Bundesgartenschau Mannheim (1975): Sustainable Urban Development through a Horticultural Festival

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Bundesgartenschau Mannheim (1975): Sustainable Urban Development through a Horticultural Festival

A Thesis Presented for the Bachelor of Arts & Bachelor of Architecture Degrees
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I. Introduction & Historical Overview

1. Introduction

“There’s nothing like it in North America, this biennial Bundesgartenschau in Germany -- in size, scope or the nature of its planning…”

Though written in 1982, this statement from visitor Nancy Denig Watkins still depicts the immensity of a Bundesgartenschau (BUGA), which is a fairly unique German phenomenon. Bundesgartenschau translates to ‘German Federal Garden Show,’ but this translation captures only a fraction of a BUGA (the standard acronym for Bundesgartenschau) and only a portion of its impact and goals. A more accurate paraphrase of the concept, also offered by Watkins Denig, is “a ‘floral Olympics.’” This paraphrase implies the substantial planning required beforehand and the intended regional benefits after a BUGA’s conclusion. A BUGA is a distinctly German creation; it is rooted in the rich history of German horticulture and environmentalism. And while grounded in this history, a BUGA’s focus is on the future and the urgent needs of society, namely those of the sustainability of that society. There is much more to a Bundesgartenschau than pretty flowers.

In the second sub-chapter, I will delve into the history of horticultural exhibitions and explain how this history led to the modern BUGA concept. I will then in the third sub-chapter explain — in very general terms — the inner workings and process of hosting a Bundesgartenschau. In the final sub-chapter, I will focus on the significance of considering aesthetics within the context of planning a BUGA and on how aesthetics may contribute to one of a BUGA’s core missions: to be an impetus for sustainable regional development.

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2 Ibid.
2. The History of World and Horticultural Exhibitions

World exhibitions are a relatively new phenomenon that began in the mid-nineteenth century. A world expo’s primary goal has always been to display and disseminate information about the world to a broader audience. Horticultural exhibitions also aim for this goal, but they are more focused on horticulture-specific information and appeal. The idea of creating BUGAs stemmed from these historic exhibitions, and BUGAs continue to use these historic exhibitions as precedents for modern-day application.

2.1. World Exhibitions

The first World Exhibition took place in 1851, in Hyde Park of London, England, officially titled the “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations.” The masterminds behind this first World Expo, primarily the British monarchy, sought a stage to display their nation’s achievements and to compare those achievements with those of the world’s nations. This stage, or rather a set of layered stages, was located in the Crystal Palace.

The Crystal Palace was an invention in its time. Designed by horticulturalist Joseph Paxton, the building resembled a modern greenhouse. Its facade was made entirely of glass draped around a structural steel frame, and both materials (glass panels and steel beams) were manufactured as standardized parts. These standardized building components were novelties of the era and greatly reduced construction time. Paxton’s design for the Crystal Palace was documented in drawings and sold as posters and postcards (see Figure 1), and through this widespread public promotion, the Crystal Palace became a cultural icon of the Era of Expositions.3 4

Though designed like a modern greenhouse, the Crystal Palace did not house a horticultural

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exhibition, rather it featured a cultural and industrial exhibition. Flowers and plants served merely as decoration in these early World Expos, and it was not until the late nineteenth century that horticulture-specific exhibitions gained recognition in Europe, particularly in Germany.⁵

![Figure 1. Postcard from the 1851 World Expo at the Crystal Palace](image)

### 2.2. Horticultural Exhibitions

Way into the nineteenth century, nobility across Western Europe flourished through the feudal system, and with their wealth, nobles created grandiose gardens surrounding their palaces and took pride in horticulture.⁶ But in the nineteenth-century, gardens were no longer exclusive to nobility. A growing class of self-made wealthy citizens, capable of owning and maintaining their

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own gardens, began practicing horticulture. Alongside serving as plots for subsistence crops, citizen gardens were sites for experimentation and scientific inquiry in horticulture.\footnote{Lambert, Tim. “19th Century Gardening.” \textit{A History of Gardening}, 2020, www.localhistories.org/gardening.html.} In particular,
aesthetic-driven experiments led to plant-breeding competitions. German historian Frank Uekoetter explains that as these competitions gained popularity in the nineteenth century, they became part of cultures, and regional governments took interest in them. As regional interest grew so did the desire for a more global-reaching horticulture festival. In the spirit of World Expos, the first international garden exhibition was held in Hamburg in 1869.

While the International Garden Exhibition in Hamburg drew an international audience, reoccurring German Garden Shows catered to more regional audiences. Early twentieth century German horticulture exhibitions remained more akin to marketplaces than World Expos. At these regional expos, one could find vendors displaying and selling new hybrids of plants. The plants were primarily flowers selected for their aesthetic appeal, and vendors shared knowledge about growing and producing these beautiful plants. With their narrower focus and audiences, these regional exhibitions were quite popular in the German territories (see Figure 2). Many German federal states soon began to organize their own annual exhibitions, so that occasionally several of them even happened simultaneously. German horticulture expositions would remain on an annual regional trajectory until the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

2.3. Bundesgartenschauen: A Brief Historical Overview

Cultural life was put on hold during World War I and World War II, and in the wars’ aftermath, the whole of Europe was in total disrepair. Left in rubble, both physically and psychologically, Germans sought to reconstruct their cities and culture. In retrospect, one could argue that this

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10 The current BUGA concept stems from major events in the late nineteenth century—the Hamburg International Horticultural Exhibition of 1896, for example. And “even these [events] derived from a prior tradition of garden shows that existed in German Towns.” (Theokas, Andrew C. *Grounds for Review: The Garden Festival in Urban Planning and Design*. Liverpool University Press, 2004. Pg. 29.)
interruption gave Germans the freedom to experiment with forward-thinking urban development. Within this overall context, horticultural exhibitions were deemed important to German culture because of their ability to add green space to urban development. Therefore, horticultural exhibitions were created to support the reconstruction of urban areas decimated during the wars.¹²

To address this new and pressing need, the concept of a Bundesgartenschau (BUGA) was formalized in Hannover, Germany in 1951. The then-established BUGA concept echoes the pre-war framework for regional horticulture exhibitions with the following distinct difference: BUGAs are federally organized events and are intentionally planned to be hosted in different locations so that, over time, they move across Germany. The primary functions of a BUGA are to serve as a horticultural marketplace and to foster urban development.¹³ This concept has been strictly maintained, as seen in the following timeline and map of all the BUGAs held and planned in Germany (see Figures 3 & 4).

Figure 3. Author's graphic, Timeline of *Bundesgartenschau* locations and themes, adapted from the official DGB Website, https://www.bundesgartenschau.de/.
Figure 4. Author's graphic, Map of *Bundesgartenschauen* locations by theme, adapted from the official DBG Website, https://www.bundesgartenschau.de/.
3. *Bundesgartenschau: Concept, Infrastructure, & Framework*

The BUGA concept was initiated with a distinct set of guidelines in 1951, and these guidelines, with certain adaptations and revisions, have defined the structure of all BUGAs and allowed for the thematic variation seen across the timeline of BUGAs (Fig. 3). In all *Bundesgartenschau*en, a distinct public-private organization is created to facilitate the funding, planning, and implementation of a BUGA in a given location.\(^{14}\)

3.1. The Overall *Bundesgartenschau* Concept

Though each BUGA is a unique undertaking, conceptual underpinnings are found in all BUGAs. Each BUGA is perceived as phases called Pre-BUGA, BUGA Festival, and Post-BUGA, and this section will detail these conceptual underpinnings as they appear in each phase of a BUGA.

The Pre-BUGA phase begins with the selection of a BUGA location — a German city or region — by a BUGA selection committee, consisting of members of the *Deutsche Bundesgartenschau- Gesellschaft mbH* (DBG, German Federal Garden Show Society). The location of a BUGA determines much of its character and thus also its impact on its surrounding region and Germany as a whole. Hosting one of these exhibitions is an enormous undertaking for any location, and therefore, the host must be thoroughly vetted by a national selection committee. To be considered as a host location, the city/region must submit a proposal explaining why they are fit to host a BUGA to the German Federal Garden Show Society (DBG) — who makes the final location selection.\(^{15}\)\(^{16}\) Most BUGAs receive a mixture of federal and private donor funding, and the resulting multi-year public-private organization looks different for each BUGA, depending

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\(^{15}\) BUGA’s may operate across distributed sites, depending on the location’s needs. For example, 21st century regional BUGAs operate across distributed sites and cities while earlier 20th century BUGAs operated on large open spaces.

on its respective funding structure.\textsuperscript{17} Prior to 1993, BUGAs were negotiated between the locations that aspired to host a \textit{Bundesgartenschau} and the \textit{Zentralverband Gartenbau e.V.} (ZVG), the German Horticulture Association, which coordinated vendors and events for the BUGA Festival.\textsuperscript{18} The ZVG’s interests were primarily horticultural, and this horticultural focus had great influence on the sustainable development initiatives related to BUGAs.\textsuperscript{19}

After a location has been selected to host a BUGA, the local organizers work with the German Federal Garden Show Society (DBG) to establish designated Festival sites within the city/region. With 7-10 years for Pre-BUGA planning and construction, the selected location has ample time to prepare for the BUGA Festival. Once the Festival sites are chosen, design competitions are held, and these competitions are a key element in the sustainable development efforts of each BUGA location, as they spark public interest and foster aesthetically pleasing design entries.\textsuperscript{20}

In these competitions for landscape designs and other infrastructural elements, winning designs are selected based on criteria related to ecological and economic performance as well as aesthetics. Another criterion is that the designed space must, first, function as a day-to-day greenspace and, second, as BUGA Festival grounds.\textsuperscript{21, 22} Once a site-design competition is held and a winning design is chosen, the site-planning process becomes more nuanced and the

\textsuperscript{19} Beginning in 1993, the newly formed DBG adheres more closely to the UN principles of sustainability and has further transformed BUGAs since its inception into more regionally sustainable ventures (rather than a focus just on horticulture).
\textsuperscript{20} Competitions for projects are considered normal practice in Germany for publicly funded, tax-sponsored landscape and architecture work (Schmidt-Bäumler, 42).
\textsuperscript{22} This slower, drawn-out timeline diverges greatly from its origins in the 1851 London World Exhibition, which was assembled in a matter of months. This is due to the different premises of the exhibitions.
resulting designs (park spaces, exhibition halls, etc.) are constructed. Physical construction is the largest cost of a BUGA, and therefore steps to make it more affordable and sustainable are considered of high importance.

The Pre-BUGA phase timeline begins many years in advance both to leave enough time for physical construction and because a BUGA Festival is a celebration of horticulture — and plants do not sprout in a day. The actual Pre-BUGA groundwork construction generally begins five years before the BUGA Festival. This length of time can be considered another measure that fosters sustainability; construction is not rushed so that the landscape can be thoughtfully crafted for the Festival. This stretched-out timeline fosters ecologically sustainable development, as well, since the plants are given time to acclimate to their site’s climate, hydrology, and soil composition. These plants are meant to live beyond the Festival’s conclusion and giving them this time to acclimate ensures that they can adapt to their surroundings before and after the stress of the Festival.

In addition to building the Pre-BUGA physical infrastructure, there is also an attempt to build an attached social and cultural infrastructure, facilitated through the multi-year public-private organization that facilitates Pre-BUGA planning and construction. This public-private organization makes conscious efforts to raise public awareness and thus attempts to achieve public buy-in for the BUGA Festival. Public engagement is critical because a BUGA is reliant on public funding and sponsorships, and to entice visitors, most public engagement takes place through marketing campaigns.

Pre-BUGA phase marketing campaigns are also key to sustaining excitement and anticipation in the hyper-local community. Dealing with construction disturbances is often a stressful time for nearby residents, but when it is in anticipation of a known event, the disturbance can be deemed worth the inconvenience. Funding and site-design decisions are oftentimes kept

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away from the public eye, so it is important to engage the prospective BUGA Festival audience through other more tangible methods, such as brochures, Pre-Festival giveaways, and, in more recent times, social media. Additionally, BUGA organizers strive to build on the existing socio-cultural infrastructure through the process of engaging local citizens and organizations.

Once selected to host a BUGA, the organizers are on a strict timeline. There is no flexibility in the start date for a BUGA Festival, that is always chosen years in advance. To meet this start date, the development of the Pre-BUGA physical, social, and cultural infrastructures accelerates towards completion as the opening day of the Festival approaches:

- Physical movement of a new organic topsoil layer and plants is begun 1-2 years in advance (so that the plants are matured in time for the BUGA).
- Also starting 1-2 years in advance, pre-exhibitions and completed buildings are opened to the public.
- In the months leading up to the Festival, the list of participating vendors is finalized, and exhibition stall layouts are established.
- Marketing and festival ticket sales efforts increase rapidly as opening day approaches.

Once this Pre-BUGA phase setup is complete, the organizers plan for the BUGA Festival to take on both a culturally significant and aesthetically pleasing form. Scientific knowledge of horticulture and landscape design is not required to enjoy a BUGA Festival — only an appreciation for nature and aesthetics.

BUGA Festivals are always six months in duration, spanning the three growing seasons (late Spring, Summer, early Fall) of the local region. Throughout the six-month Festival, visitors are greeted by tremendous floral displays and entertained with many events that take place alongside these horticultural demonstrations. Upon the Festival’s conclusion, the Post-BUGA

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The phase begins; the temporary Festival structures are disassembled, and the planned long-term infrastructure and management strategies are implemented. As seen in the graphic below (Figure 5), the Post-BUGA phase extends indefinitely, as the overarching goal of a BUGA is to bring sustainable long-term development to that region.

![Figure 5. Graphic depicting the three phases of a BUGA on a timeline](image)

### 3.2. BUGA Sustainable Infrastructure Development & Phasing Framework

When analyzing the multidimensionality of sustainability within a BUGA, it is best to look at the infrastructural components separately. Each BUGA aims at fostering sustainable development through physical, social, and cultural infrastructures that will be defined as follows:

- **Sustainable development of the physical infrastructure:** transformations of the landscape and built environments in sustainable ways
- **Sustainable development of the social infrastructure:** catalytic actions that spur further economic growth and draw people into a region/city, making that location's growth more sustainable and the location more aesthetically pleasing
- **Sustainable development of the cultural infrastructure:** methods for successfully sustaining and/or heightening the distinct culture and traditions of the chosen region/city

These three infrastructural development goals are key to understanding how BUGAs work and are useful in examining the overall impacts of a BUGA on regional development. In this context,

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25 These three categories of infrastructures were developed based on the description of the BUGA Mannheim events and architectural elements provided in the reference “Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. *Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975.*”
it is important to note that these infrastructural development goals are *not* equally shared by each BUGA; their thematic foci vary greatly between BUGAs (see Figure 3). Therefore, these three infrastructural layers are useful in depicting the nuances of a single BUGA’s sustainable infrastructure.

### 4. Bundesgartenschauen & Sustainability

One of the core concepts established for all BUGAs in 1951 is the sustainable development of German cities and regions, and it is therefore necessary to briefly address the historical context and definition of sustainability and its German-language counterpart, *Nachhaltigkeit*.

#### 4.1. Nachhaltigkeit & Sustainability: Tracing the Origins of a Term

The concept of sustainability was first negotiated in Germany in the early 18th century. In 1713, nobleman Hans Carl von Carlowitz, a German accountant and forester, published “Sylvicultura Oeconomica,” in which he used the adjective *nachhaltend* to describe the method of sustainable forestry, which can be summarized as follows: one should only cut down as many trees as can be replaced. Thus, von Carlowitz coined the concept of sustainable yield (*nachhaltiger Ertrag*), and as his paper circulated among foresters, *nachhaltiger Ertrag* was adopted by the wider European forestry community as an important parameter for planning. Later, this concept of sustainable yield (*Nachhaltigkeit*) was rendered in English as “Sustainability.” In 1987, the UN Commission brought the concept of sustainability to the attention of the world by adopting it as a method to save the planet from human greed. The often-cited definition written by the United

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26 *Nachhaltend* is a compound German word, composed of the preposition *nach-* meaning “after” & the verb *halten*, meaning “to hold,” which give a combined meaning of “to hold after.”


28 Ibid., Pg. 6-8.

29 Two words separated by language, sustainability and *Nachhaltigkeit* refer to the same foundational concept, and they will, therefore, now be simplified to one term: the English language version.
Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as the ability “to ensure that it (humanity) meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Defined in this manner, sustainability applies not only to forest management, but is also applied to political, economic, and ecological actions. Aiming at any form of sustainable development demands responsible decision-making that keeps in mind the needs of posterity.

With the demand for sustainable development rising to global prominence in the UN Brundtland Commission report in 1987 and also in the earlier *Grenzen des Wachstums* Club of Rome report in 1972, ‘sustainability’ has become a widely understood and adopted concept, but along with this development, the term’s original meaning as perceived in these reports has been broadly stretched and applied within many different contexts and areas. Having so many applications has diluted the term’s meaning and opened up a multitude of often contradictory notions when discussing the concept of sustainability. It is important to acknowledge the use of sustainability as a buzzword today and to provide a clear definition when using this term.

### 4.2. Possible Ties Between Sustainability & Aesthetics in the Context of BUGAs

Sustainability has played a key role in the planning of BUGAs since their inception in 1951. When discussing sustainability and BUGAs, it is important to note that there are distinct periods of BUGAs:

- **1951–1965:** Parks as a component of the post-war reconstruction in Germany
- **1967–1993:** Green renovations/new sites for local recreation and adventure
- **1995–2007:** Urban development in new states, land-use conversion projects
- **2009–2015:** Ecological upgrades in cities--daylighting water sources

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2017–2031: “Green in the City,” decade-long regional projects

Each period’s focus is determined based on the social pressures of that time. Although these periods are clearly delineated for BUGAs, they are open-ended and do not prescribe specific measures that are aimed at ensuring a sustainable development for each event. Nonetheless, a BUGA’s success is measured by how the BUGA Festival fosters the sustainable long-term development of a region, and I argue that much of this long-term success is also determined by a BUGA Festival’s aesthetic appeal.

The tangible benefits of intertwining aesthetics and sustainability have, until recently, received little attention. Though aesthetics are rarely used as performance metrics, Elizabeth Meyer, American professor of landscape architecture, convincingly argues that “sustaining beauty” is vital for successful sustainable development in her 2008 journal article titled “Sustaining Aesthetics: The Performance of Aesthetics. A Manifesto in Three Parts.” With a clear set of principles, Meyer demonstrates the pertinence of aesthetic considerations, and interestingly, her theory seems to serve as a suitable analytical tool to determine how and why BUGAs are successful. BUGAs are comprised of many aesthetic choices, and examining one BUGA through Meyer’s principles — retrospectively — can reveal the innerworkings of how BUGA aesthetics contribute to sustainable development. Meyer’s principles of aesthetic performance will serve as important touchstones for discussions on sustainability and aesthetics in the subsequent chapter, focusing on and providing an analysis of the 1975 BUGA in Mannheim.

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II. **Bundesgartenschau Mannheim (1975)**

Though my research spans across decades and looks at many different BUGAs, this thesis chapter will analyze the 1975 *Bundesgartenschau* in Mannheim (abbreviated as BUGA-MA) as a distinct example of how a BUGA can instigate sustainable development. BUGA-MA was the most-visited BUGA of all preceding BUGAs and has had a positive, long-lasting impact on the city of Mannheim and the surrounding region. It is, therefore, an interesting proposition to analyze BUGA-MA through the lens of sustainability, examining how BUGA-MA was constructed — physically, socially, and culturally — and in how far aesthetic considerations contributed to this type of long-term sustainable development.

In this chapter, the sub-chapters are chronologically broken down into the Pre-BUGA, BUGA Festival, and Post-BUGA phases of BUGA-MA. Each sub-chapter will first outline the specific actions, events, and infrastructures during that BUGA-MA phase. In addition to this background information, each sub-chapter will also aim at analyzing if there is a correlation between the aesthetic appearance of exhibitions and the long-term sustainable positive impact on the region.

1. **Pre-Bundesgartenschau Mannheim Phase**

![Figure 6. Author's graphic, highlighting the Pre-BUGA phase](image)

Before the BUGA Mannheim Festival could be held, a massive groundwork had to be laid. This groundwork included not only the distinct physical infrastructure but also the social and cultural infrastructure of BUGA-MA. This sub-chapter will highlight the key components of the Pre-BUGA...
Mannheim phase and assess whether these components fostered sustainable development for the region.

1.1. BUGA Location, Site, & Design Selection in Mannheim

From the history behind BUGA-MA, it is clear that BUGA-MA’s presence was highly anticipated in the region surrounding Mannheim long before the BUGA Festival in 1975. Mannheim initially began proposing to hold a BUGA during the first BUGA period (1951 to 1965), which had a focus on rebuilding the war-torn cities of Germany. The city submitted an application for the 1957 BUGA but eventually withdrew, and BUGA 1957 was hosted by the city of Cologne (see Figure 3). During the second BUGA period (1967 to 1993), which focused on constructing green spaces for recreation, Mannheim submitted a new proposal to host the 1977 BUGA, but in 1968 Stuttgart was chosen as the site for the 1977 Festival instead. However, Karlsruhe — which was set to host the 1975 BUGA — withdrew from hosting in December of 1968, and as Mannheim was already pushing to host a BUGA, the city was invited to host BUGA 1975. Once chosen as the 1975 BUGA location in late 1968, BUGA Mannheim organizers worked with the Zentralverband Gartenbau e.V. (ZVG, German Horticultural Association) to identify two inner-city sites and set up a multi-year public-private organization. The Pre-BUGA phase for the 1975 Festival in Mannheim was thus shortened to seven years which meant that everything prior to the Festival itself had to be done on a very tight schedule.35

In Mannheim, preliminary BUGA site studies were carried out by engineer Richard Grebe from Nuremberg and horticulture director Robert Murb from Karlsruhe.36 By having both men — an engineer and a horticulturalist — lead the site studies, BUGA-MA organizers began the site-design process with both quantitative and qualitative measurements, assessing the sites’

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potentials for both natural landscapes and prospective built environments. Together, Grebe and Murb created a site-design competition that intended to revitalize and rebuild the parks of inner-city Mannheim, which had been badly damaged during WWII.\textsuperscript{37}

From their preliminary studies, Grebe and Murb outlined two sites for BUGA-MA: the pre-existing \textit{Herzogenriedpark} and \textit{Luisenpark}.\textsuperscript{38} According to Grebe and Murb, \textit{Herzogenriedpark} was to be developed in a “more city-planning oriented” manner, and \textit{Luisenpark} was to become “a city park designed for strolling” and enjoyment of the outdoors.\textsuperscript{39} These intended end-use goals relate back to the overarching goal of a BUGA — to stimulate long-term sustainable development in a region — as the parks would serve these intended end-uses long after the BUGA Festival’s conclusion.

\textbf{Figure 7. Rahmenplan (Master Plan for) Luisenpark BUGA-MA 1975}

\textsuperscript{37} Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975.
\textsuperscript{38} It was an increasingly common trend to have multiple sites for a BUGA, as cities were being rebuilt and large open spaces becoming more fragmented and absorbed into the built environment.
\textsuperscript{39} Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975, Pg. 42.
After defining the intended end-use for these parks, two separate design competitions were held, and several landscape architects were invited to submit site-design proposals.\textsuperscript{40} \textsuperscript{41} In the end, three co-winning landscape architects were contracted for \textit{Herzogenriedpark}, and a winning landscape architect was contracted for \textit{Luisenpark}.\textsuperscript{42} Once contracted, the landscape

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., Pg. 42.
\textsuperscript{41} Competitions for projects are considered normal practice in Germany for publicly funded, tax-sponsored landscape and architecture work (Schmidt-Bäumler, 42).
\textsuperscript{42} Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975, Pg. 42.
architects could finalize their designs (see Figures 7 & 8), and physical construction of the BUGA sites could begin.

1.2. Constructing the Infrastructure of BUGA-MA

After the multi-year organization for all on-site planning was established, landscape architects were selected, and site designs were created, the Pre-BUGA physical groundwork could be laid. First, the two parks’ topographies were drastically changed. Soil was moved across the sites to create mounds and enlarge lakes, and in addition, fresh topsoil was brought into the sites to improve soil quality for new vegetation. Alongside this massive movement of soil, BUGA-MA designers preserved and augmented unique features of the existing landscape, such as the Kutzerweiher (a large lake) and communications tower in Luisenpark. Additionally, the remaining trees that had survived the war bombing efforts were preserved in both parks.

Another key aspect of physical groundwork constructed during the Pre-BUGA-MA phase were the newly erected structures for BUGA-MA 1975. Tying into the traditions of World Expos, BUGAs often feature provocative, futuristic buildings that showcase experimentation and beauty in design, both of which attract more visitor interest and funding. In Mannheim, many exciting new structures, both permanent and temporary, were added to the existing parks. Examples of BUGA-MA’s provocative structures include the above-ground gondola, named the Aerobus, which connected the two parks, the Mannheim Multihalle, a lightweight, latticed grid-shell structure by famed architect Frei Otto, and the Herzogenried-Siedlung, a tall housing development aimed at green living.

44 For example of topographic preservation, see 2001 BUGA’s use of existing site berms.
46 Ibid.
1.3. The Multi-Year Organization & Pre-BUGA Marketing

The multi-year organization for all on-site planning was created primarily to facilitate the involvement of existing local businesses and stakeholders who are essential to a BUGA’s widespread appeal. During the Pre-BUGA phase, BUGA-MA organizers provided financial encouragement to bolster existing businesses and rebuild garden allotments within Luisenpark.
and Herzogenriedpark, encouraging citizens to utilize them.\textsuperscript{47} Such interactions align nicely with the overarching BUGA goal for sustainable development of an existing city and region.\textsuperscript{48}

Pre-BUGA phase marketing also served as cultural infrastructure by creating a region-specific brand for the BUGA-MA Festival and reinvigorating the existing culture and community. Pre-BUGA marketing occurred through an assortment of designs on print materials, including the BUGA mascot, the \textit{Jäger aus Kurpfalz} (hunter from Kurpfalz). This mascot was based on a porcelain figure displayed in Mannheim’s Reiss Museum, and the porcelain figure was designed and crafted in the 18th-century in Mannheim.\textsuperscript{49} For BUGA-MA, renowned German comedian and graphic designer Loriot (Bernhard-Viktor Christoph-Carl von Bülow) transformed the 18th-century \textit{Jäger} into a joyful hunter clad in green clothing, pointing forwards, and shooting a friendly flower from his yellow gun (see Figure 10).\textsuperscript{50} The \textit{Jäger aus Kurpfalz} would take on different forms during the BUGA Festival — from posters to human mascots — and Loriot also designed the main logo for the event, consisting of an overlaid geometric abstraction of trees (see Figure 11).\textsuperscript{51} Additionally, there were many other promotional branding materials which were all disseminated during the Pre-BUGA phase through news outlets.

News about BUGA-MA spread through print sources and advertisements, and it was always accompanied by BUGA-MA’s futuristic and iconic logo.\textsuperscript{52} During the Pre-BUGA phase, posters and videos were shown and displayed at public events, and they were often accompanied by intricate architectural models of permanent BUGA-MA structures, used to provoke additional interest in Mannheim and its surrounding region.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{47} Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975, Pg. 41.
\bibitem{50} Ibid.
\bibitem{51} During BUGA-MA, the \textit{Jäger aus Kurpfalz} appeared as a costumed person, serving as a live character for the delight of visitors.
\bibitem{52} Today, most of a BUGA’s public engagement is organized through websites and social media.
\end{thebibliography}
1.4. Pre-BUGA Phase: Considerations Related to Sustainability & Aesthetics

When analyzing BUGA-MA’s physical infrastructure through the lens of the sustainable development goals established for the Festival, it is important that all BUGA actions, events, and structures were specific to the needs of the region. In Mannheim, BUGA-MA’s new infrastructure filled needs not currently met by the city for greenspace, transportation, and housing.

With the 1967-1993 BUGA-period’s focus on relaxation and enjoyment, criteria related to the sustainability of the various ecosystems was not the top priority for BUGA-MA organizers. Instead, BUGA-MA’s organizers focused on the redevelopment of Mannheim’s society and its cultural landscape. To do this, Mannheim’s multi-year organization for all on-site planning handled local Pre-BUGA development and publicity, and the German Horticultural Association (ZVG) handled the coordination of BUGA Festival vendors and exhibitors. Though sustainability was not a main focus, many of the decisions made during the Pre-BUGA-MA phase nevertheless contributed to the long-term sustainable regional development that helped to improve all infrastructural layers in Mannheim and the surrounding region.
2. *Bundesgartenschau* Mannheim Festival Phase

As aforementioned, the planning process for *Bundesgartenschau* Mannheim 1975 began in 1968, leaving seven years to prepare for the BUGA Festival. It is important to distinguish between the seven-year Pre-BUGA groundwork phase and the following six-month BUGA Festival (see Figure 12). This chapter will describe a selection of BUGA Festival structures and events and will then analyze them in terms of both their aesthetic value and potential to foster long-term sustainable development in the region.

2.1. The BUGA-MA Festival: Six Months of Horticulture-Focused Events

While six months for a festival may seem like a long duration, it is sensible for a festival of horticulture. Horticulture is seasonal, and the six months of the BUGA-MA Festival began in April and concluded in October 1975, allowing for plants of all three growing seasons (late Spring, Summer, and early Fall) to reach their peaks. The BUGA Festival in Mannheim officially started on April 18th, 1975, beginning with a three-day opening show to commemorate Spring horticulture. Aside from the horticulture exhibitions, visitors to the BUGA-MA Festival were greeted with an array of permanent and temporary buildings where a variety of events across the 170 acres of BUGA grounds were held. The first impression of most visitors of a BUGA Festival

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53 Growing seasons are also regionally specific, and therefore BUGA opening and ending dates are determined by the particular climatic conditions of the chosen location.
55 Additional three-day opening shows for Summer and Fall horticulture were held in August and October, respectively.
is conceived from its permanent structures. Therefore, when evaluating the BUGA-MA Festival, it is important to take an inventory of these structures built for the Festival and trace their impacts on visitors and the cultural landscape of Mannheim.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the physical infrastructure of BUGA-MA followed in the tradition of World Expos, involving experimental and provocative architecture. Perhaps the most successful and highly acclaimed permanent infrastructure of BUGA-MA is the Multihalle, an elaborate parametric architectural space designed by German architects Frei Otto and Carlfried Mutschler (see Figure 13). This structure became famous for its self-supporting timber grid shell structure — still the largest in the world today. Underneath the large “biomorphic” structure that contains no straight lines or right angles, there is a large event hall where various BUGA-MA Festival events took place. With its provocative design, the Multihalle played a central role in the BUGA’s popularity, and the Multihalle is still an architectural wonder in the region today.

57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
Another highly popular BUGA-MA built structure was the futuristic Aerobus. This above-ground shuttle system was implemented to efficiently transfer visitors between Luisenpark and Herzogenriedpark. For visitors, the experience was like riding a trolley in the sky. Similar to the Multihalle, the Aerobus was at the frontier of new technology in 1975, and with this new technology, it gave visitors a new and exciting way to experience the BUGA Festival from above.59

Alongside the Multihalle and Aerobus were an assortment of other permanent physical structures that benefitted the region, but they were less innovative in their design. These permanent structures functioned for recreation and housing, and they were mainly made up of renovated existing structures that were centered around der Kutzerweiher, the existing lake in Luisenpark that was enlarged for the BUGA-MA Festival. Alongside der Kutzerweiher in

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Luisenpark, an array of newly built amenities included a lake-side restaurant, amphitheater, bird island, and restored telecommunications tower, which contained a restaurant in its upper dome (see Figure 7). In Herzogenriedpark, the Herzogenried-Siedlung (apartments by the park) added a substantial number of apartments to the area (see Figure 8). In the spirit of BUGA-MA’s theme of “greening the city,” this housing design advocated for a forward-thinking sustainable and healthy lifestyle of gardening and outdoor activity. Other notable mentions are the renovated bath house and the Rosengarten (Rose Garden), which has had a continuous display of roses since 1975. Altogether, these permanent structures contributed immensely to the popularity and positive collective memory of BUGA-MA.

In addition to the permanent physical structures, BUGA-MA 1975 also featured many temporary structures that primarily catered to horticultural interests. These temporary structures enriched Festival visitors’ overall experience and provided sites for vendors and exhibitors to share information on regional and global horticulture practices, a practice mandated by the German Federal Garden Show Society (DGB) for all Bundesgartenschauen.

In Luisenpark, a flower market and bulb-and-flower display took place in the meadow adjacent to the Kutzerweiher during the entire six-month Festival. Vendors within these spaces would rotate depending on the season, and the meadow provided a flexible space for different vendors and exhibitors to set up. Additionally, an outdoor toy market took place along a pathway through Luisenpark, and electric gondolas, named Gondolettas, carried Festival visitors around the newly expanded Kutzerweiher.

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In *Herzogenriedpark*, some horticultural displays were concentrated near the park entrance, while many others were dispersed throughout the park. The dispersal of displays allowed for *Herzogenriedpark*’s open meadows to become demonstration gardens for horticultural techniques and different arrays of plant species.\(^{64}\) For instance, five of the 100 permanent allotment gardens of the *Herzogenried-Siedlung* were temporarily transformed into demonstration plots for the Festival, and a mini-greenhouse and information-center were erected adjacent to these plots.\(^{65,66}\)

Displays and information about horticulture were key aspects of the BUGA-MA Festival, and most displays took place along long promenades and in open meadows throughout both parks. One display, for example, was a peat moss producer demonstrating the application of their products on a roof garden.\(^{67}\) These horticultural displays were important elements of regional social infrastructure, as they created a network of vendors and visitors who, standing side-by-side in tents, could exchange horticultural information and techniques.

A final subset of infrastructure that could be considered temporary or permanent, given their modification over time, were the many innovative playground structures designed and constructed for Festival visitors. Fifteen playground designs were chosen and implemented on the BUGA-MA Festival sites, and they provided joy and delight not only for the children but also the children-at-heart.

### 2.2. BUGA-MA Festival Marketing & Ticket Sales

Throughout the Festival’s duration, BUGA-MA marketing succeeded in spreading word about the BUGA Festival widely across the region. Similar to how the 1851 World Expo’s Crystal Palace


\(^{65}\) Although these allotment gardens existed for ten years before BUGA-MA, they were remodeled and revamped for the 1975 festival and were closely associated with the new *Herzogenriedpark-Siedlung* apartment complex and aura of green living.

\(^{66}\) Schmidt-Bäumler, Hellmut. Die Bundesgartenschau, Mannheim 1975. Pg. 44.

\(^{67}\) Ibid., Pg. 45.
was featured on postcards and memorabilia, the bold architecture and landscapes of BUGA-MA found their way into popular postcard designs and along with them, into gift shops across the region. Videos that promoted the Festival circulated and showed visitors enjoying the sites and Festival-specific activities. At the BUGA-MA Festival’s conclusion, BUGA organizers counted 186,000 season tickets sold (six times the original estimate) and over eight million BUGA Festival visitors — more than any preceding BUGA. Given this high level of interest and visitors, it is no wonder that the design of BUGA-MA’s building structures and events have left a lasting imprint on the city and region surrounding Mannheim as well as in the collective memory.

2.3. Analyzing the BUGA Festival for Connections Between Aesthetics & Sustainability

BUGA-MA’s physical infrastructure was immense and elaborate, and from the contemporary perspective, there was, arguably, a resounding emphasis on sustainability and aesthetically driven development when it was created. But, in most historic accounts of the BUGA-MA Festival, there is little explicit emphasis on the role of aesthetics when BUGA-MA organizers aimed for sustainable development. In this section, key portions of American landscape architectural theorist Elizabeth Meyer’s framework will be applied to analyze the correlation between the aesthetic dimension of features and events that together made up BUGA-MA Festival’s long-term effect on the region as well as the collective memory of regional citizens.

Meyer argues that aesthetics are key to connecting people to sustainable landscape designs and to increasing their desire to care for and protect these landscapes. Her framework states explicit principles that, when implemented, can maximize the sustainable and aesthetically

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70 Meyer has built upon the argument of another American landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, who also believed that aesthetics have a performative role in sustainable landscape designs.
pleasing elements of a designed landscape. According to Meyer, the following framework principles are of particular importance:

- **Sustainable beauty is sustaining culture through landscapes.** Meyer remarks that “design is a cultural act,” and that in order to sustain a landscape, one must also protect and sustain the culture of people living in that landscape.

- **Sustainable beauty is going beyond ecological performance.** Meyer states that “nature is not out there but in here, interwoven in the human urban condition.” According to her, a sustainable landscape design must go beyond addressing the ecological needs by creating a connection with the humans living in it — their culture, customs, and society.

- **Sustainable beauty is recognizing art through hypernature.** Meyer describes designed landscapes as nature reconstructed into artful forms. According to her, designed landscapes are often “exaggerated versions of nature,” or “hypernature.”

- **Sustainable beauty is designing experiences.** Meyer defines experiences in beautiful sustainably designed landscapes as “vehicles for connecting with, and caring for, the world around us.” She emphasizes the importance of designing experiences of the landscape, rather than just the landscape itself.

- **Sustainable beauty is particular, not generic.** Meyer states that “sustainable beauty” is specific to its physical context and will “act as a magnifying glass, increasing our ability to see and appreciate the context.”

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71 The benefits of creating sustainable and beautiful landscape designs are linked to the idea that as the city’s scenery (and greenery) improved so would the city’s hygiene standards. (Source: Ahn, Susann and Regine Keller. “False Nature” from Girot, Christophe, and Imhof, Dora. Thinking the Contemporary Landscape. 2017.)


73 Ibid., Pg. 16.

74 Ibid., Pg. 18.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid. (emphasis added A.B.)

78 Ibid., Pg. 19.
- **Sustainable beauty is dynamic, not static.** Meyer remarks that landscapes are constantly changing, and therefore their beauty is momentary and fleeting, always, as she notes, “interacting with time.”\(^{79}\) She further states that time is a key player that must be amplified, minimized, or delayed in order to maximize the sustainable beauty of a site.\(^{80}\) According to Meyer, this is facilitated primarily through design, which she highlights through the examples of “a mix of a specific light angle, a particular slope of the ground, and a short-lived drop of a carpet of brilliant yellow leaves.”\(^{81}\)

Through Meyer’s principles, three common themes of aesthetic performance emerge: culture, dynamic time, and ecology. Tracing these themes within the context of BUGA-MA, one quickly notices that decades before Meyer’s theoretical considerations, all three themes had already received ample consideration during the planning of BUGA-MA 1975 and the Festival itself.

Meyer’s principles of cultural specificity are particularly salient in the BUGA-MA Festival. Establishing a clear connection with regional cultures is one of the core requirements that each BUGA needs to fulfill according to the statutes of the German Federal Garden Show Society (DGB) for every BUGA, and in Mannheim, organizers cultivated new cultural layers through marketing materials that both harkened back to Mannheim’s history, like the *Jaeger aus Kurpfalz* logo design (see Figure 10), and projected that history forward, like the geometric, abstract BUGA-MA logo (see Figure 11).

Meyer also states that sustainable beauty is particular, not generic, and what she means is that a designed landscape is taking place within an existing landscape and therefore the new landscape design must not copy but must address the existing landscape in its new design. She states,

\(^{80}\) Ibid.
\(^{81}\) Ibid., Pg. 19-20.
“It [the design of the landscape] will be of its place whether an abandoned brownfield site, an obsolete navy shipyard, or a lumbered forest. And yet it will not simulate its place. It will be recognized as site-specific design, emerging out of its context but differentiated from it.”

This differentiation between the landscape prior to BUGA-MA and how it was presented during the BUGA-MA Festival phase were key to the BUGA-MA Festival’s success, as the parks’ designers acted on the desire to turn Mannheim into an innovative city by designing cutting-edge buildings that offered potential ways of living a more sustainable lifestyle. For example, through the Herzogenried-Siedlung’s and Multihalle’s designs, the BUGA Festival demonstrated new ways of constructing and inhabiting buildings to visitors. Another example was the technological spectacle of the Aerobus, through which BUGA-MA organizers sought to add a future-oriented transportation method to Mannheim’s existing cultural landscape. The Aerobus allowed for an experience of the landscape from a new vantage point, namely from above, thus creating what Meyer would call a newly designed “[vehicle] for connecting with, and caring for, the world around us.”

Designing for “dynamic time,” another one of Meyer’s principles, is also ingrained in BUGA standards through the initial framework laid out in 1951, over twenty years before BUGA-MA 1975. Holding the BUGA-MA Festival over six months that spanned the three growing seasons allowed for time, temperature, and climate to shape the landscape and to potentially provide visitors with a multitude of different aesthetic experiences. This is exemplified nicely by the fact that BUGA-MA organizers planned three different opening celebrations to mark the start of each season, and each celebration represented a distinct landscape design, layered upon the BUGA-MA sites at a different time of year. This celebration of seasonality reflects Meyer’s principle of

83 Ibid., Pg. 17.
ephemeral beauty — “it can be a fleeting event, captured once a year” — and added value to the season-pass visitor’s option to experience a multitude of different landscape designs whose aesthetic appeals were heightened by their ever-changing looks because of the seasonality of the horticultural displays.84

With the understanding that beauty in nature is ephemeral, site-specific, and culturally relevant, the BUGA-MA Festival designers also brought ecological needs and constraints to the attention of visitors. For BUGA-MA organizers, it was important to consider ecological needs in combination with the Festival’s social and cultural agendas. Meyer states that “sustainable landscape design must do more than function or perform ecologically; it must perform socially and culturally.”85 BUGA-MA’s most prominent example of going beyond ecological functionality is in the expansion of the Kutzerweiher and its bird island in Luisenpark. While still protecting the birds on the island from human interference, Festival visitors could now travel around the lake in modern electric Gondolettas and catch glimpses of birds nesting on the island. Here, the designers of BUGA-MA’s sites also blurred the lines between art and nature, creating what Meyer would later call “hypernature” through the exaggerated design of the Kutzerweiher, which was initially a small pond in Luisenpark and was artfully enlarged for the Festival.86 Although it was not stated as an explicit focus of the BUGA-MA Festival, art was (and still is) prevalent throughout the two major site-grounds, Luisenpark and Herzogenriedpark. From the playful Gondolettas to the elaborate floral arrangements to the entrancing parametric wooden form of the Multihalle, these “exaggerated version[s] of constructed nature” not only drew the awe and attention of Festival visitors through their aesthetically pleasing appearances in 1975, but these features continue to attract visitors to Luisenpark and Herzogenriedpark today. Through Meyer’s principles, it is evident that the aesthetics of the BUGA-MA’s landscape designs, structures, and

85 Ibid., Pg. 16.
86 Ibid., Pg. 18.
marketing materials were the underlying source of the Festival’s success and positive insertion into the collective memory of visitors and residents of Mannheim and the surrounding region.
3. Post-Bundesgartenschau Mannheim

The end of the Festival in Mannheim coincided with the onset of winter, a season for cold weather, contemplation, and dormancy. This time marked the transition from the high-intensity construction of the Pre-BUGA and BUGA-MA Festival phases to the slower Post-BUGA phase. At the beginning of the Post-BUGA-MA phase, all temporary structures assembled for the Festival — such as vendor stalls and performance stages — were taken down. Simultaneously, long-term property management and maintenance regimes were set in place to care for the permanent structures, including Luisenpark and Herzogenriedpark, the Multihalle, the communications tower, and the Herzogenried-Siedlung. This sub-chapter will focus on these dismantling efforts and then analyze the long-term impact of the remaining infrastructural elements on the sustainable development of Mannheim and the surrounding region.

3.1. Implementing the Over-Arching BUGA Vision through Post-BUGA Mannheim

The Pre-BUGA-MA and BUGA-MA Festival phases were only steps towards accomplishing the over-arching vision of the BUGA concept: to foster long-term sustainable cultural development in the region of Mannheim. As aforementioned, the Post-BUGA-MA phase began with several different simultaneous actions. One action was to transfer all the physical assets — funding, ticket sales, promotional materials, etc. — of the temporary public-private organization that handled on-site planning and to transfer the permanent physical infrastructure of the BUGA to long-term
management groups. For BUGA-MA, this involved dividing the Festival grounds into a mixture of public and private properties.

*Luisenpark* was developed to be an urban greenspace for relaxation, thus a majority of the Festival site was retained by the city parks and recreation department for public use. The three adjacent sports arenas and communications tower are now under private ownership, but the enlarged Kutzerweiher, restaurant pavilion, and multitude of meadows were set aside for public use (see Figure 7).

*Herzogenriedpark*'s overall purpose was to add more urban development and physical infrastructure to inner-city Mannheim, and therefore, a large portion of the Festival site was handed to private property owners. The parking areas, bath house and grounds, *Herzogenried-Siedlung*, and other residential developments and allotment gardens were placed under private ownership. The remaining city-owned portion of *Herzogenriedpark* consists of the sports arena, *Multihalle, Rosarium*, and adjoining meadows (see Figure 8).

One other aspect retained from the BUGA-MA Festival by the two parks to this day is the BUGA-MA logo — a simple geometrical design that was adapted two-fold to represent the two distinct parks and their historical relation to one another through BUGA-MA (see Figure 11). The adapted logos can be seen to the left of the title on each park’s map — blue for *Herzogenriedpark* and light green for *Luisenpark* (see Figure 15 & 16).
Figure 15. Current-day map of Luisenpark

Figure 16. Current-day map of Herzogenriedpark
By placing permanent entities in charge of keeping the permanent elements of BUGA-MA well-maintained and contributing to city life, the temporary public-private organization that had been entrusted with all on-site Festival planning ensured the longevity of BUGA-MA’s physical infrastructure before it was dissolved. Since 1975, the Herzogenried-Siedlung’s 2,000 private apartments have been continuously inhabited, the Multihalle is still in use today as an event space, and the bath house has welcomed visitors to its facilities daily.\(^{87}\) Luisenpark and Herzogenriedpark have largely remained public property, which has allowed visitors to enjoy the meadows, Kutzerweiher, athletic facilities, and more for a modest admission fee. Although the fee creates barriers for some to enjoy the parks, admission fees are critical, as they have allowed the parks to be self-supporting ventures since the BUGA-MA Festival’s conclusion.\(^{88}\)

### 3.2. Post-BUGA-MA Today: A Retrospective Exhibition on the BUGA-MA Festival

In 2019, the BUGA-MA Festival’s cultural infrastructure reappeared in a retrospective exhibition hosted by Marchivum, Mannheim’s Archives. Titled “Ein Fest Verändert die Stadt,”\(^{89}\) the six-month exhibition showcased artifacts from the 1975 BUGA-MA Festival such as posters advertising the event, the Jäger aus Kurpfalz costume, worn by actors on the Festival grounds, and an original Gondoletta from der Kutzerweiher lake in Luisenpark.\(^{90}\) Testifying to the enduring aesthetic appeal of BUGA-MA’s cultural infrastructure, many of the artifacts displayed in the 2019 Marchivum exhibition had been donated by private citizens who attended the BUGA-MA Festival — over forty years earlier — and had held onto their memorabilia.

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\(^{89}\) This phrase translates to “A Festival Transforms the City” in English.

\(^{90}\) “BUGA 75. Ein Fest Verändert Die Stadt.” MARCHIVUM, Retrieved on 5 May 2020, from www.marchivum.de/de/ausstellungen/sonderausstellungen/buga-75-ein-fest-veraendert-die-stadt-0.
In the *Marchivum*’s description of their retrospective exhibition, BUGA-MA Festival’s enduring success is described in this way: “*Kaum ein anderes Ereignis in der Nachkriegszeit prägte Mannheim so sehr wie die Bundesgartenschau 1975.*”\(^91\) \(^92\) By the mid-1970s, German cities were rebuilt and well-functioning, but there was a need to improve the quality of city life — namely through bringing beauty and delight into the city. BUGA-MA served as the impetus for uplifting Mannheim through its cultural infrastructure of sustainable and aesthetically pleasing elements, and the long-term impact of BUGA-MA was clearly demonstrated through this 2019 *Marchivum* exhibition.


\(^92\) Rough translation: “No other event in the post-war times left a greater mark on Mannheim than the Bundesgartenschau 1975.”
III. Concluding Thoughts: *Bundesgartenschauen* 1975 & 2023

A *Bundesgartenschau* is an immense undertaking for any location — big or small. It is incredibly detailed and complex to plan, construct, and host. The BUGA organizers in Mannheim spent seven years planning and constructing the grounds for the six-month Festival in 1975, and, as time has shown, their care and thoughtfulness throughout the Pre-BUGA and BUGA Festival phases paid off: BUGA-MA has left and continues to leave a significant mark on the urban and regional fabric.

How did BUGA-MA achieve this long-lasting impact on Mannheim? My initial research question probed whether plans aiming at sustainable development had a role in BUGA-MA’s long-lasting success, and from this research, it is now clear that BUGA-MA capitalized on using sustainable elements and processes that ranged from augmenting existing urban parks and preserving trees on-site to reimagining cultural artifacts as marketing materials. BUGA-MA embedded itself into the physical and cultural fabric of Mannheim and the region through implicitly sustainable practices.

Planned more than a decade before the 1987 UN Brundtland Convention’s declaration on sustainability, BUGA-MA’s infrastructure was sustainably designed and constructed primarily by focusing not only on the immediate visitors but also future, Post-BUGA-MA phase visitors. This sustainable practice is most visibly embodied in the *Multihalle*, which still today greets visitors with awe and wonder upon entry, and it continues to serve as a flexible event space for local gatherings. The longevity and interest in the *Multihalle* are astounding, as the structure requires extensive maintenance and upkeep, and this sustained interest in the *Multihalle* can largely be attributed to the aesthetic appeal of its design. As Mannheim’s Mayor, Dr. Peter Kurz, describes the *Multihalle* in English:

“It (the *Multihalle*) conveys an immediate sense of openness...It is brimming with potential...It was — and still is — a symbol for the future, and that is what’s so fascinating
about it. It is an iconographic building that immediately generates feelings of identity, and the people of Mannheim see it as a landmark and a place for sharing memories."  

Figure 18. Logo/marketing graphics and themes of BUGA-MA 2023

From the renewed interest in BUGA-MA 1975 generated by the 2019 Marchivum retrospective exhibition, it is evident that many citizens in Mannheim and the surrounding region still have fond memories of BUGA-MA 1975. Here, it is important to note that the 2019 exhibition was not just a retrospective on BUGA-MA 1975 but that it was also a forward-looking exhibition, which aimed to generate excitement for another BUGA: Bundesgartenschau Mannheim 2023.

Nearly 50 years after BUGA-MA 1975, BUGA-MA 2023 will follow in the footsteps of BUGA-MA 1975 and serve as a catalyst for future sustainable development in Mannheim and its surrounding region. In BUGA-MA 2023, though, the focus will be explicitly on sustainability and aesthetics — as addressed through its core themes (see Fig. 18) of the sustainable living environment (Lebensraum), field research (Feldforschung), power station (Kraftwerk), and timber/tree house (Baumhaus) — all of which have now been identified as key elements of BUGA-MA 1975 that allowed it to have such a long-lasting impact on the city and surrounding region of Mannheim.

List of Common Abbreviations

**BUGA** - *Bundesgartenschau(en)* - German Federal Horticulture Show(s)

**BUGA-MA** - *Bundesgartenschau Mannheim 1975* - Federal Horticulture Show Mannheim

**ZVG** - *Zentralverband Gartenbau e.V.* - German Horticultural Association

**DBG** - *Deutschen Bundesgartenschau- Gesellschaft mbH* - German Federal Garden Show-Society
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Concluding Thoughts: Bundesgartenschauen 1975 & 2023

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