

# **STAPFER HAUS:**

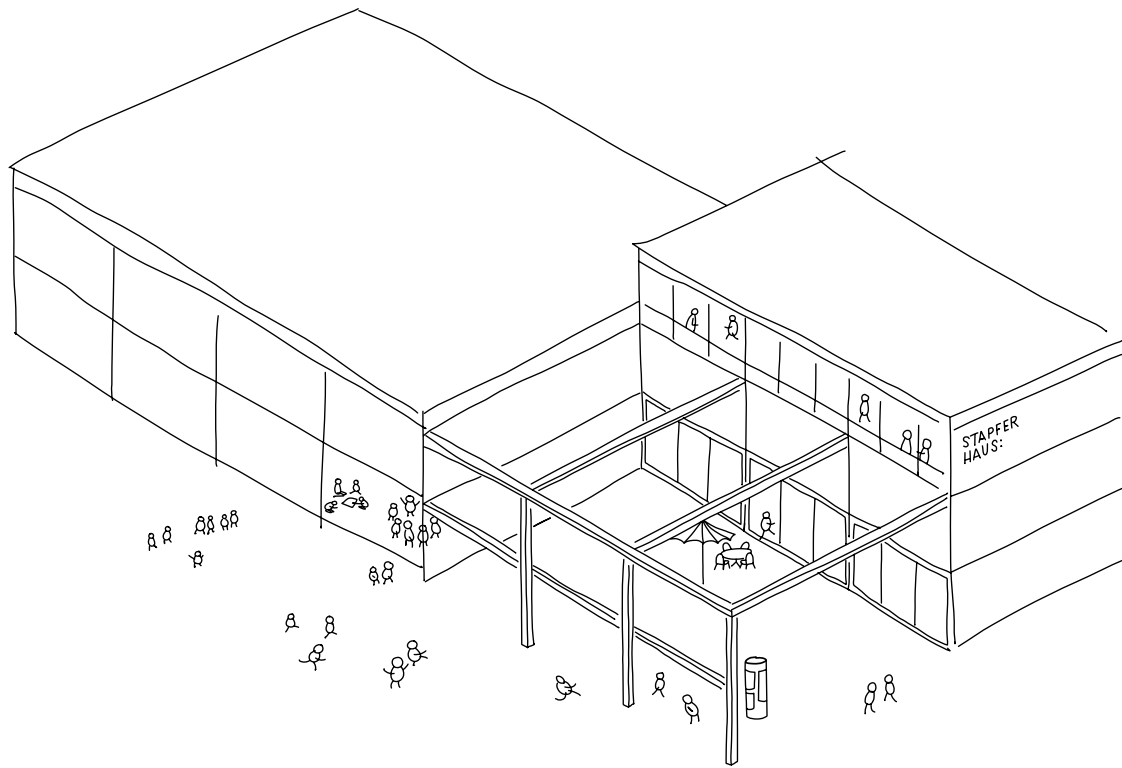
**Here, the big questions  
of the present are  
central: what shapes  
our lives, affects our  
country, and moves  
our world.**



European Museum  
of the Year

**“The Stapferhaus helps us navigate questions of the present in an accessible way. At a moment when we know more than ever before, but are at the same time losing a sense of security and orientation, a place like this is more important than ever.”**

Dr. Katja Gentinetta, political philosopher and president of the board of the Stapferhaus Foundation.



At the Stapferhaus, the big questions of the present are central: what shapes our lives, affects our country, and moves our world.

The Stapferhaus doesn't provide simple answers, but makes difficult topics concrete and manageable. With interactive, immersive exhibitions and a wide array of educational resources, it invites visitors to discover new perspectives and connections and to rethink their own positions.

All are welcome at this place of dialogue, inspiration, and playful insight: young and old, experts and laypeople, those who are “for” and those who are “against”. All who want to better understand our time and themselves.

## **The Topic: Here and Now**

Everything is changing, in all directions, ever more rapidly. The present is demanding, the future uncertain. Searching for a foothold in the past is one way of dealing with the challenges, projecting longings into the future another. The Stapferhaus focuses on the present. On the you-are-here point in the maelstrom of time, on the moment that is ours. In this way, the Stapferhaus opens up spaces to explore and experience together where we stand and how we want to move forward.

**“In times of shrill debates and heated polarization, the Stapferhaus captivates with its gift for approaching topics in an open and enjoyable way, thus bringing people together.”**

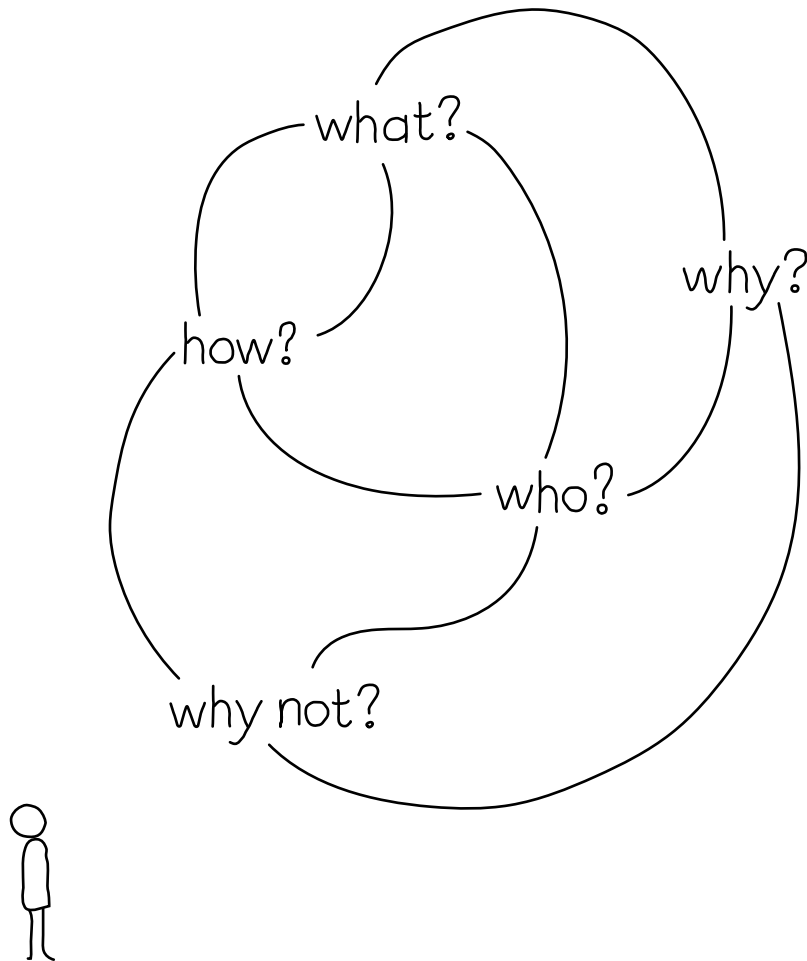
Michael Hermann, political scientist and director of the Sotomo research institute.

## **The Goal: Insight and Understanding**

The Stapferhaus is a place of dialogue. All are invited to contribute their convictions but also to explore other points of view. The Stapferhaus contrasts the exchange among like-minded people with the experience of the unfamiliar and surprising. Through a change of perspective, our assumptions can be questioned, and our own positions can be reexamined. In this way, our awareness of diversity in our society is sharpened, and democracy is strengthened.

**“The Stapferhaus identifies relevant topics and puts them up for debate in clever and creative ways – in a fascinatingly designed building, which sets new standards with its openness and convertibility. And which not only seeks dialogue with society, but also finds it.”**

Philippe Bischof, director of Pro Helvetia



## **The Path: Head and Gut**

The Stapferhaus creates worlds that remain in our memory. In collaboration with experts in scenography, architecture, film, games, drama, light, and sound, exhibition spaces are developed that address and involve visitors on various levels. They touch and move, see and feel, read and hear, experience and discuss. In addition to the exhibitions, the building offers space for established and new event formats.

**“With its exhibitions, the Stapferhaus has achieved a reputation far beyond the country’s borders as an innovative, creative think tank and exhibition space.”**

Hedy Graber, head of the directorate for culture and social affairs at the Federation of Migros Cooperatives

## The Place: Play and Transformation

The Stapferhaus is housed in a pioneering new wooden building at the Lenzburg train station that places itself entirely at the service of its content and its visitors. The architecture is designed for change. Walls and stairs can be moved, floors opened, the façade and forecourt playfully altered: a big stage for the examination of the big questions of our time. In addition to the 1400 square meters of exhibition space, the building also has several event spaces and a bistro where visitors can linger. The Stapferhaus also takes its projects beyond the building's walls: in Switzerland, abroad, and on the Internet.

**“The Stapferhaus is a dream house without restrictions for anyone who wants to create narrative spaces. I think it's the only building of its kind in Europe, perhaps in the whole world. A house for experimentation – an invitation to creativity.”**

Herman Kossmann, Kossmandejong (Netherlands), member of the architectural jury for the new Stapferhaus.

gewissensbisse  
Entscheiden  
bauen  
Grundhaltung  
beugend  
erleichternd  
ausser  
gescheit  
fordern  
schlicht gemacht!  
Dabei und weiter so!  
K+K  
12.03.19

21.01.23

Bravo pour le contenu,  
le côté interactif  
et les bonnes traductions  
en français.  
Je reviendrais et je ferais  
de la pub en Romandie!  
Beachi

Sehr interessante Ausstellung  
die alle Sinne anspricht,  
und zum Nachdenken anregt.

Ala L. Retti

Wieder mal eine super Ausstellung! Ich werde noch  
lange darüber nachdenken! Nicole

Etwas vom Berühresten, das  
ich erleben durfte!

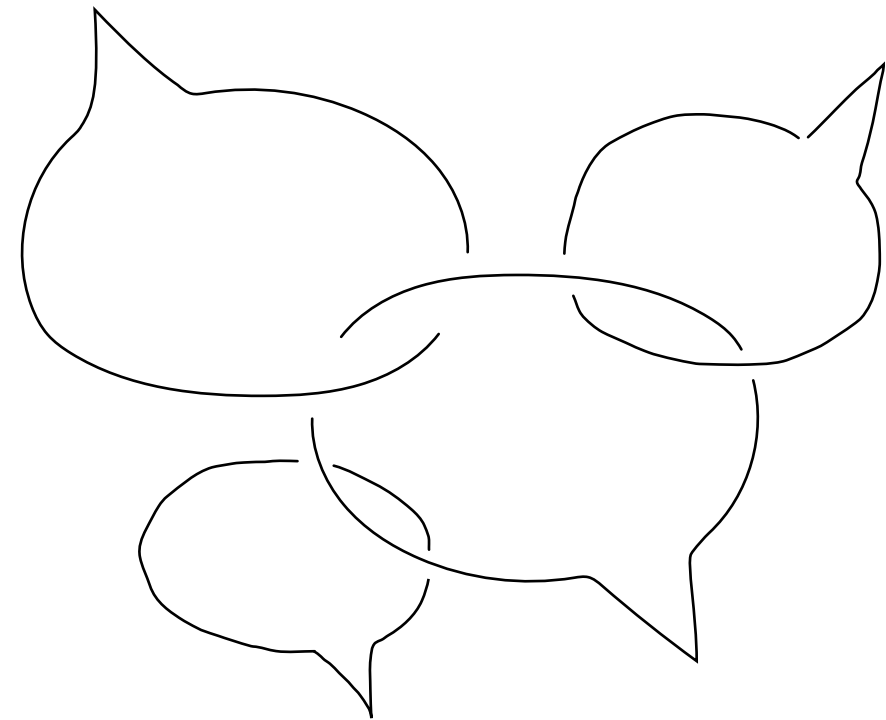
## The History: Change and Consistency

The Stapferhaus was founded in 1960 at Lenzburg Castle. Representatives of Pro Helvetia, the canton of Aargau, the city of Lenzburg, the Pro Argovia foundation, and the New Helvetic Society stated its purpose: “The establishment and operation of an Aargau and Swiss site of human encounter and intellectual debate.” They deliberately kept the format open: “The design of the task must be worked out from experience.”

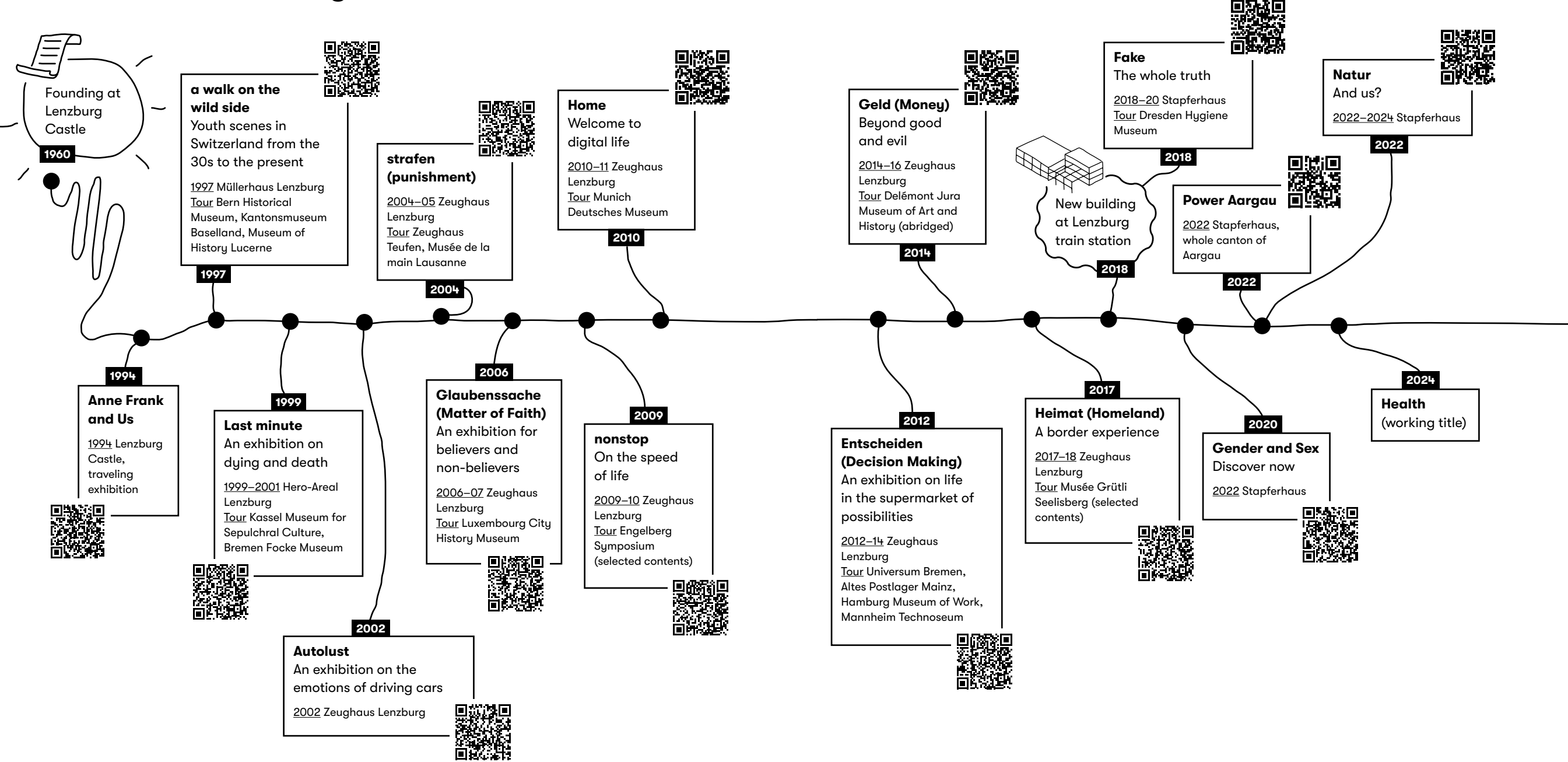
For the first thirty years, the focus was on conferences and debates; starting in the late 1990s, it was on large thematic exhibitions in temporary-use spaces. In 2018, the Stapferhaus moved into its new building at the Lenzburg train station, uniting exhibition, event, and office spaces under one roof. Today, the goal of all activities in the Stapferhaus is still dialogue – what has changed is the mode of communication.

**“Every conversation in the Stapferhaus attempts to set something in motion: to break us out of the prison of rigid preoccupation with our own concerns, to move us forward into the reality of community. When we are set in motion in this way, when we begin to have a dialogue even within ourselves, because we were impressed by an unconventional thinker we met in the Stapferhaus, or because we were confronted with aspects of reality we hadn’t considered before – this invisible result of the Stapferhaus’ work is at the same time its most beautiful, its most genuine. This is what it is designed to do: it aims at fruitful dialogue.”**

Martin Meyer, director of the Stapferhaus 1960-1991.

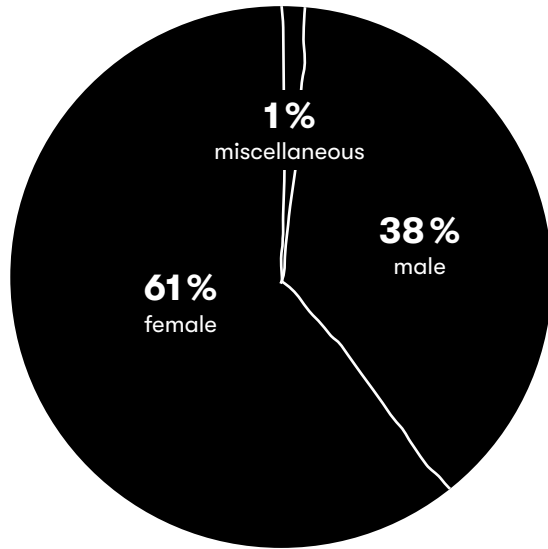


# Past Projects: Overview and Story Collection

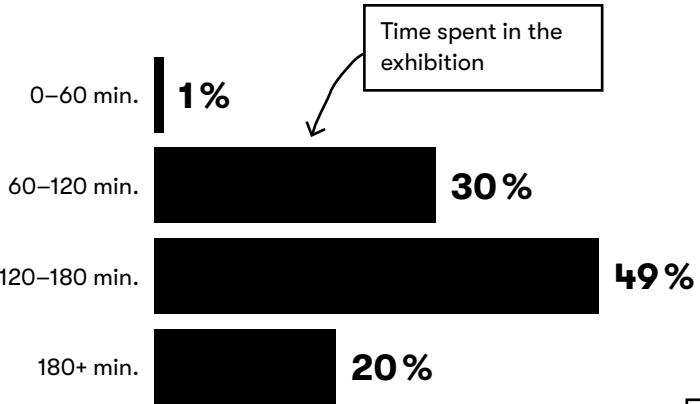


# Facts & Figures\*

**2020**  
booked educational offerings per exhibition (workshops, tours, introductions)



**100 000**  
visitors per exhibition

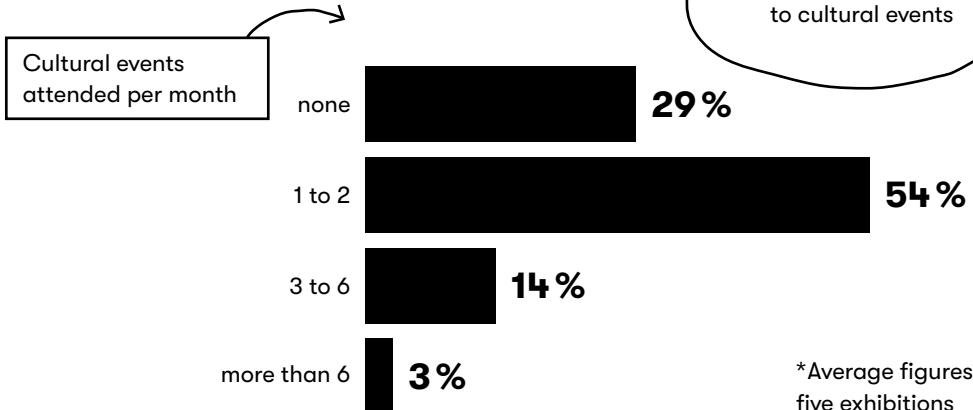
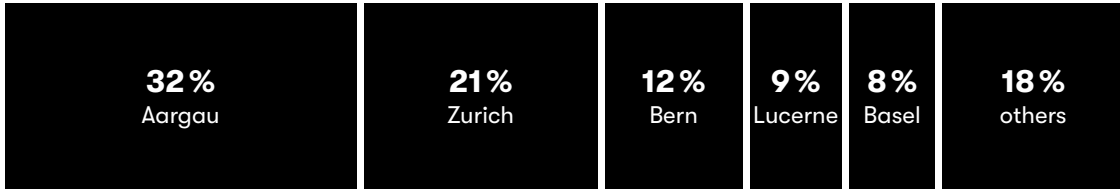


**17,6**  
duration in months

**1604**  
number of classes per exhibition

**37%**  
group visitors per exhibition

Average percentage of visitors traveling from these cantons



\*Average figures for the last five exhibitions



# At a glance

**“Through its innovative, creative, and forward-looking approach, the Stapferhaus serves as a model for the museum as a laboratory for the art of living – as all museums should be.”**

Mark O’Neill, laudatory remarks, European Museum of the Year Award 2020



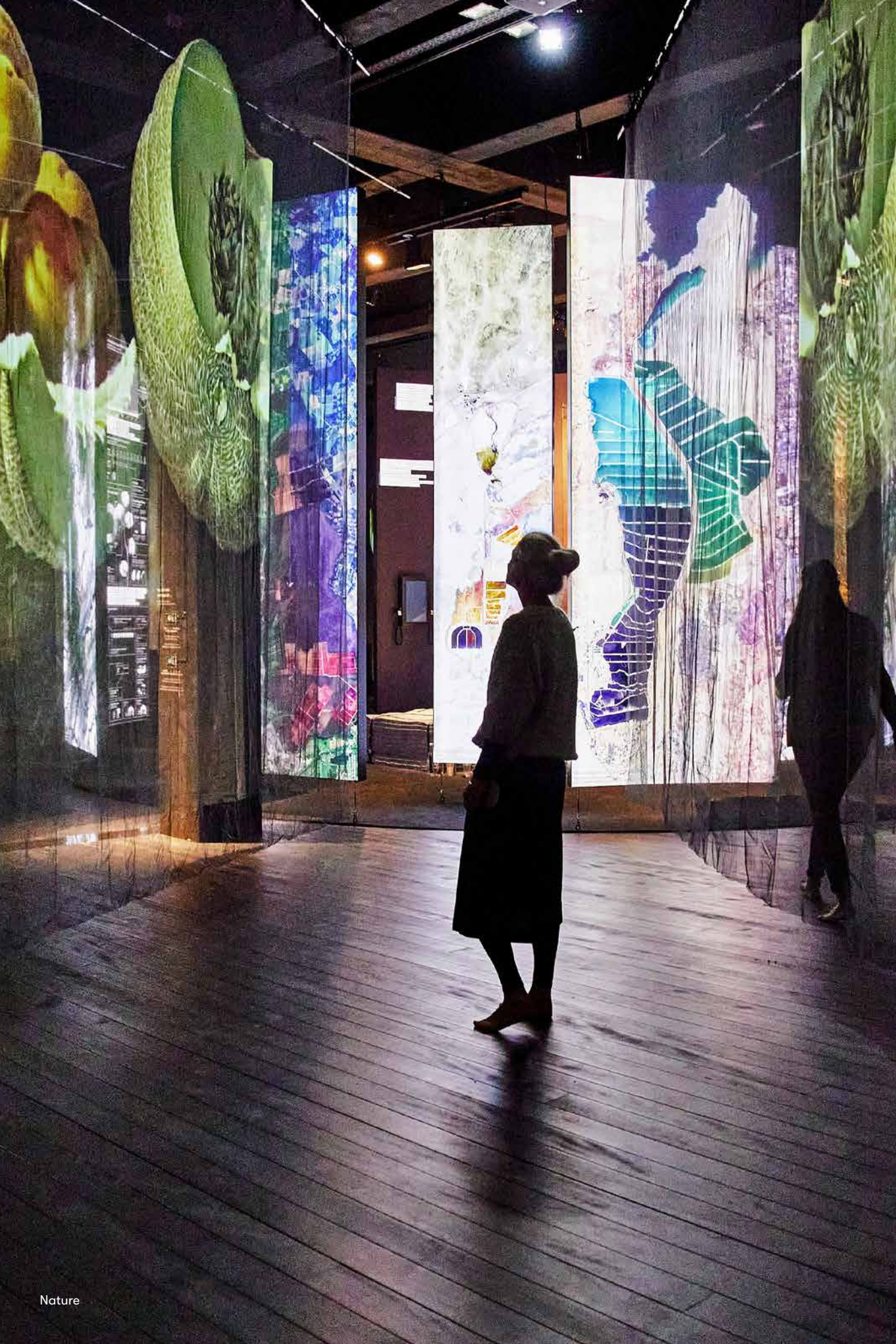
Large thematic exhibitions: every two years in a converted building

Target-group-specific educational offerings: tours, workshops, lectures; on site, off site , and online

Versatile accompanying program: conversations on site and as podcasts as well as other series and formats

Convertible spaces for rent: for events, seminars, and catering

Cozy bistro with regional and home-made delicacies







STADTER  
HAUS:

und  
wir?

Stadter Haus  
Natur und  
Kultur



participatory



Fake



Fake



Fake

playful



Entscheiden (Decision Making)



Gender and Sex



Heimat (Homeland)



Nature



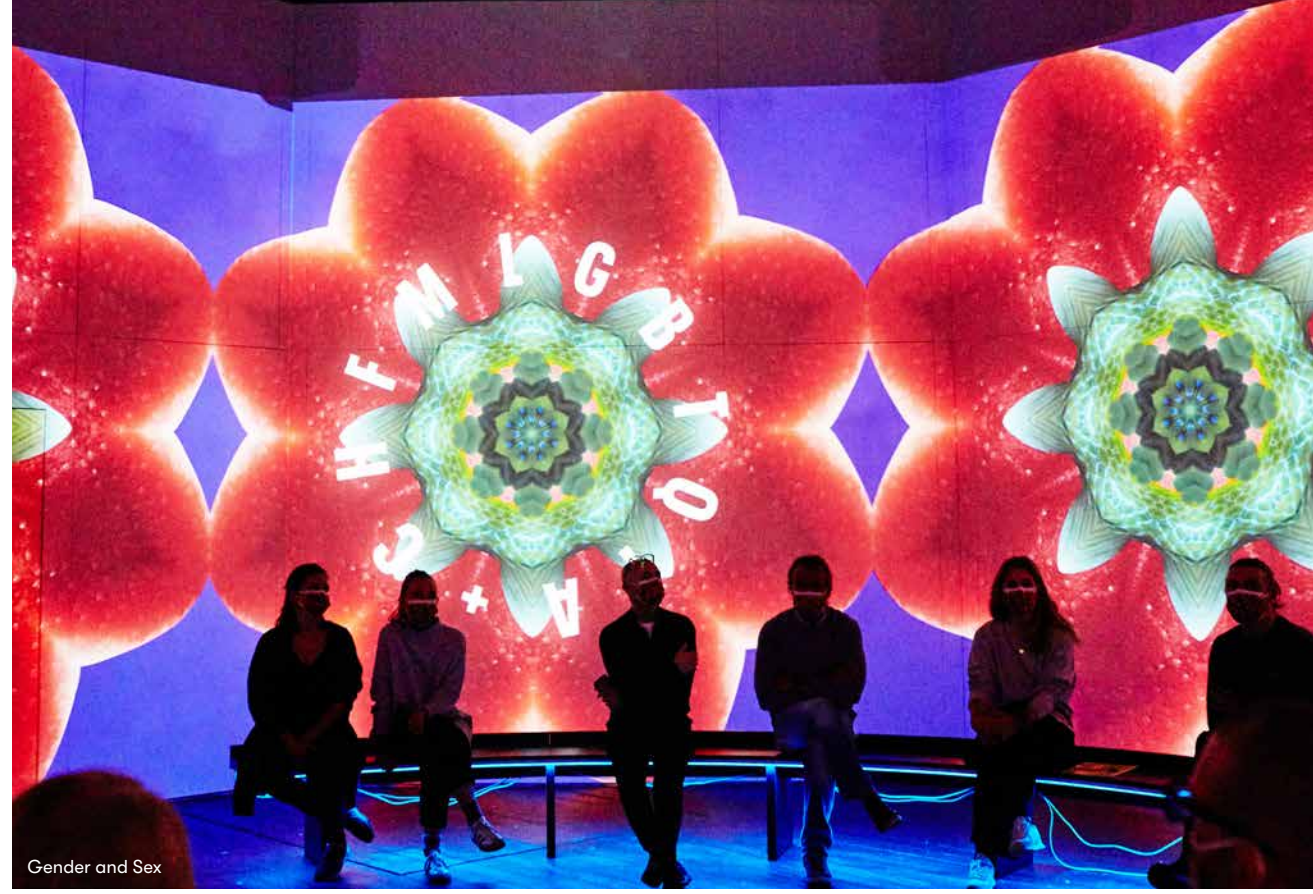


Nature

informative



Gender and Sex



Gender and Sex



Gender and Sex



Geld (Money)



Gender and Sex

poetic



# Was ist Natur?

What is nature?  
Quest-ce que la nature?

Die Natur ist ein Begriff, der in der  
Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Kunst  
verwendet wird. Er bezieht sich auf  
alles, was nicht von Menschenhand  
geschaffen ist. Die Natur ist ein  
unbegrenztes Feld der  
Erforschung und  
Entdeckung.



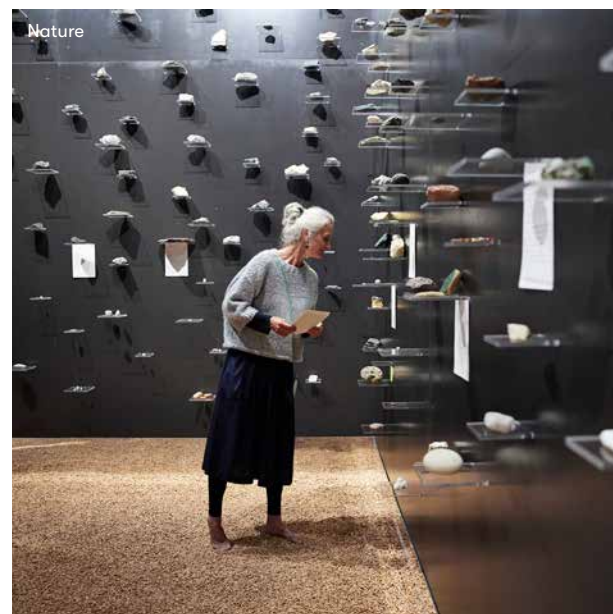




accessible



for everyone







Gender and Sex



Power Aargau



Nature



Nature

promoting dialogue

broadening horizons



Fake



Gender and Sex





Fake



Fake



Gender and Sex

inspiring



Nature

courageous



Gender and Sex



Nature









diverse



versatile



Gender and Sex





Streuholzgewässer Südpalme  
1990-2000  
Südpalme



A woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants, stands with her arms crossed, looking towards the right panel.



Regenwald-Abholzung Brasilien  
Degradation, Brazil  
Degradation, la Estia

A man with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and light-colored pants, stands with his back to the camera, looking at the right panel. He has his hands clasped behind his back and is wearing a white bag slung over his shoulder.

Other visitors are visible in the background, including a man in a green shirt and a woman with blonde hair.