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Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel

2011 was an exceptionally dynamic year for the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel (CDN). The exhibition devoted to the architecture of Mario Botta created awareness of the CDN among an audience it had not previously reached. Thanks in part to this event, the CDN achieved a new record of 13 594 visitors.

The major exhibition *Mario Botta – Architecture et mémoire* was the highlight of a year in which the CDN celebrated its 10th year in existence, and was widely reported in the media. The CDN attracted a new audience consisting of larger numbers of visitors from French-speaking Switzerland, Ticino and abroad. A catalogue documenting the various sections devoted to libraries, museums, religious spaces and theatres was published. Numerous guided tours, round-tables and discussions were organised to accompany the exhibition, as well as an installation focusing on Botta's models and projects at the Museum Night.

The exhibition *MY-THOLOGY* saw contemporary art come to the CDN. The Centre commissioned the video artist Elodie Pong to create a work examining the myths that inspired Friedrich Dürrenmatt and which recur frequently in his literary and pictorial works.

Accompanying the performance of *Die Panne* at the Théâtre du Passage, Pierre Bühler, professor of hermeneutic theology at the University of Zurich, examined the theme of justice in the work of Dürrenmatt. This project was organised in association with the Rougemont and Piaget high schools.

Together with invited artist Pavel Schmidt, Pierre Bühler also presented a cycle of myths including Prometheus, Atlas and Hercules.

Two evening events were devoted to Midas. Against the backdrop of current world events, the topic of money proved particularly popular with audiences. The first evening featured contributions by Peter Nobel, lawyer and former professor of economics at the University of St. Gallen, and Peter Hablützel, former director of the Federal Personnel Office and author of *Die Banken und ihre Schweiz – Perspektiven einer Krise (The Banks and Their Switzerland – Perspectives on a Crisis)*. In *MONEYFESTO*, the second lecture, Michael Groneberg, professor of philosophy at the University of Lausanne, looked at money from the philosophical perspective from the Ancients (Aristotle, Plato, Solon) to the thinkers of the 21st century. Elodie Pong also presented her project *Secret for Sale*.

The CDN played host to a scientific colloquium organised by the Swiss Literary Archives (SLA) on the topic of *Dürrenmatt – Text und Bild (Dürrenmatt – Text and Image)*, which brought together some 15 researchers from across Europe and the United States. A further event was the summer school, organised every two years in association with the SLA and the Conference of Universities of Western Switzerland, which was attended by around 20 students of German language and literature from universities in the west of the country.

The inventory of the pictorial works of Friedrich Dürrenmatt was completed and new acquisitions further enriched the collection. Contacts with the University of Neuchâtel led to a research project on Dürrenmatt's pictorial œuvre which is to be launched in 2012.

The *Résonances* concerts have now switched to a “master-pupil” format, while an active collaboration with the Neuchâtel branch of the Geneva Conservatoire (Haute école de musique) was established. Relations with the NEC, which adopts a multi-disciplinary approach involving both literature and music, were intensified in areas relating to contemporary artistic expression combining texts, videos and music.



View of the exhibition
Mario Botta, © Enrico Cano



Mario Botta during a guided tour
of the CDN, © CDN



View of the exhibition
Mario Botta, © Enrico Cano