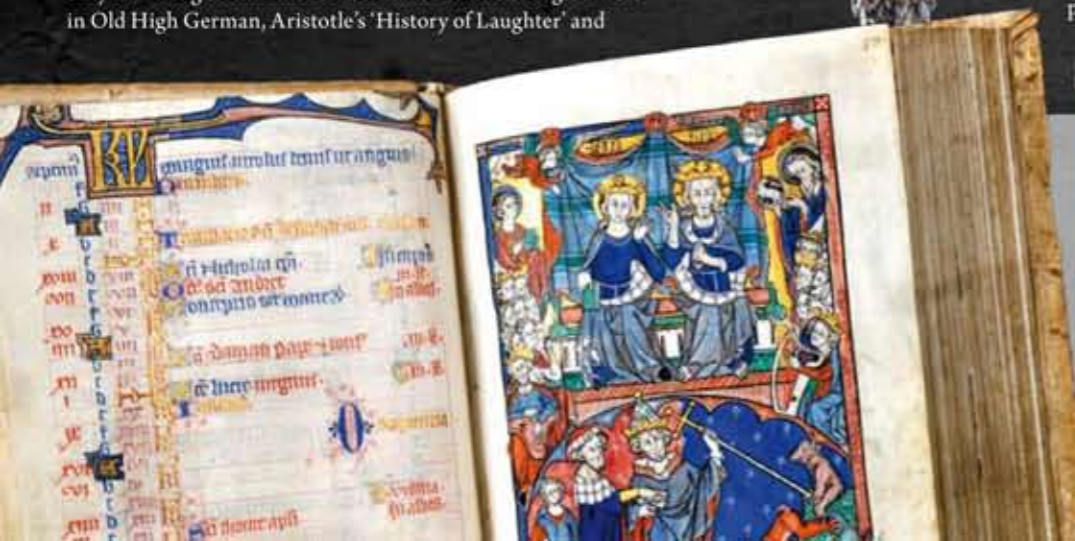
A breathtaking world offers itself to all of the senses. Mighty arches, secret corridors and magnificent halls form the setting for a unique exhibition. What appeared as an architectural flight of the imagination in Eco's novel has become reality in St. Paul through the structural adaptation of blocked up rooms.

A paradise for bookworms is the new library in the ancient vaults underneath the previously well-known rooms of the abbey.

Ramsey psalter, 12th C., Benedictine abbey of St Paul



Hartmannstab crozier, ca. 1130, Benedictine abbey in St. Georgenberg Fiecht, abbey museum



Treasures crafted by goldsmiths and silversmiths round off an amazing experience for the beholder. They form just one part of over 1,000 exhibits from all over Europe which can be admired on a stroll through an enormous display area.

Crystal cathedral

The crystal cathedral presents itself as one of the highlights of the Europe exhibition: the multimedia presentation of the Days of Creation and the life of St. Benedict by the successful Linz producer Peter Hans Felzmann in a breathtaking basement setting amazes the visitor and takes

him off to a bygone era. In the 'Planetarium' the crystal cathedral underlines the virtuosity of medieval architecture. It is a place of dreams.



The crystal cathedral, a place of amazement and dreams

Baroque garden and herbal garden

Those wishing to escape from the stress of everyday life can relax over a cup of coffee in the 'Gartenschloessl Belvedere', a historic Baroque garden, and enjoy both the views and the peace and quiet of 'Carinthia's Garden of Eden'. There's sure to be some herb or other to combat the hectic pace of life in these times. Perhaps you'll even find one in the redesigned herbal garden or in one of the teas on offer at the abbey's herbal apothecary.

Celestial globe, 17th century



The monastic experience awaits you!

Children's programme

The organisers of the Europe exhibition haven't left out young visitors in their considerations. In the abbey of St. Paul children have the opportunity of going off on a journey of discovery with Muki the monastic imp and can pick up a little surprise gift from the museum shop after successfully completing the 'puzzle rally'. What's more, in the Werner Berg Museum children can give full rein to their creativity by painting pictures in a special room.



Tiny tots can enjoy playing games and supervised entertainment in the children's area while grown-ups either take a stroll through the exhibition or relax over a glass of wine from the Abbey's private domain in the restaurant.



Ark of St Willibrod, 1040/1070 Emmerich, Martini, treasure chamber



Gandeebomer Evangelist, 9th century, Feste Coburg



Rubens - Adoration of the Shepherds, 1621/1622, Benedictine abbey of St Paul



Fresco, S. Vincenzo al Volturno, ca. 820



Ambrosian Codex, Austria's oldest book, early 5th C., Benedictine abbey of St Paul