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# NIGHTS NOTHING RIENS



## Something out of nothing

The “Nothing” exhibition at the Museum of Communication in Berne shows that nothing is not nothing after all.

“Please move along, nothing to see here,” it says at the bottom of the ramp leading to the small space housing the “Nothing” exhibition curated by Kurt Stadelmann and his team. The entire display is steeped in irony. Or should that be “non-display”? Yet there is nothing pretentious about “Nothing”. It was German author Kurt Tucholsky who once wrote that a hole – the epitome of nothing – can only be a hole where something is not. It cannot exist in isolation. Take away the something, and the hole goes too.

To put it another way: the holes in a piece of Emmental only exist if they are surrounded by cheese.

The innovative Museum of Communication has rigorously applied this principle. There is a sign positioned next to a worthless 500-franc share of the now-defunct Credit Suisse. “Nothing but empty promises,” it reads. “Basically, nothing came of it” next to an origami paper boat made by someone who was bored in a meeting. “Nothing lasts forever” next to a wedding ring.

A map of the world shows the location of Point Nemo in the middle of the South Pacific. Point Nemo is the place in the ocean that is furthest from land. Nemo is Latin for “no one”.

You can put one of the listening cups hanging from the ceiling to your ear. A warm, resonant voice will explain that there is no place in the entire universe in which there is absolutely nothing. Not even in a vacuum. Nothing is never nothing.

It is always something, provided we want to see it. Be it joy, hope, a memory, an idea – or anything else. This is the message that visitors to the exhibition can take home with them. You can make quite a lot out of nothing.

JÜRIG STEINER

Museum of Communication, Berne: “Nothing”. Until 21 July 2024. There is an online game accompanying the exhibition called The Void. It can be played anywhere. Website: [mfk.ch/nothing](http://mfk.ch/nothing)