

Prints and drawings department

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Prints and Drawings Department

The main focus was the cataloguing – and to some extent also the restoration and digitisation – of a selection from the over one million photographs. As of the beginning of 2009 a part of these will be accessible in *HelveticArchives*.

Photography: *Memoriav* Projects

Two new projects in the field of landscape photography could be started in 2008 thanks to support from *Memoriav*¹⁴: *Archive of Place* and *How a Postcard Publisher Portrayed Switzerland 100 Years Ago*. Work continued on the projects *Photoglob-Wehrli Collection* and *Views and Landscapes of Switzerland*. The aim of all four projects is to conserve – at least in part – and where necessary, to restore, catalogue, digitise and make the collections accessible.

In *Archive of Place: Prints of Swiss Towns and Landscapes from the 19th and 20th Centuries* approximately 6'000 vintage prints will be analysed, to evaluate how images reveal the change of the concept of Switzerland as a place. Running parallel with this is a research project with the Zurich University of the Arts supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

In the project *How a Postcard Publisher Portrayed Switzerland 100 Years Ago* 203 sample albums of the postcard publisher *Photoglob-Wehrli* containing over 37'000 photographs will be processed. Approximately 15'000 of these will be digitised. The priority of the *Photoglob-Wehrli Collection* project is the preservation of the image information of approximately 2'500 documents that are already showing signs of deterioration; but in addition, making the collection known is also an important consideration.

Collection

Among the new acquisitions the following are particularly worth mentioning: five landscape drawings by Michael Günzburger, which were created in the context of the project *Arte Bregaglia*; etchings, lithographs and experimental pigment prints by Filip Haag; twelve original watercolours by Lisa Hoever Looock. The latter were conceived in the context of her first major retrospective in the *Kunstmuseum Winterthur* in the summer of 2008 as preliminary studies for the cover of the exhibition catalogue; but they may equally be considered as artworks in themselves.

In the Swiss Posters union catalogue¹⁵ 51'876 posters were available online as of the end of 2008 (End 2007: 41'113). Thanks to the previously mentioned *Memoriav* projects and the launch of the online *HelveticArchives*, as of 2009 the cataloguing of the photo collection will be improved considerably.

User Services

There were 155 visitors to the Prints and Drawings Department in the past year. In addition, replies were made to 429 written, electronic and telephone enquires. A total of 3'420 reproductions, photocopies and copyrights of documents were ordered, of these 2'691 alone from the Federal Archives of Historical Monuments: in comparison to the previous year (612 documents) the demand has quadrupled.

Thanks to participation in national and international symposia the significance of the Photo and the *Schweizer Kleinmeister* collections are being recognized among experts. The Head of the Prints and Drawings Department is Chair of the Photography Expert Group of *Memoriav* since 2008.



From the *Photoglob-Wehrli* Collection. Geneva, *Quai des Bergues* (1908); Basel, *Freiestrasse* (1908); St. Gallen, Cathedral (1906)



¹⁴ Association for the Preservation of Swiss Audiovisual Heritage
¹⁵ www.nb.admin.ch/posters