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# Prints and Drawings Department

The Prints and Drawings Department organised and curated the *Colour Space* exhibition in 2024, in which historical and contemporary printed works related to the theme of colour entered into dialogue. A *weekend of graphic art* was staged in Bern for the first time in partnership with Kunstmuseum Bern. A large donation from Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik), a generous donation from Visarte Neuchâtel plus individual purchases enlarged the art prints collection.





### Collection

Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik) in Zurich has been working since 1948 to provide printed paper graphics at reasonable prices and expand this art form. The Prints and Drawings Department received 550 works in 2024 and thus increased its holding of contemporary prints. The donation also enables the documentation of manual and innovative skills applied in printing workshops in Switzerland.

The regional Visarte group in Neuchâtel, which has commissioned one or more artistic editions annually since 1917, also donated a copy of each one of its prints to the Prints and Drawings Department. In addition, printed works by Marco Ganz (*Red, green and blue*, 2022), Douglas Mandry (*Val Morteratsch, Engadine*, 2019), Anna Katharina Scheidegger (*Diamonds – Melting*, 2022) and Cecile Wick (*deep lake*, 2024) were bought. In parallel with these

acquisitions, the historical collection of art prints was made into a multi-year project and opened to the public.

The collection of artists' books grew by 40 works, the new acquisitions included a unique copy by Catherine Bolle (*L'Eau crucifiée*, 2006), the entire book collection of Valentin Magaro (1995–2024) as well as the 10-part conversion of a text by Hugo Ball about Hermann Hesse (*Sein Leben und sein Werk*, 1927) by Serge Chamchinov (2021–2024).

The unique entire collection of prints by **Marc Gonthier** (1895–1954) from Vaud, held in its entirety only in the National Library, with the associated printing blocks and exchange of letters with Cuno Amiet is now catalogued in the archive database. In SIKART, Lexicon on Art in Switzerland issued by the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) there was an article on Marc Gonthier, whose woodcuts

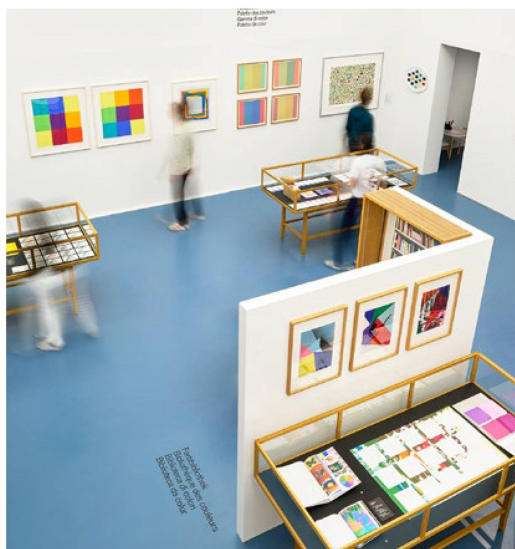
### Marc Gonthier

Bass, tenor,  
soprano and alto,  
two printing blocks  
and four wood en-  
gravings, 1920/1954



**Adolf Pochon**

Uniforms dating from 1799 in Schwyz,  
coloured drawing, ca 1900

**Farbraum**

View of the exhibition room

and engravings portray, among other things, circus life and landscapes in Vaud. The watercolour by Bernese **Adolf Pochon** (1869–1931), who meticulously researched and graphically documented all the uniforms from Swiss regiments available to him, are now catalogued and accessible via Wikimedia Commons.

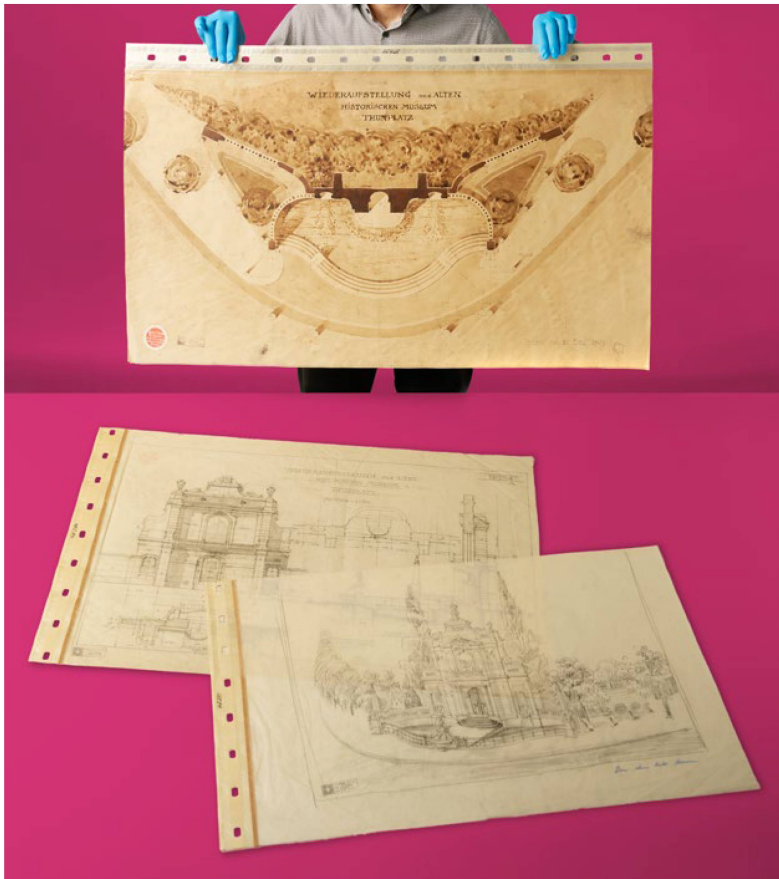
## Outreach

One of the highlights of 2024 was the **Colour Space** exhibition, which presented more than 50 works based on the theme of colour in historical and contemporary Swiss prints. Artworks from the Edition VFO donation and collections held by the National Library (including *Farbenklavier* by Karl Gerstner and *Prose du Transsibérien* by Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay) were dialogically juxtaposed. The monotype *blow ///* by Izidora I LETHE was created for the exhibition, as was the edition *Entrance* by **Dominik Stauch**, which presents the National Library in colour.

A weekend of graphic art featured presentations and workshops centred around an in-depth examination of applying colour in prints. This outreach format is a joint project with the Prints and Drawings department of Kunstmuseum Bern and Tom Blaess print studio and was held in Bern for the first time.

**Dominik Stauch**

*Entrance*, lithograph, 2024 (© Edition VFO)



**Henry B. von Fischer**

Plans to restore the Bibliotheksgalerie building, ca 1910

Walks were held in Bern's Kirchenfeldquartier as part of the *European Heritage Days*. Buildings designed by architect **Henry B. von Fischer** (1861–1949) were presented, including villas and the restored facade of the Bibliotheksgalerie building at the end of Thunstrasse. The archive of Fischer's plans is stored in the Prints and Drawings Department.

The film *Greina* features the immense print work of architect and artist Bryan Cyril Thurston (\*1933) as well as his other activities. It is archived in the Prints and Drawings Department.

### User services

There were 774 information and research requests, slightly more than in the previous year (2023: 745). Documents from all parts of the collection were again in demand, while reproduction orders were down. The number of users on site was similar to prior years at 111 (2023: 125, 2022: 116).

During the year under review, over 13,000 pictures from the Prints and Drawings Department in the public domain were uploaded to the Wikimedia Commons (WMC) platform, bringing the total number to 38,000. Growth in the number of hits was pleasing with a total of 20.5 million (2023: 16.8 million). This was partly due to a two-day *GLAM on tour* event held with Wikimedia CH in June 2024. The event featured digitised images from the archive of **photograph publisher Wehrli AG**, which merged with Photoglob 100 years ago.



**Photograph publisher Wehrli AG**

Traditional Graubünden costume from Val Calanca  
Photograph from 1905