



Prof. Dr. Brigitte Franzen, Photo: Ruth Neubert

Vita Brigitte Franzen

Brigitte Franzen studied art history, European ethnology, German studies and sociology at the universities of Karlsruhe, Vienna and Marburg an der Lahn and completed her doctorate in 2000 on the relationship between nature and art using the example of artists' gardens. The book "Die vierte Natur" was published in 2000 by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König and quickly sold out. The topics of landscape theory, public space, architecture and the history of ideas about nature appear again and again in her academic and curatorial work. In addition to numerous teaching activities, Brigitte Franzen has supervised around 100 exhibition projects since 1993. From 2004 to 2008, she worked as a curator for

contemporary art at the Westfälisches Landesmuseum in Münster and curated the skulptur projekte münster 07 from 2004 to 2007. From 2009 to 2015, Brigitte Franzen was director of the Ludwig Forum for International Art in Aachen. In 2015, she became the Chairwoman and CEO of the Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation with 28 partner museums worldwide, including the Museum Ludwig, the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum and the Museums of Asian and Applied Arts in Cologne, as well as the mumok in Vienna, the Ludwig Muzéum in Budapest and the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin.

She sees her curatorial work as "research-based curating": in 2019, as curator of the Triennale in Fellbach, she focused on the anthropological dimension of art and its creation - in her "Museum of Curiosity" created there, numerous contemporary positions were placed in relation to 40,000-year-old early sculpture finds. In 2021/22, she curated the exhibition "The Cool and the Cold" at the Gropius Bau Berlin, a first-time juxtaposition of US and Soviet painting during the Cold War. Since October 2020, Franzen has been responsible for the Senckenberg Nature Museum Frankfurt for four years. Under her aegis, 19 exhibitions were held. Visitor numbers increased by 13% to 460,000 compared to the pre-corona period. The museum was able to expand through cooperative projects such as "Forests. From Romanticism to the Future" and participatory formats such as the "AHA? Research Workshop" to attract new groups of visitors. Franzen also focused on the structural development of the museum, from the new store and the renovation of important museum areas and collections (e.g. the famous Anaconda) to the introduction of so-called "Freiräume", new recreational areas in the museum.