

Prints and drawings department

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Prints and Drawings Department

The collection concept devised in 2010 was well received in the specialist community. The new organisation, also introduced in 2010, made the department more user-friendly. Photo portraits are now searchable online.

Collection

The collection concept for the Prints and Drawings Department (PDD) drawn up in 2010 was widely discussed among the specialist community. The model for the concept was the cooperation between poster collections on the Swiss Poster Catalogue,³³ which has been working smoothly for some years: the task of collecting physical objects is divided up between the institutions, while an online platform ensures that the collection remains complete. Five new institutions³⁴ joined the platform during the year in review. As of the end of 2011, it contained 61 456 records (2010: 56 072).

The PDD entries in *HelveticArchives* grew by 16 827 units. A total of 65 533 PDD items were listed at the end of the year (2010: 48 706).

The vast majority of the expansion came in the form of photo portraits. Over the last three years, all of the approximately 18 000 photographs acquired up to 2010 have been catalogued online. Those dating from before 1900 can also be viewed via preview images. The acquisition of the archive of Zurich photographer Niklaus Stauss at the end of 2011 more than doubled the holdings of photo portraits. The archive consists mainly of portraits of cultural practitioners, and is one of the largest private archives documenting artistic life in Switzerland from the 1950s to the present day. Photography collection strategy in Switzerland is coordinated by the photographic competence group of *Memoriav*,³⁵ which is chaired by the head of the PDD.

The Swissinfo archive represents an era that is drawing to a close. The international branch of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) presented its final paper archive to the PDD, comprising the years 1983 to 2003. The archive has been maintained electronically since 2004.

User Services

The reorganisation in 2010 began to bear fruit in 2011. Centralisation of workplaces and client inquiries has substantially reduced processing times. The *HelveticArchives* online catalogue is beginning to establish itself as a research tool. In 2011, information was provided on 594 occasions (2010: 583) and 2139 reproductions were ordered (2010: 2497). A large proportion of these concerned documents from the Federal Archives of Historic Monuments (FAHM).

This demonstrates that each of the PDD's collections has a specific client base with specific requirements. For this reason, specialists with an in-depth knowledge of fields such as heritage protection, archaeology and architectural history are on hand to provide assistance.

The needs of many target groups can be readily identified via joint research projects. The example of the Swiss Literary Archives shows that these both raise awareness of the collections and increase usage of them. The PDD has been involved in research projects on a number of occasions, including the "Archives of Place" in conjunction with the Zurich University of the Arts. Research collaboration is to remain an ongoing activity in future. A Swiss National Science Foundation project on artists' books in Switzerland is currently in preparation in association with the University of Lausanne. The international colloquium *Les livres d'art et d'artistes s'exposent* examined one aspect of this issue, namely outreach via exhibitions.



Images by unknown photographers from the portrait collection:
Léon Berthoud, painter, ca. 1890



Emma Matthys, poet, Einsiedeln, Benziger Verlag, ca. 1880



Johannes Brahms, composer, ca. 1887

³³ www.nb.admin.ch/posters

³⁴ Cinémathèque suisse, Basler Plakatsammlung, Abtei St. Maurice, Kantonsbibliothek Nidwalden, Swiss Jazzorama

³⁵ Association for the preservation of the audiovisual heritage of Switzerland