

Swiss Literary Archives

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Annual report / Swiss National Library**

Band (Jahr): **106 (2019)**

PDF erstellt am: **04.06.2024**

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Swiss Literary Archives

The Swiss Literary Archives (SLA) kicked off the year with the lyricist and performer Nora Gomringer and jazz percussionist Baby Sommer in a homage to Nora's father Eugen Gomringer, marking the handover of his archive of concrete poetry and Constructivist art. The SNSF project *Lectures de Jean Bollack* in the SLA, in association with the University of Fribourg and an international research group from Switzerland and Germany (University of Osnabrück) comprising four doctoral students of classical philology and German studies, gathered pace. The drafting group on the cataloguing rules for literary archives from the Staatsbibliothek Berlin, the Austrian National Library, Vienna and the SLA drew up the rules for cataloguing using authority files in archives and libraries (replacing the RNA); they were approved by the standards committee of the German National Library (DNB).

Collection

The acquisition of the Segmüller/Seiler Collection and the archive of P.K. Wehrli significantly strengthened the SLA's focus on avant-gardes in the second half of the 20th century. An important and previously unknown collection of letters by Annemarie Schwarzenbach entered the SLA in the literary estate of Willy Storrer. The literary estate of criminal law professor and author Peter Noll, best known for his *In the Face of Death*, was shipped back from the US by his daughters and handed over to the SLA. The SLA was also gifted a further publisher's archive, that of La Dogana. Among Romansh literature, the literary estate of Chasper Po was gathered together from various provenances and brought to the Archives.

The Swiss Literary Archives lost one of their leading scholars, with the death of Jean Starobinski (1920–2019). The second part of his academic library was transferred to the SLA shortly after he passed way, and is now being catalogued.

The SLA received six archives and literary estates, including a publisher's archive and three collections, with five fonds as gifts. The number of online inventories rose by 8.8% in 2019, to 247 (2018: 227).

Outreach

At a spring soirée, the Bern-based performer Ariane von Graffenried delved into the archive of Emmy Hennings, appropriating texts by the author and *diseuse* of Cabaret Voltaire, who a century ago spent almost two years living in Bern at a turning point in her life. The dialect poet and expert Beat Sterchi appeared at a commented autumn reading in which he essayed a dissection of the supposedly high poetry of Carl Spitteler, discovering a humorous side and dialect overtones in the Nobel Prize winner.

Quarto no. 46 was devoted to Jean-Marc Lovay. It was presented to the public at a launch in Geneva. Quarto no. 47 honoured the life and work of Paul Nizon on the occasion of his 90th birthday. It was presented in Paris, where he now lives, and in his home city of Bern, with both occasions being attended by the author himself. The volume is also the publication accompanying an exhibition in Aarau presenting Nizon as art critic and writer on art. Marking the 100th anniversary of Carl Spitteler's Nobel Prize accolade, the SLA's bulletin *Passim* devoted an issue to the topic of *literary awards* and produced a volume on the SLA's *cooperations*. The collected volume of *Rilke's Correspondence* (accompanying the eponymous conference in 2017), containing essays from international research, was edited by Irmgard Wirtz and Alexander Honold and published in autumn by Wallstein (Göttingen) and Chronos (Zurich).

User services

The number of active users rose by 9%, from 864 (2018) to 943 (2019). There was a slight drop in information and research requests, which fell from 4006 (2018) to 3949 (2019).



Cover of *Passim* on cooperations



Nora Gomringer evening with Günther "Baby" Sommer