



PRESS RELEASE

25 years of Museum Casa di Goethe in Rome

“Casa di Goethe – interventi”

23 March 2023, 11.00 Press preview

23 March 2023, 19.00 - 21.00 Opening “Casa di Goethe – interventi”

25 March 2023, 10.00 - 18.00 Open Day

The Museum **Casa di Goethe** in Rome is celebrating its 25th anniversary by opening up new perspectives on its permanent exhibition. Students from the Weißensee Art Academy Berlin were invited to design creative interventions to introduce contemporary takes and new observations into the presentation of the institution’s collections, thereby connecting the museum with contemporary society.

The new Director of the **Casa di Goethe**, Dr. Gregor H. Lersch, has been in office since April 2022. He sees his mission in reinvigorating and reexamining the role of the museum as a cultural link between Italy and Germany against the backdrop of European history and modern developments. In November last year, the **Casa di Goethe** cooperated with students on the Visual Communication program of the Weißensee Art Academy Berlin, who were invited to work together with on-site experts to analyze the museum and its collections. A workshop conducted with students from the “Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma” also integrated Roman and broader Italian perspectives into the conceptual process. The students developed a special formal vocabulary for the new exhibition elements and interventions. The “**Casa di Goethe interventi**” will be on display in the permanent exhibition of the museum from 24 March until the end of the year.

“The ‘**interventi**’ are an important first step in this transformation, linking Goethe’s Italian journey much more closely with the here and now. In the apartment in the Via del Corso, in which Goethe and other artists lived from 1786 to 1788, new, innovative perspectives on the Italian journey, the German enthusiasm for Italy, and the complexities of contemporary European history are being developed,” explains Gregor H. Lersch, the museum’s director. The ‘**interventi**’ can be experienced directly by visitors and are highly visible. It is just a short step from Goethe’s studies of nature to a tactile sensory cabinet, from his surviving travel descriptions of southern Italy as a contact zone to encounters with North Africa, or from historical travel guides to the Lonely Planet. Central questions concerning contemporary Europe are woven into the exhibition on Goethe’s life and times, such as the tense relationship between North and South, the question of the significance of women for Goethe, or the memory of National Socialism. In the ‘**interventi**’, from March 2023, the story of the Jewish father Guido Zabban will be told for the first time: he survived the German occupation in 1943/44 hidden in the mezzanine floor on Via del Corso 18.



Open Day Program on 25 March:

The Casa di Goethe will be opening its doors to its youngest visitors. To launch the special children's program, the anniversary will be marked with the workshop "Das geheimnisvolle Haus" (The House of Secrets) and tours for five to ten-year-olds will be available in German (11am) and Italian (12pm).

The 25th anniversary of the Museum Casa di Goethe is an opportunity to connect history with the future of the institution: former directors of the Casa di Goethe, Ursula Bongaerts (1997-2013) and Maria Gazzetti (2013-2022), will be in conversation with Gregor H. Lersch.

Museum "Casa di Goethe"

The "Museum Casa di Goethe" is the only German museum outside Germany. It is sponsored by the Arbeitskreis selbständiger Kultur- Institute e.V. (AsKI/Association of Independent Cultural Institutions) and financed by the German Federal Government Commission for Culture and Media. The permanent exhibition uses works of art and historical documents to tell the story of Goethe's trip to Italy and his time in Rome, as well as the significance of Italy for the history of German art and literature. In addition to original drawings and paintings by Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, among others, modern works such as the famous Goethe portrait by Andy Warhol are also on display. Temporary exhibitions link the reception of Italy and the tradition of the "Italian Journey" to our present day. In addition, the museum houses the most comprehensive library on Goethe's work in Italy thanks to the book collection of the publisher Richard W. Dorn; the building also houses the historical library of Deutscher Künstlerverein (German Artists' Association) and an apartment for scholarship holders.

Museum Director

Gregor H. Lersch has been Director of the "Museum Casa di Goethe" in Rome since April 2022. Previously, he was Director of Exhibitions and Curator at the Jewish Museum Berlin from 2016. He worked for the Martin-Gropius-Bau Berlin from 2005 to 2011 and realized international exhibitions for the HILTI Foundation. He was also a research fellow at the Europa University Viadrina Frankfurt/Oder, where he taught and conducted research in the Department for Art and Art Theory.

Current temporary exhibition

Until 9 April visitors can still see the exhibition "**Reise nach Italien XXI – Der Blick auf den Anderen / Viaggio in Italia XXI – Lo sguardo sull'altro**" (Journey to Italy XXI - Seeing the Other). The exhibition curated by Ludovico Pratesi presents works by eight artists who live and work either in Italy or in Germany. The exhibition brings their work into dialog: Francesco Arena, Guido Casaretto, Johanna Diehl, Esra Ersen, Silvia Giambrone, Benedikt Hipp, Christian Jankowski, Alessandro Piangiamore.

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