

Heidi Archive and the Plan for a First Heidi Museum in Zurich

The Heidi Archive of the Heidiseum maintains an exceptional collection of holdings on the theme of "Heidi". The Heidi Archive contains numerous documents from the estate of the author Johanna Spyri and her heirs. Another focus is on original illustrations for "Heidi" as well as publishing documents and correspondence. UNESCO has recognized the exceptional value of these documents for mankind by including them in the international register "Memory of the World" in 2023.

Of the 432 documents registered to date in "Memory of the World" program, only 5 are directly related to women. This new entry in the international register adds Johanna Spyri to the list of female personalities.

The Heidiseum is planning a Heidi Museum in Zurich in order to convey the novel's 140-year history of success and reception in a modern way and make it a tangible experience on the basis of these documents.

The Heidi Archive with its valuable holdings comprises over 1000 documents and has been built up by Heidi expert Dr. Peter Büttner, great-grandson of the first Heidi illustrator, since 2006. The uniqueness of this archive manifests itself in the coherent composition of the collection, which makes the archive an important part of Switzerland's documentary cultural heritage.

The Heidi Archive uniquely represents the worldwide dissemination, reception and impact, as well as the publishing use of the author's complete works until the expiration of copyrights in 1931 and beyond.

The Heidi Archive includes the following areas:

- Collection of the original German editions in closed edition sequence
- Collection of early and rare translations from over 20 languages in first editions
- Significant dedication copies
- Original illustrations, including the first drawings for "Heidi" by Friedrich Wilhelm Pfeiffer from 1880 with related correspondence by Johanna Spyri
- Documents and letters of the author Johanna Spyri, her family and her environment
- Estate of publishing documents and correspondence
- Cinema posters and programs
- Scripts
- Production Cells
- Heidi comics
- Newspaper clippings
- Records and radio play cassettes
- Photographs

Highlights from the Heidi Archive

The unique collection on "Heidi" contains rare translations, including representative holdings of American, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Japanese, and Spanish adaptations, as well as the first German "Heidi" editions in Braille. The English first editions from 1882 come from the estate of Johanna Spyri, as well as the dedication copy of the Geneva women's rights activist Camile Vidart to Johanna Spyri, who translated her stories into French.

The Heidi Archive also includes a valuable Hebrew collection with a dedication copy from Max Brod to the daughter of his long-time collaborator Ilse Hoffe, which cannot be found in this completeness in any other library. The dedication copy by Max Brod, who like the Hoffe family had to flee from the Nazis, is a unique contemporary document.

In addition, the Heidi Archive is in possession of numerous original illustrations. The original designs by Friedrich Wilhelm Pfeiffer for "Heidi" from 1880 and the accompanying letters by the author are key documents of the archive. They are particularly significant in view of the fact that the "Heidi" manuscript has not survived.

Among the highlights of the archive is a film script of the first Hollywood adaptation from 1937 with Shirley Temple in her famous role as Heidi. The script comes from the personal estate of U.S. film producer Darryl F. Zanuck, with numerous annotations.

Planning of the first Heidi Museum in Zurich

The Heidiseum would like to realize a Heidi Museum in Zurich, where the author Johanna Spyri lived and worked. The documentary cultural heritage is to be made accessible to a broad and international public in a modern and innovative way.

The credo of the Heidiseum is a well-founded and experience-oriented knowledge transfer of the Swiss cultural heritage "Heidi", which also has families, children and schools in mind as a target group. The Heidiseum wants to culturally enhance the multifaceted and extensive landscape of the Spyri and "Heidi" world and thus complement and enrich the overall picture with a museum offer in addition to existing offers.

The Heidiseum also organizes exhibitions and art projects on the theme of "Heidi". In 2022, it showed the exhibition "Heidi in Israel" in Munich for half a year (see YouTube: "Heidi in Israel"). The illustrated catalog presents the many surprising backgrounds and references to the Hebrew reception of "Heidi in Israel".

Through the inclusion of contemporary international artists, the focus is not only on the past, but also on the future.

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