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# CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS FOR ARTISTS' ARCHIVAL ESTATES: TWO EXAMPLES

## *Die Hedwig Scherrer Stiftung:*

**Isabelle Zürcher** Hedwig Scherrer (1878 – 1940) enjoyed a high reputation as a renowned artist in the region of Eastern Switzerland and Vorarlberg. The Foundation Board president Ursus A. Winiger describes her as a "model feminist, pacifist and pioneer".

The artist bestowed her art estate to the Kunstverein St. Gallen, which passed it on to the then GSMBA. In order to preclude a possible sale of the house and to check the sale and distribution of her works, the foundation board decided to set up the Foundation. The art estate encompasses a catalogue comprising approximately 3,500 units and the writings including 700 letters, as well as scores of diaries and guest books. Her artwork is located in several collections of the Canton of St Gallen and the Comune and in private possession. The Works Catalogue and Documentation are in the care of the Foundation conservator. The studio in Montlingen is owned by the Foundation.

In the course of time the Foundation's profile has changed, as the original goals have been adapted to present requirements. Out of rental earnings, the place's maintenance and upkeep is paid for and the revenues help support winners of art residencies. The core of Hedwig Scherrer's initial purpose remains however: to help artists without financial means by providing the free use of a studio. "To put something into the artists' hands," this, according to Winiger, is one of the Foundation's primary objectives. Speaking personally, he sees "in setting up a foundation ... an act of respect and appreciation".

## *Studio Hermann Haller:*

**Sonja Kuhn** Hermann Haller's studio, which was designed by the artist himself and built in 1932, stands at a prominent location, i.e. in the immediate proximity of the Lake of Zurich. When Hermann Haller died in November 1950, his wife took over the studio administration and attended to his entire estate. On condition that the work should remain unaltered, she gave it to the City of Zurich in 1982.

The visitors get the chance to tour the studio for free and to get acquainted with the work of the renowned sculptor from Zurich. Apart from sketches, drafts and drawings, plaster models of his bronze casts can also be viewed. The art historian Priska Held Schweri, who supervises and opens the studio to the public, thinks that this foundation is an ideal solution: the estate is maintained in the original authentic location and has become a studio museum. "Even a biographical estate exhibition in a museum would never succeed in creating such a dense atmosphere". Often the Studio Haller is also the contact point for questions relating to Haller and his work. A problem the art historian finds herself confronted with, though, is that the work is incompletely documented. Jean-Pierre Hoby, the City of Zurich's director of the Department of Culture, likewise talks about a stroke of luck unlikely to happen again in a comparable manner today. Donations are evaluated according to a stringent grid pattern and only rarely accepted.



## **Albert Stürchler**

*Der Bildhauer, Maler und Architekt (1914 – 2001) wurde in Basel, Berlin und Paris ausgebildet. Er experimentierte mit Ton, Holz, Glas und anderen Materialien und präsentierte seine Werke an über 50 Ausstellungen. „Die Ordnung der Hinterlassenschaft unseres Vaters brachte ungeahnte Schwierigkeiten. Die Behörden verlangten ein Verzeichnis „aller Werke“, mit der Angabe von „Marktwerten“. Enttäuschend waren auch die durchwegs abschlägigen Bescheide der Museen und Galerien in der Region, den Nachlass als Leihgabe aufzunehmen.“*

*Le sculpteur, peintre et architecte Albert Stürchler (1914 – 2001) s'est formé à Bâle, Berlin et Paris. Il a travaillé l'argile, le bois, le verre d'autres matériaux et a présenté ses œuvres à plus de 50 expositions.*

*« Lors de la mise en ordre de la succession de notre père, nous avons été confrontés à des difficultés inouïes. Les autorités exigeaient un répertoire de «toutes les œuvres», avec indication de «valeurs marchandes». Ce qui était décevant aussi étaient les réponses invariablement négatives des musées et des galeries de la région à nos propositions de céder la succession en accord. »*

*The sculptor painter and architect Albert Stürchler (1914 – 2001) was educated in Basel, Berlin and Paris. He experimented with clay, wood, glass and other materials and presented his works in over fifty exhibitions. "Putting our father's estate in order caused us unimagined difficulties. The authorities asked for a list of 'all works' with an indication of their 'market value'. We were also disappointed by the invariably negative responses of museums and galleries in the region to the idea of accepting the estate as a loan."*









Bilderdepot Kunstmuseum Thurgau