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# Swiss Literary Archives

The Swiss Literary Archives examined the interrelationship of literature and film in 2023 and held an exhibition, film screenings, lectures, workshops and a conference on the topic. In cooperation with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, the biggest research project yet supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF was initiated into the estate of scholar Jonas Fränkel. Büchner prize winner Lukas Bärfuss and author Christina Viragh gave their archives to the Literary Archives.



## Collection

Author **Lukas Bärfuss** (\*1971) gave his entire archive to the Swiss Literary Archives (SLA). Author Christina Viragh (\*1953) entrusted her literary holding to the SLA. The SLA gained small, fine holdings from cult women's literature figure Lore Berger (1921–1943) and lyricist **Tresa Rüthers-Seeli** (\*1931) from

Surselva. Other major acquisitions were the collection of publisher Marie-Luise Ammann Flammersfeld (\*1949) with her own works, the archive of periodical *Drehpunkt* and the two literary archives of its founder Rolf Bussmann and Martin Zingg. In addition to that came the estate of Charles Racine (1927–1995), the archive of Martin Stadler from Uri (\*1944), other collections of Albert Vigoleis Thelen (1903–1989), Doris Hürzeler (\*1947) and Charlot Strasser (1884–1950) as well as the letters from Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926) to Agnes Brumof.



**Lukas Bärfuss**

Signing a contract in the Swiss National Library

## Outreach

The exhibition *Writing the silver screen. From literature to cinema and vice versa* featured ten talks in cooperation with Lichtspiel Bern and Kino Rex in Bern. The main SLA research focus in 2023 *Literature and Film* was also the title given to an edition of periodical *Quarto* on unrealised films in the four literatures of Switzerland.



**Tresa Rüthers-Seeli**

Notebook from the Tresa Rüthers-Seeli archive





**Hildegard Keller and Charles Lewinsky**  
Event with the film-maker and author



**Franz Hohler and Nadeschkin**  
Talk and exhibition of work

The conference entitled *Bewegte Literaturgeschichte. Autorschaft, Text und Archiv in Dokumentarfilm und Biopic* (Eventful literary history. Authorship, text and archive in documentary film and biopic) broadened and deepened the SLA theme of 2023 with contributions on documentaries and biopics. This was where the theory and practice of film-making converged, leading to some lively debate among film-makers and film scholars. Outstanding specific instances of Swiss film featuring Bernard Comment (\*1960), **Charles Lewinsky** (\*1946), **Hildegard Keller** (\*1960),

Klaus Merz (\*1945) and Plinio Martini (1923–1979) were shown and discussed over several evenings. These evening sessions provided an insight into the diversity of the tradition of Swiss film from the early 20th century up to the current scene.

Highlights of the year included the tribute for and with **Franz Hohler** (\*1943) with comedian **Nadeschkin** (Nadja Sieger, \*1968) in the National Library reading room and the vernissage for the latest edition of Rilke's *Duino Elegies* in Villa Morillon. There was a reading at the event in the presence of the editor and publisher.

Conference publication (in German) **Wirklichkeit als Fiktion. Fiktion als Wirklichkeit**. *Neue Perspektiven auf Friedrich Dürrenmatt* (Truth as fiction. Fiction as truth. New perspectives on Friedrich Dürrenmatt) featuring 30 articles and interviews



**Wirklichkeit als Fiktion. Fiktion als Wirklichkeit.**  
New perspectives regarding Friedrich Dürrenmatt

from anniversary year 2021 and including many of Dürrenmatt's artworks came out at the end of 2023 and offers groundbreaking approaches to Dürrenmatt.

### User services

The number of users of the SLA reading room rose in 2023 to 1,583 (2022: 1,038), while information retrievals amounted to 4,282 (2022: 3,771). A total of 1,623 holdings were consulted (2022: 1,155).

### Networking

The SLA secured the cooperation of Switzerland's literary archives in the KOOP-LITERA national association at the annual meeting in the National Library. The nature of the coming together of the SLA institutions was demonstrated in the cooperation with the Swiss universities on the study day for Alice Ceresa with the Italian Studies departments of the universities of Bern and Zurich and in new workshops and interactive tours developed for the University of Zurich and which are still offered. The annual conference with the theme *100 years of Duino Elegies* was organised in Sierre in cooperation with the Rilke society. The research project **Cryptophilology. Jonas Fränkel's "underground" science** in the political and historical context together with the professorship of literature and cultural history at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich was fully approved at its first submission. Doctoral and postdoctoral students started work in October on the library, Fränkel's philology and co-authorship, as well as the critical exchange and archive-related awareness of Fränkel with Nobel Prize winner Carl Spitteler, the cataloguing of



**Cryptophilology. Jonas Fränkel's "underground" science**

The research project team at work

the estate and library, for which fund raising was also conducted successfully, proceeded in parallel. In Bern, the project was based in Walter Benjamin Kolleg. The initial results of the SNSF project *Lectures Jean Bollack* with the University of Fribourg and the University of Osnabrück in the new series *Bollackiana 01: Lire Jean Bollack lesen* shows that academic cooperation on internationally significant estates and development of burgeoning archivists and university academics have long since stopped being isolated instances.