

# PRESS RELEASE

## EXHIBITION: VICTORIAN LOVE LETTERS

FULL OF ADMIRATION – AND WRITTEN IN GERMAN  
29 – 30 JUNE 2019

**German as the language of love – no one would have agreed more than Queen Victoria when she fell head over heels in love with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. Facsimiles and transcripts of letters all dated from 15 October 1839, the day Queen Victoria proposed to Prince Albert, will be on display in an exhibition at the Goethe-Institut London from 29 until 30 June 2019. Visitors are invited to find out more about the couple's relationship through their letters and the role of the German language at Buckingham Palace in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**

Along with some of Victoria's extremely passionate diary entries, the exhibition points to fascinating facts about the couple and the reasons why they spoke German. Queen Victoria's mother, Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, was originally from Germany, so Victoria spoke only German for the first three years of her life. Even when Queen Victoria was fluent in English, she nonetheless had a German accent, while two tutors were engaged to help her get rid of it.

Although English was the predominant language, German was spoken with various members of the family – it was by no means an uncommon language at Buckingham Palace in the late nineteenth century. Queen Victoria spoke German most of the time with her husband Prince Albert, even when the latter's English became increasingly proficient.

The small exhibition in the Goethe-Institut's library will be accompanied by an **interactive workshop** encouraging visitors to create their own love letters on wooden heart cut outs or handmade cards and envelopes with Victorian images. On the weekend, visitors can also learn German in 25 minutes in **special taster sessions** or learn more about contemporary German culture in various **talks, performances, games** and more. **Find the full programme [online](#).**

All events are part of **The Great Exhibition Road Festival**, a weekend full of curiosity, discovery and exploration in South Kensington. The festival brings together science and the arts in a unique programme of creative workshops, talks, exhibitions and performances – all in the spirit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's vision for the Great Exhibition, 200 years on from when they were born.

The **Goethe-Institut** is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach. We promote knowledge of German abroad and encourage international cultural exchange. The Goethe-Institut London attracts a public interested in culture and education. We offer modern and diverse language courses and highlight the advantages of learning German for a successful career in our education work. Throughout the year, we host various cultural events and organise artist residencies in collaboration with selected partners. Our library and information service offers media on German literature, arts, society and history.

The exhibition is presented in cooperation with **Stadtmarketing Coburg**. The letters of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were kindly supplied by the **Royal Archives** which contain the official and private papers of the Sovereign and other members of the British Royal Family, together with the records of the Royal Household and the private Royal estates.



**GOETHE  
INSTITUT**

Sprache. Kultur. Deutschland.




24 June 2019

### CONTACT

Franca Forth  
Press and Public Relations  
Goethe-Institut London

T: +44 20 7596 4042

E: [franca.forth@goethe.de](mailto:franca.forth@goethe.de)  
[goethe.de/uk](http://goethe.de/uk)

 [goethe.institut.london](https://www.facebook.com/goethe.institut.london)  
 [@GI\\_London1](https://twitter.com/GI_London1)  
 [goetheinstitut\\_london](https://www.instagram.com/goetheinstitut_london)

#ExRdFest

#VictoriaAlbert200