



**Gletscher
Garten
Luzern**

**Glacier
Garden
Lucerne**

**Jardin des
Glaciers
Lucerne**

Press release Glacier Garden Lucerne

Media wait period until Thursday, July 15, 2021, 12 p.m.

The new Felsenwelt in the Glacier Garden is a journey through time

Lucerne, July 15, 2021: After three years of construction, the Lucerne Glacier Garden will open the Felsenwelt as a new attraction for the public on Friday, July 16 at 1 pm. The underground tour and ascent to the newly developed Park is a spectacular museum extension through the mountain. A trip to the popular Lucerne Museum becomes a completely new overall experience. Scientific insights are ideally combined with sensual experiences in the museum ensemble. A visit to the Glacier Garden is a journey through time to the wonders of geology and nature, transmitted in the entire garden Park, and to be discovered.

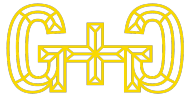
For three years, the Glacier Garden Lucerne was full of space-consuming, noisy construction machinery. Blasting, demolition, construction, and planting took place in a very confined space. Except for the completion of the Sandstone Pavilion for exhibitions, construction activity is now coming to an end. The Glacier Garden will open Felsenwelt to the public at 1 p.m. on Friday, July 16, 2021. The new attraction is an underground tour in the mountain with unique dramaturgy. Geological peculiarities of the Lucerne sandstone, stratifications and fracture systems reveal the primal forces that acted here over millions of years. Subtle illuminations on the rock form images of former landscapes with their flora and fauna. Here, earth history becomes a goose bump moment.

Immerse yourself in times gone by

The adventure of the journey through time starts at the museum entrance. You enter and receive a large-format, historic-looking explorer's map. It shows an overview of the Glacier Garden with all its old and new attractions. The Felsenwelt leads the public out of the park landscape. Those who enter the winding portal leave the daylight behind. Animated light displays lead the way. They reveal phenomena of the earth's history: there are rushing waves and falling leaves. Prehistoric fish scurry by. Galloping mammoths cross the path. In today's reality, they no longer exist. The course of time, however, has captured traces of such witnesses in stone, sometimes next to, sometimes layered on top of each other. It took the mighty forces of our earth's core for millions of years to fold these traces into the alpine rock.

Green oasis in the middle of the city

The gently sloping path leads deep into the mountain into a large cavern. Here, rainwater seeping in from the earth's surface collects and forms a lake. The water reacts upon the arrival of the public. A vortex is created that symbolizes the leap back in time to the present. From here, some steps lead upwards for about 30 meters to the Sommerau. As you climb, new perspectives into the vertical cavern continuously emerge. This part of the Felsenwelt is exposed to the weather. What is bare stone today will develop into a green garden courtyard with algae, mosses, and ferns. The exit leads to a previously inaccessible part on the site. The idyllic Sommerau extends the historic Park. On this rock terrace, guests can enjoy a view over Lucerne to the Alps. The path continues past the observation tower back to the central square between the glacial pots and the museum building. The vegetation combined with playful elements such as the "Schwyzerhüsli", the waterfall or the observation tower evoke images of the alpine landscape. With the renewed park landscape, the Glacier Garden has created a new oasis in the middle of the city. "The more generous space will delight school classes and families, who will be happy to stay with us for a little longer," says Andreas Burri, director of the Glacier Garden.



Harmonious connection of all areas of experience

The new Felsenwelt is also a masterpiece of architecture. The renowned architectural firm Miller & Maranta from Basel played a decisive role in the development of Felsenwelt. "We were fascinated by the idea of Felsenwelt as a time machine. It adds a new dimension to the overall experience. At the same time, this project made it possible to clarify the situation of the Swiss Chalet by demolishing additions and thus increasing the area of the park," Quintus Miller of Miller & Maranta explained the architectural concept. "This created the possibility of recasting the entire park as a large landscape garden and dividing it into areas that are coherent in terms of content," Miller added. The entire planning and construction process was constructively accompanied and financially supported by the Department for the Preservation of Historical Monuments of the Canton of Lucerne.

Craftsmanship and architecture

New, striking structures complement the existing "follies" in the historic Alpine Park. There is the winding portal to Felsenwelt, cast in artificial stone. The newly designed entrance to the Mirror Maze and the exit from Felsenwelt is pyramid shaped. The filigree pattern in the cast concrete is the result of skillful stonemasonry. In the vertical garden courtyard, bare rock is combined with precisely fitted artificial stone walls and forms.

Amazement and Adventure

"Earth history and nature are the core themes in the Glacier Garden. These aspects dominate many big questions of our time," explains Andreas Burri. "The unifying element in all exhibition areas is the concept of time. Traces of time can be discovered throughout the area, many ancient, others more recent and unmistakably made by us humans. With our new mediation concept, we abolish the chronology of time. In the style of Jules Verne's "Journey to the Center of the Earth", our guests experience a journey to the center of time," explains Burri. In addition to scientific findings, the Glacier Garden offers sensory experiences at every corner. Inside the Felsenwelt, there's the warmth in winter and the coolness in summer. And why not caress the current ripples on the damp rock faces, while dreaming of the sea or looking for Professor Stein's Mountain dog Bönni, who has a starring role in the new children's quiz? Visitors will experience the Glacier Garden very individually, depending on their knowledge and will to interpret: this way, the almost 150-year-old Glacier Garden remains true to itself, it allows a variety of experiences and impressions, offers postcard motifs and creates personal memories.

Download photos of the Felsenwelt: [LINK](#)

Caption: In Felsenwelt, the rock recounts events of the last 20 million years. Parts of this history swirl as projections like sand over the rock.

Information and more photos can also be found directly on the Glacier Garden website:

https://gletschergarten.ch/de/ueber_uns/medien

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Additional information to the press release "The new Felsenwelt in the Glacier Garden is a journey through time" from July 15, 2021

Financing

The Glacier Garden has invested a good 20 million francs in the large-scale renovation project. The canton and city of Lucerne each contributed three million francs. The Albert Koechlin Foundation Lucerne was the project's pioneer with its early pledge of 6 million francs. In total, numerous foundations and over 500 private individuals donated a sum of nearly 14 million francs. "We are very proud and grateful to have reached 99% of the fundraising goal of CHF 20 million, especially since the Covid crisis made it virtually impossible for us to make the final spurt in fundraising activities. Finances meant a lot of effort, and we have been rewarded", explains Corinne Fischer, President of the Glacier Garden Foundation Lucerne.

Preservation of historical monuments

The project was also supported in all phases by the preservation of historical monuments in the Canton of Lucerne. With contributions of 347,000 Swiss francs each from the federal government and the Canton, the conversion of the Swiss House and the restoration of the landscape garden were substantially supported by the preservation of historical monuments.

Scenography Felsenwelt

In the Felsenwelt the key chapters of the earth's history are thematized: from the formation of the rock at the bottom of the primordial sea; from the subtropical sandy beach that the Lucerne region was at that time; from the formation of the Alps; from the last Ice Age; finally, from the arrival of man, who used the sandstone, among other things, to build the city. Then the visitors reach the Felsensee and with it the present, the crossroad between the past and the future. Here, at the center of time, the water flows into the depths in an unfathomable vortex: the powers of nature are unstoppable, and any human presence is only brief and ephemeral. The subsequent ascent to the earth's surface leads through the future. Guests discover a cosmophone with which they can send a very personal message to eternity.

(For more on the scenography of the individual exhibition areas, see [Supplement 1 \(g\)](#) /Velvet Creative Office, Lucerne. wolfgang.moehrle@velvet.ch)

Architectural description

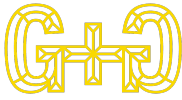
The realized project clarified the situation of the Swiss House by removing the annexes. By including the Sommerau, the area of the park could be considerably enlarged: this created the possibility of redefining the park as a large landscape garden and dividing it into coherent areas. Next to the Swiss House, a central square was created from which the various exhibition sections are accessible: the glacier pots, the mule track to the Sommerau, the entrances to the Felsenwelt, to the Swiss House and to the new Sandstone Pavilion in the north.

The strong spatial atmosphere in Felsenwelt is shaped by the predominant material, stone, and the more elementary experiences of light and dark, confinement and expanse, sound, and silence. The geometry and location of the spaces are oriented to the prevailing stratification of the sandstone, which is out of alignment due to the folding of the Alps and the existing gaps. This leads to oblique cross-sections of corridors and caverns, which enhances the specific perception of space relationship.

(More on the architectural concept in [Supplement 2 \(g\)](#) / Miller & Maranta, Basel. von_aarburg@millermaranta.ch)

Garden description

The garden design in the spirit of the historical landscape garden is a scenographic staging that relates present and history: in relation to each other materials, arrangements, views, and insights, but above all the vegetation span



the arc from today's landscape to primordial seas and primeval vegetation, and thus back to geology as a theme of the garden. Species native here before the ice ages, such as the primeval sequoia, ginkgo, and amber tree, mingle with those considered native today. As a recurring element, they link the various garden areas together and carry the dimension of geological time periods into the garden via the vegetation. In selected places alpine plants complete the scenery.

(More on the garden description in [Supplement 3 \(g\)](#) / Müller Illien Landscape Architects, Zurich. r.illien@muellerillien.ch)

Geology

Zircons and flow ripples reveal the age of the sandstone. Recent investigations indicate that many mineral particles in the sandstone were formed by magmatic processes about 300 million years ago. Some, however, are much older with an age of no less than 1 billion years. Thus, the journey through time in the Glacier Garden is extended by whole new dimensions.

(Article by Dr. Franz Schenker, [Schweizer Strahler 2/21](#) and 3/21, [Supplement 4 extra \(g\)](#))

Facts and figures on the Glacier Garden Lucerne

- Sponsorship: Lucerne Glacier Garden Foundation (until 2008 Amrein-Troller Foundation)
- Autumn 1872: Discovery of the first glacier pots by Wilhelm Amrein-Troller
- May 1873: Opening of the Glacier Garden Lucerne
- 1898: Purchase and installation of the Mirror Maze built for the 1896 National Exhibition in Geneva
- Over 14 million guests since the foundation of the museum
- Number of visitors in the last 10 years: 115'000 per year (2/3 Switzerland, 1/3 abroad)
- Number of visitors in 2020: 55'000
- Employees: 20 (total 1100 full-time equivalents) plus temporary staff
- Annual operating budget: 1,5 Mio.
- Self-financing ratio: > 95

Information and more photos can also be found directly on the website of the Glacier Garden:

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