

# Prints and drawings department

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## Prints and Drawings Department

On 1<sup>st</sup> January the Federal Archives of Historic Monuments was incorporated into the Prints and Drawings Department (PDD). The collection of posters was shown to a wider public for the first time in the *Tell im Visier/Tell in Focus* exhibition and the publication of the same name. A detailed analysis of the PDD's collection will form the basis for its future development and the work of cataloguing.

### Collection

Two donations stand out particularly among the acquisitions of 2007: the archive of the curator and publisher Johannes Gachnang and the archive of Photoglob, the post-card printer, containing about 150,000 black and white photographs.

With the transfer of the Federal Archives of Historic Monuments from the Cultural Heritage and Historic Monuments Section of the Federal Office of Culture to the NL, the number of items in the National Library's Prints and Drawings Department leaped by approximately 1.2 million. Given the complementary nature of the collections, the Federal Archives of Historic Monuments is an ideal addition to the Prints and Drawings Department.

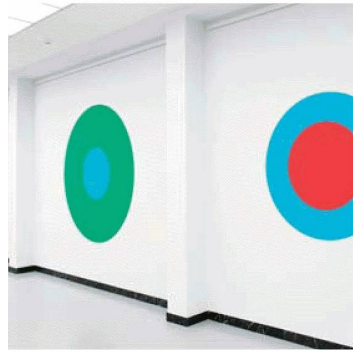
The Fribourg Cantonal and University Library became an additional partner in the Swiss posters union catalogue (CCSA) managed by the NL. At the end of 2007 41,113 posters could be accessed at [www.nb.admin.ch/posters](http://www.nb.admin.ch/posters) (2006: 34,522) including all the posters in the NL collection acquired up to and including 2004. The foundation of the CCSA was only made possible by the support of Memoriav, the association for the preservation of Swiss audio-visual cultural heritage.

Although the poster collection is easily accessible, other parts of the collection have only been catalogued in outline. A detailed analysis of the collection was started in 2007. This will serve the dual purpose of developing the future collection strategy and determining the priorities for more detailed cataloguing work. The parts of the collection which have yet to be catalogued will be recorded in *HelveticArchives*, the NL's new archive data-base.

### User services

There was a large demand from the general public last year for documents from the Daniel Spoerri archive, items from the collection of portrait photographs, the poster collection and the Federal Archives of Historic Monuments even though a reduction in demand was experienced for the latter due to the introduction of fees for copies and reproductions.

The significant demand for posters is a result of the *Tell im Visier/Tell in Focus* exhibition and the publication of the same name. Taken from the 40,000 posters that make up the NL's collection, a selection of approximately 100 posters was shown to the general public in the exhibition and about 200 in the publication. The leitmotiv showcasing the poster exhibition was the Swiss national hero William Tell. Tell, his cross-bow and the oath on the Rütli appear continuously in Swiss posters from the beginning of poster design up to the present in the widest possible range of connections. This motif gives expression to both the extent of the NL's poster collection and the development of poster art. And, vice versa, the powerful effect of what is probably Switzerland's most important national myth is evident in the posters. On the other hand, the publication which accompanies the exhibition examines the myth not only in terms of posters but also in terms of literature and music. The exhibition also gained from its unusual staging. The posters were displayed close to each other, attached to the wall by magnets and not mounted behind glass, thus allowing the closest possible encounter between the posters and the public just as in a public space. Václav Pozárek redecorated the walls in the NL's corridor to act as an introduction to the exhibition using a frequent motif to be found in Tell-related posters, a target.



The *Tell in Focus* exhibition, designer: Václav Pozárek

