

Swiss Literary Archives

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): **108 (2021)**

PDF erstellt am: **27.06.2024**

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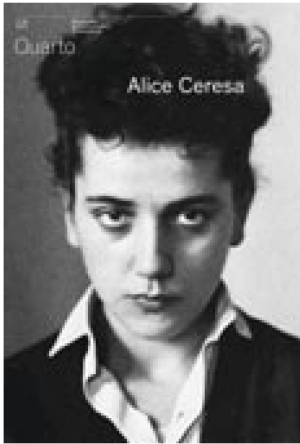
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Swiss Literary Archives



Quarto on author Alice Ceresa

The Swiss Literary Archives (SLA) significantly expanded its collection in 2021, adding the estates of scholar Jonas Fränkel and writer Jürg Laederach, the archive of writer and artist Birgit Kempker and the photo archive of Yvonne Böhler. The SLA also celebrated its 30th anniversary with the publication of *Trouvaillen, Trouvailles, Trouvaille, Truvaglias* on its fonds and collections. In addition, events were organised and publications released to mark the centenary of the birth of Friedrich Dürrenmatt (1921–90).

Collection

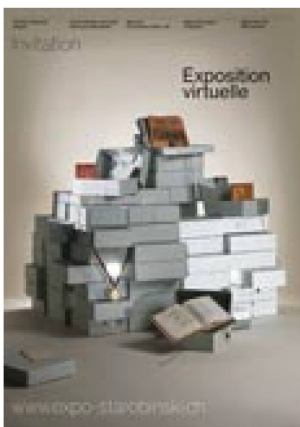
The SLA recorded some significant new acquisitions in 2021, including the estate of Jonas Fränkel (1879–1965), Jewish scholar and patron of Carl Spitteler. The estate comprises many of Spitteler's manuscripts, bequeathed to Fränkel by the poet, important literary correspondence and key documents on Fränkel's editorial and journalistic work. The SLA also acquired the estate of writer Jürg Laederach (1945–2018) and the archive of writer, essayist, author of audio works, and video and installation artist Birgit Kempker (b. 1956), therefore expanding its collection to include experimental literature from Switzerland. It received the photo archive of Yvonne Böhler (b. 1941) as a gift. This archive contains photos of authors from the Swiss literary scene since the 1970s, thereby documenting the faces of Switzerland's four literatures over a period of more than fifty years. As such, it is the ideal complement to the SLA's literary holdings. Additionally, the SLA added the library of Franco Beltrametti (1937–95) – one of the most important Swiss authors of the Beat Generation – to its collection. This supplements his estate, which is already held in the SLA, with rare books on Beat Culture.

The SLA also made important progress in cataloguing, with three large holdings being accessible online since 2021: that of the oldest living author in the SLA, Eugen Gomringer (b. 1925), the entire estate of Nobel laureate Carl Spitteler and the estate of Genevan scholar Jean Starobinski.

Outreach

2021 was the Friedrich Dürrenmatt centenary year. To mark the occasion, the SLA published an attractive edition, lavishly illustrated with facsimiles, on his autobiographical *Stoffe-Projekt* in association with the Diogenes Verlag. The five-volume edition is accompanied by a freely accessible online presentation of a total of 30,000 digitised manuscripts from Dürrenmatt's 20-year writing process. An array of previously unpublished texts is therefore accessible to the public for the first time, allowing a fresh and comprehensive look at his work. This marked the completion of a longstanding research project. To mark Dürrenmatt's 100th birthday, the SLA also organised the international conference *Wirklichkeit als Fiktion – Fiktion als Wirklichkeit* at the National Library. The over 30 lectures and plenary sessions by Elisabeth Bronfen, Andreas Kilcher, Peter von Matt, Monika Schmitz-Emans, Andreas Urs Sommer and many others highlighted new ways of approaching Dürrenmatt's work, shed light on the material, media and transdisciplinary aspects of his oeuvre, and opened up new ways of engaging with the work in future. A cultural fringe programme with workshops by authors and translators and an orchestra rehearsal by the ensemble *Proton* brought Dürrenmatt's work to life through text and sound. The conference was organised with the support of the Burgergemeinde Bern, the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel, the Charlotte Kerr Dürrenmatt-Stiftung, the Oertli Foundation, the Robert Walser Centre, the Swiss National Science Foundation, the Stiftung Pro scientia et arte and the University of Bern.

To mark the 100th birthday of Jean Starobinski (1920–2019), at the end of 2020, the virtual exhibition *Jean Starobinski. Relations critiques*, which was developed in close collaboration



Event on the virtual exhibition on Jean Starobinski. *Relations Critiques*

between the SLA and the EPFL+ECAL Lab, was made available online. The exhibition illustrates the current relevance of the Genevan writer and world-renowned critic. The final version of the exhibition was presented at the Maison Rousseau & Littérature in Geneva in late 2021 and was addressed in the *Bulletin du Cercle d'études Jean Starobinski*.

To coincide with the acquisition of the estate of Jonas Fränkel, a series of workshops was launched on the Jewish scholar's legacy. An event was held in spring 2021 entitled *Zu Jonas Fränkels Nachlass mit dem Kryptonachlass Carl Spitteler* and in the autumn on *Fränkel, der Philologe*. The series, which was organised in association with the Walter Benjamin Kolleg at the University of Bern and the ETH Zurich, sparked an international debate and encouraged dialogue with the Spitteler network, literary societies and philologists at the Universities of Basel, Zurich, Lausanne and Geneva. It is to be pursued in 2022.

The international colloquium *Jean Bollack. Lectures d'un lecteur – Kritik des Verstehens* was a highlight of the SNSF project with the University of Fribourg, the University of Osnabrück and the University of Lausanne. It was held at the National Library and at the University of Fribourg and included a play about Bollack's work as a translator and playwright performed by the STOA theatre group.

In terms of publications, the book *Trouvaillen, Trouvailles, Trouvaille, Truvaglias*, which was released in four languages to mark the SLA's 30th birthday, is worthy of mention. It highlights the diversity of the SLA's collection, its research projects, and its collaborations and partnerships. The book features photos and descriptions of many of its fonds and collections, along with explanations by the SLA's curators. The articles have been published in the Bern newspaper *Der Bund* in recent years.

The SLA also dedicated a *Quarto* to author Alice Ceresa (1923-2001). The SLA magazine was handed out to the public in her home city of Rome in the spring of 2021.

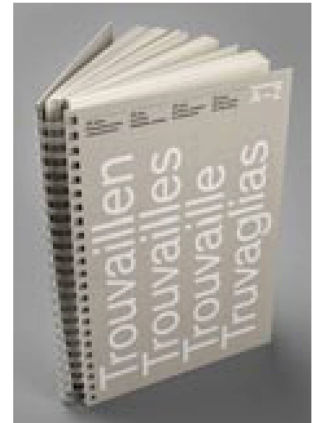
The first issue of the SLA's bulletin *Passim* in 2021 placed a theoretical discussion on archive fever in a practical context, and the second explored the diversity of the SLA's notebook holdings.

User services

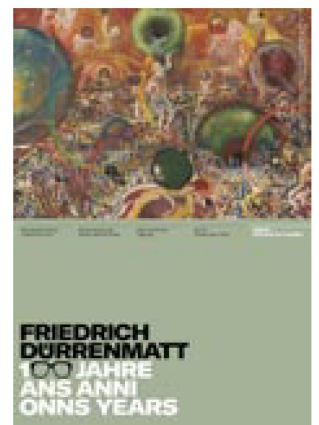
The number of users of the SLA rose in 2021 to 894 (2020: 829), while information retrievals amounted to 4,057 (2020: 3,257).

Networking

In 2021, the SLA ran a national archiving conference at the National Library on the theme of *Digital data in archives* with speakers and participants from the following partner institutions: the German Literature Archives, the Swiss Institute for Art Research SIK-ISEA, the Robert Walser Archives, the Thomas Mann Archives at ETH Zurich, Zurich central library, the Joyce Foundation Zurich and the Basel University Library.



Publication *Trouvaillen, Trouvailles, Trouvaille, Truvaglias*, 2021



Wirklichkeit als Fiktion – Fiktion als Wirklichkeit: international conference to mark the centenary of the birth of Friedrich Dürrenmatt