

Table of contents

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1	Wiesbaden a capital of calligraphy	
	Felicitas Reusch	14
2	In advance: Too good to be true!	
	Felicitas Reusch and Stefan Soltek	14
3	Gottfried Pott: Form and Content. Scripts and the writing master's book "A Letter Collection" in the Klingspor Museum	
	Stefan Soltek	20
4	Gottfried Pott: The green book - an elementary etude	
	Stefan Soltek	58
5	Tamed or unleashed: Friedrich Poppl's art of drawing and writing lettering writing	
	Silvia Werfel	78
6	Werner Schneider: Real life means encounter	
	Katharina Pieper	102
7	In the magic garden of writing: Werner Schneider and his relationship with the Berlin Calligraphy Collection	
	Susanne Nagel	132
8	How do calligraphers come up with their texts?	
	Felicitas Reusch	146
9	Changing art forms	
	Ole Freytag	158
10	Biographies Friedrich Poppl, Werner Schneider, Gottfried Pott	172
11	List of authors, list of illustrations	178
	Imprint	184

Chapter 1 from page 6

Wiesbaden the capital of calligraphy, too good to be true!

Wiesbaden is a capital city, which raises questions. About what? And when? And why Wiesbaden in particular? We are in the years after the Second World War, Germany is divided into two parts. West Berlin was an island and a new capital had to be created. For a time, it was to be the trade fair city of Frankfurt am Main. Although badly damaged, the city received a lot of attention because of its central location in the new Federal Republic. But the capital of the new Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) became the relatively small university city of Bonn on the river Rhine, probably because of its proximity to the much more important city of Cologne, 90% of which had been destroyed.

Capitals also had to be found for the states that were founded. When the state of Hesse was established, Wiesbaden was chosen, not only because of its historical connection to the royal seat in Nassau times, but also because the American occupying power had helped the city of its headquarters gain a certain reputation. With the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, Wiesbaden acquired the status of state capital of a federal state. In this respect, it can be said that Wiesbaden became a capital. A city of faded wealth from the years before the First World War with many fanciful villas built by rentiers who had moved here. But why does Wiesbaden come to mind in connection with "beautiful"? And why shouldn't "beautiful" go with "true"?

Wiesbaden stretches from the Rhine to the Taunus slopes with many green spaces and can be perceived as pleasant simply because of its location between the streams flowing from the Taunus to the Rhine. The city's architecture is moderate, ranging from conservative historicism to modern buildings that blend in. In order to attract guests, Wiesbaden claimed to be an elegant city with flair after the Second World War. This claim was also upheld by the elegant fashion ateliers that moved in from Berlin. The theater and Kurhaus were repaired after bomb damage and provided space for social events in the evening in a large dressing room or in the afternoon in the Kurpark, e.g. at the flower festival.

The influx of small and large publishing houses and the associated circle of writers from the Soviet-occupied zone became important for the city's intellectual climate.

In 1945, Helmuth von Hasen moved the music publisher Breitkopf & Härtel from Leipzig to Wiesbaden. A publishing house that had brought out important complete editions of Bach, Beethoven (1862-1865), Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1874-1877), Mozart (1877-1893), Schumann (1879-1893) and Schubert (1884-1897) and was to publish Max Reger, became a new pillar in the city's musical life.

Anton Kippenberg founded a West German branch of the Insel Verlag in Wiesbaden, whose management was taken over by his long-time member of staff, the writer Friedrich Michael.

Hans Brockhaus also moved the encyclopaedia publisher of the same name from Leipzig to Wiesbaden. In the graphic artist Johannes Boehland, who had moved from Berlin, he found an artist whose conservative sense of style suited him. So he had his publishing brochure illustrated not with photos, but with drawings from Johannes Boehland's fine pen and reduced line.

All these people contributed a great deal to Wiesbaden's self-image. They prevented the beautiful from tipping over into the sweet or stuffy.

Beauty is most obviously celebrated in the Antiqua writings of Friedrich Poppl. He and his assistant Werner Schneider developed Antiqua to the purity and perfection demanded by the great humanists. It was also part of the development of taste in the young FRG that some aspects of aesthetics were measured against the standards of Roman antiquity, as the turn towards a humanist education provided moral support after the lost war and the Holocaust.

Even if the aesthetic achievements of Poppl and Schneider have been forgotten in Wiesbaden, they are still "true". There are several reasons why they have been forgotten. Their achievements were always seen in connection with their teaching activities and these schools - whether the Werkkunstschule or its successor, the university of applied sciences - had not set up any archives. So they decided to give their estate to the "Berlin Calligraphy Collection". Another reason was their own view of their works. They did not regard their prints as independent works of art and did not build up a market for them. They saw themselves as lone fighters and it was enough for them to position themselves

morally with their written texts. In addition, type design played a more important role in their everyday academic appointments than calligraphy.

The "Lettering and Graphics" class took shape again during the reappraisal of the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden for the exhibition and publication in 2016. On this occasion, Friedrich Poppl's former student Gottfried Pott donated important calligraphic sheets by his teacher to Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V., which brought Poppl's skills back to life. This was the beginning of a renewed interest in calligraphy in Wiesbaden. This also prompted Werner Schneider to donate calligraphic sheets from the print shop of the university of applied sciences to the Kunstarche before his death (2022).

Gottfried Pott opted for calligraphy to a greater extent than the two previously mentioned. Together with Karlgeorg Hoefler, he took up the enthusiasm for calligraphy in America and decided to teach calligraphy in workshops in the USA, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. Shortly before his death on August 5, 2024, he reaped the fruits of his international career as a rich harvest in Wiesbaden and once again strengthened the Wiesbaden location for teaching with his bequest to the library of RheinMain University of Applied Sciences.

So I can justifiably claim that it is "true" and "beautiful" that Wiesbaden has these three exceptionally talented calligraphers. The future will show whether more calligraphers will come to Wiesbaden on the basis of this heritage and whether they can keep the "capital of calligraphy" alive. In the tradition of Poppl, Schneider, Pott, the public sector and patrons are called upon to create a framework for this and the RheinMain University of Applied Sciences would be well advised to expand its curriculum to include calligraphy. The book title found by Stefan Soltek should be an impetus to establish a treasure and teaching house for calligraphy in Wiesbaden.

Felicitas Reusch

Chapter 2 from page 14 Preface: Too good to be true..!

The title of this book is intended to be ambiguous. It does not want to ignore the two perspectives that the genre of calligraphy has experienced over the course of the 20th century, when three well-known protagonists are to be honored. In fact, calligraphy as a discipline struggles with all the attributions, assessments, understandings and misunderstandings that have been attached to creative processes in the intermediate field of applied and fine art, design and craft, at least in recent decades. Again and again, the debate revolves around the claim that products that become usable, unlike a work of art that is free of them, should be attributed the quality of the artistic; a phenomenon that had to be dealt with especially at the museums of applied arts. It is remarkable how the age of the products in question tends to protect them from this examination. For in the period of Art Nouveau and the following decades, when the objects of everyday life were subjected to new design standards, the corresponding results soon ranked under the label of visual, fine art; but at least no question was raised as to the equal status of the fields. For since Art Nouveau brought with it an expanded need for design in all areas of life, the things from the hands of designers and manufacturers were ennobled as belonging to the artistic furnishing of living spaces. There is hardly an art history of the 20th century that would do without a poster by Jules Cherét or Toulouse-Lautrec or a vase by Émile Gallé or the Post Office Savings Bank chair by Otto Wagner. Art and design - this familiar neighborhood was established for Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Bauhaus, and it was revived after 1950 for the genre of (furniture) design with heroes such as Charles and Ray Eames, Achille Castiglioni, Philippe Starck or Ron Arad or Ingo Maurer.

Writing has a harder time of it. It is symptomatic that the most recent comprehensive presentation of Peter Behrens' life's work in several volumes failed to produce one on his decidedly trend-setting typographic work.¹ But also consider how little of the written and type-related work of Kokoschka, Matisse, Léger, Picasso or Le Corbusier is included when talking about their artistic oeuvre.

Too good to be true - On the one hand, it expresses the enthusiasm that a considerable occurrence of quality is so remarkable and respected that it exceeds all expectations. Johannes Böhlend, Friedrich Poppl, Werner Schneider, Gottfried Pott - such a phalanx of remarkable protagonists of calligraphy in one place, in Wiesbaden - that must evoke a corresponding appreciation: This is concentrated calligraphy, i.e. the art of beautiful writing, and yes, that may lead to the happy observation that it is "too good to be true."²

On the other hand, however, the aphorism can be reinterpreted. Where traditionally (Plato, Goethe) the true, the good and the beautiful exist in balance and harmony, this can of course be called into question. At the very beginning of the 20th century, when protagonists of type design in Offenbach, Stuttgart and Düsseldorf raised type design to a new creative level, there was considerable doubt about calligraphy.

Christian Scheffler, long-time director of the Klingspor Museum and one of the best experts on the subject, cites Paul Renner (Futura) as a key witness: "In his pseudo-medievalism, the art writer ekes out an artificial existence like the last elk in the nature reserve" he indicated, not turning against handwriting per se, but 'the romantic preference for historical forms'.³

1 Cooperation project of the Museum of Applied Arts Cologne (MAKK) with the LVR Industriemuseum Oberhausen and the Kunstmuseen Krefeld, 2018. Topics of the 12 issues see: <https://www.zvab.com/erstaussgabe/Allesk%C3%B6nner-Peter-Behrens-150-Geburtstag-18682018/30412604712/bd>

2 Cf. the publication: Karlgeorg Hoefer, *Schriftkunst Letter Art*, Hardheim 1989, with contributions by Hermann Zapf, Dieter Leitner, Larry Brady, Gottfried Pott, Kathleen Casey/Christina Pierce and Sheila Waters
3 Christian Scheffler, *Kalligraphie*, in: *Schrift und Schriftlichkeit*. HSK 10.1 Berlin 1994, pp.228-255.

After the Second World War - Scheffler continues - the attack continues. In 1963, the trend-setting exhibition *Schrift und Bild* (Writing and Image) was opened, accompanied by the statement of the writing art expert Werner Doede: "Beautiful writing, calligraphy, saved itself in an outmoded festive dignity, congealed in historicizing ornamentation, became a laboriously conceived and followed rule and thus fell into the bad reputation that persists to this day".

Scheffler, without going into more detail about the calligraphy protagonist Karlgeorg Hoefler and the Klingspor Offenbach writing workshop he initiated⁴, supports this swan song with a series of artists who seem to him to be associated with setting their own personal accents independently of a set of rules. From Eva Aschoff to Max Ernst, from Georges Mathieu and Jean Dubuffet to Picasso and Horst Janssen, Scheffler identifies a group of painters and graphic artists who incorporate writing into their pictorial inventions beyond all historically anchored training.⁵

Scheffler sees the conflict exemplified in the Offenbach scribe Christine Hartmann, where he finds that she has taken "the hard path from the perfectly formed Antiqua to an individually shaped expressivity of the line". He obviously concedes to her that she has transferred calligraphy from its utilitarian nature to the milieu of free art. If you read his foreword to the catalog of the Offenbach writing workshop in 1991, it becomes clear that he saw this as an exception: "Calligraphy today is for many a beautiful and meaningful leisure activity, a craft for the well-trained hand; and calligraphy can also be art, but that is difficult".

Specific comparative studies between protagonists of "calligraphy", which is anchored in the history of writing and its various forms, on the one hand, and the visual arts, on the other, which attribute a decided share of their visual work to writing, especially handwriting, have hardly been carried out. This is evidenced by the fact that, at least in the predestined Klingspor Museum, despite all the exhibitions on typography ("*Schrift in Form*") and writing in artists' books on the one hand and on individual calligraphers on the other⁶, there is still no such exhibition that would have shown the characteristics of the design and use of writing in an "interdisciplinary" way, highlighting similarities and differences.

The perception of "The Wiesbaden School" from overseas is completely different.⁷

Looking at the topics of calligraphy conferences and workshops abroad, it becomes clear that calligraphy was cultivated there at the highest level, full of enthusiasm.

In 1996, the academic journal "Letters Art Review", published in Norman, Oklahoma, published Werner Schneider's calligraphy of Psalm 45 on a red background on the front cover and on a dark blue background on the back cover. This spirited handwriting by Werner Schneider from Wiesbaden startles the reader and is intended to arouse his curiosity about a subject that is attracting worldwide interest: The expressive handwriting from Wiesbaden.

4 Cf. the same: *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Schrift*, in: Christine Hartmann, *Kalligraphie. Die Kunst des schönen Schreibens*, Niedernhausen 1986, pp. 6-25; foreword to the catalog *Schreibwerkstatt Klingspor Offenbach*, Klingspor Museum 1991, Hardheim 1991, p.8; Christine Hartmann, *Meisterschule Kalligraphie*, Augsburg 1996, pp. 93-128

5 The occurrence of handwriting in the French painter's book deserves its own examination. The volumes that Henri Matisse decorated for the publisher Tériade alone show well-considered, very different forms of his handwriting, adapted to the content and the time of origin of the texts

66 Hermann Kilian (2004), Rudo Spemann (2005), Gottfried Pott (2011), Ernst Schneidler (2013), Karlgeorg Hoefler (2014)

7 *Letter Arts Review*, 1996, Volume 13, Number 2, p.10 -17

The main article in this issue, "Demystifying the Ruling Pen", explores the acceptance of this pen, which is linked to the life's work of the Wiesbaden calligrapher Friedrich Poppl. " ...he had drawn precisely in outline character under enormous time pressure and high physical tension, working through the night. Happy with the redemptive final stroke, he spontaneously dipped his drawing pen into the full glass of ink in order to elicit more contrasting, fragmentary accents from this precise drawing instrument. The expressive style was born."⁸

In 1996, fourteen years after Friedrich Poppl's death, this drawing pen found its place in the pantheon of writing instruments and so the drawing pens used by Friedrich Poppl, Gottfried Pott, Paul Shaw, Irving Bogen and Thomas Ingmire are illustrated on a double page as a respective set for expressive writing.⁹

The impact of German expressive calligraphy remained in the USA, but in its country of origin, Germany, it lost importance, partly because teaching at the universities of applied sciences was characterized by utilitarian thinking and thus type design became a priority in type instruction.

Can this neglect still be made up for in Germany if Wolfgang Beinert's assessment is correct: "Today, calligraphy no longer plays a significant role in the materialization of language and thoughts. It is only used to a limited extent in the private sphere, in art and in graphic design, for example in the development of word and figurative marks or in the inscription of documents. Even in type design, it has been almost completely replaced by the use of electronic publishing software."¹⁰

Christian Scheffler already provided his own rejection of the classical parameters of the art of handwriting and its basics when he stated: "Paul Klee's 'Pädagogisches Skizzenbuch' (1925, Bauhausbücher 2) and Wassily Kandinsky's book 'Punkt und Linie zu Fläche' (1926, Bauhausbücher 9) are the fundamental writing master books of our century"¹¹ ; knowing full well that references to writing can hardly be discerned there. So should writing be fed exclusively from general doctrines on structure and proportion, on the importance of pointing on the one hand and empty space on the other? Conversely, reference should be made to the previously unpublished book by Gottfried Pott from 2020, in which the calligrapher reacts to seven Kandinsky quotes and shows how he uses his source of inspiration for form design and its possible interpretations

Here is an attempt to once again invite you to take a closer look at calligraphic creation. This is based on the conviction that it is not just amateurish enjoyment of lettering, but the continuation of a profession that has grown over time, when proven positions in the art of lettering and their updates of writing are pursued according to the educational background of established written forms. In the following, we will attempt to take a closer look at the well-known writers from Wiesbaden, Friedrich Poppl, Werner Schneider and Gottfried Pott, with regard to their conception of writing in the intermediate field of writing training and the artistic position of the artist self.

Let us examine whether and how Schön-Geschriebenes can bring its goodness into the field of graphic verbal and non-verbal communication, even against all doubt, with the claim to be taken as true.

Stefan Soltek and Felicitas Reusch

⁸ Werner Schneider, Friedrich Poppl type artist, type designer and pedagogue, in: Die Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden, published by Kunstarchiv Wiesbaden, 2016, p.77

⁹ Letter Arts Review, p.10 -11

¹⁰ Wolfgang Beinert (Calligraphy, in: typolexikon.de; 2019)

¹¹ See note 3

Gottfried Pott - Form and Content.

Scriptures and the Writing Masterbook A Letter Collection

Writing is the most civilized form of self-understanding. This interpretation by the author and publisher Michael Krüger is one of the most catchy formulas of our time and makes you think about the term. It refers, however, to the authorship of a novelist, poet, essayist, etc., to the words and sentences that they creatively combine to form a text. Those who deal with the actual process of literally putting ink, India ink or lead on paper (as in this book) would like to adapt Krüger's statement. Martin Luther passed on the long-rooted understanding of holistic writing with the words: "The pen is light, that's true... Three fingers are enough, they say of writing, but the whole body and soul work at it.)" Luther knew what he was talking about. By translating the given text of the Bible into his own language and by creating manuscripts of his sermons and letters, he can be considered a protagonist of writing in general.

Long before, artists (ivory carvers and book illuminators) created succinct depictions of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) writing his works.

An early medieval ivory panel presents the scene in a strictly separate manner: Above, behind drawn-back curtains, the theologian writes his text, inspired by the dove of the Holy Spirit. Beneath him sit monks who, in a conspiratorial manner, ensure that the prescribed text is disseminated. Whether the author used his preliminary handwriting, while the scribes used calligraphy optimized for a wider readership - it is difficult to say whether the carver of the ivory had such thoughts... Either way - the scholar's reflections on Jesus Christ, for whom a characteristic writing situation of his own has been handed down, are gradually released into the world:

When an adulteress is brought before him for what is supposedly inevitable judgment (John 8.6), the man being put to the test refuses to give an immediate answer. Like a fermata, he bends down and writes with his finger on the ground. Only then does the instruction follow: "Let he who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her"; and then he reinforces it by writing more. The fact that the evangelist does not tell us what Jesus writes increases the symbolic power of the event. Writing, it becomes clear, has subtle facets that can be used to make oneself eloquent. Words are not inevitable and are not the only means; And how difficult it is to weigh up where one is writing from, whether with holy, dynamic elegance or in a combative struggle with what is unholy squeezed from the pen - this range of writing by soulful and striving minds, which cannot be thought of in a sufficiently multifaceted way, is to be tentatively indicated in the comparison between the evangelist Mark and the rather unangelic author Philip. Civilized self-understanding does not necessarily mean a simple flow of writing, at peace with oneself. It is definitely about a clarification - possibly also a conflict with oneself - of the reason and purpose of graphically notating letters, individually or in the alphabet, and word and text. In this dilemma, constantly positioning oneself anew, this actual meaning of practice is the declared prerequisite for Gottfried Pott to dedicate himself to writing.

Putting these aspects at the beginning of a discussion of Gottfried Pott is intended to highlight the special quality of his writing. Pott is an author when, as an expert par excellence, he has meticulously compiled his knowledge of writing and its history and its development into textbooks. This is based on a skill in writing that has found and continues to find recognition far beyond the borders of his hometown of Wiesbaden.

The conditions under which Pott, as well as his colleagues discussed in this book, Friedrich Poppl and Werner Schneider, established their writing were full of tension. The purpose-related application of correct writing was still established in schools (fine handwriting) and technical colleges, but in the cultural sector it was viewed with suspicion as an obsolete *l'art pour l'art* is questioned.

Even the highly influential Offenbach Klingspor writing workshop, initiated with great fanfare by Karlgeorg Hofer in 1981, was not left untouched by this critical distancing. What went unnoticed was an interplay between professional and amateur people who demonstrated solidarity, in the spirit of Josef Beuys (every person is an artist), and which, viewed from a distance, is to be appreciated.

calligraphy, in the face of such clear contradiction ? For Gottfried Pott, the answer lay in the correct understanding of the term: "Beauty is an addition. So at the beginning, the

Striving for the good. Wanting to make something beautiful first is very tempting, but often prevents the explosive power of creativity. Doing justice to the content in the work falls by the wayside. The desired beauty does not have a natural charisma. Beauty should simply appeal to us in and of itself, without asking why."

longer than his teacher Poppl and his companion Schneider. He has used this opportunity for decades and has developed into one of the high-ranking representatives of his field. This is underlined by the recent award of the Order of Merit by the Hessian Minister. Pott has bequeathed 20 of his scriptures to the Hessian State Library. The writer wants the scripts created in Wiesbaden to find a permanent home here.

The art of writing has not only seen those protagonists who have attributed decorative, even artistic, meaning to it in the sense of traditional typologies; and write. The lettering that is widely practiced today is linked to this category. In addition, there were and are those who write writing who have extracted characteristics from writing that were decisively defined for the 20th century by none other than Peter Behrens. Writing, he explains, must be able to act beyond its legibility. It has the potential to moderate the artistic status of a place where it appears, to be the finish of an artistic charisma, as it were. With his Behrens typeface, developed in 1901 for and with Karl Klingspor, the then young architect translated his considerable understanding of writing into a literal and ornamental compendium that is definitely effective at the height of its time, indeed, to be a work of art.

As a book author and writer of articles, Gottfried Pott has taken many paths to teach the writing of script on the basis of a broad knowledge of its history and form development. This theoretical work forms the basis of his artistic work in which he - regardless of all formal and stylistic aspects - makes room to combine his world view and philosophy of life, page by page, script by script, into a coherent whole of his fundamental humanistic convictions and character. His teaching work in Hildesheim was combined with the exploration and teaching of all the facets that the history of writing has to offer. He broke down the epochs, the forms, the letters and the ornaments surrounding them that emerged at different times and summarized his handwritten examples with his verbal explanations in several textbooks. All of them received considerable response. He himself had learned a lot from his teachers, perhaps most of all from Vincent Weber, whose pictures are worth comparing with Potts' scripts and aspects of structural form. If the pictorial aspect of his compositions, the focal points in the interplay with the contouring of the details and the overall form, are striking, then these are characteristics that derive from Weber's visual language.

Trained in both writing and image design, Gottfried Potts' artistic dimension is evident in the way he has made a significant contribution to the development of this profession and, beyond that, has been able to assert his claim to verify the thinking and spirit of his time in his writings; and to make them effective in and during his time. This will be discussed in more detail below.

Located in Offenbach.

Poppl , Schneider, Pott – the triumvirate of scribes from Wiesbaden makes this city a place of the art of writing. Opposite it, to the east, in the Rhine-Main area , lies Offenbach. Its importance as a city of the art of writing stems from Karl Klingspor, who ran the Rudhard type foundry together with his brother Wilhelm from 1892. Klingspor understood and promoted the spirit of his time, which saw art

not as an ingredient but as the motive of modern life. In this respect, a new dimension was also to be opened up to writing. Otto Eckmann and Peter Behrens created signposts with their typefaces that were taken up by no one else as much as by Rudolf Koch. His 25 typefaces for Gebr. Klingspor set standards for an understanding of type that was inherently attributed to this character and statement.

And Koch was a writer. Combining writing and image into a sign that had a visible effect in his time - this is what his Gospel books and his calligraphic sheets show. The Sermon on the Mount, written in the form of a Latin cross, is at the top of the works associated with his artistic personality.

Gottfried Pott studied Koch extensively in the Klingspor Museum. The museum was an important meeting place for Karlgeorg Hoefer, who was himself a student of Koch and, like him, a lecturer at the neighboring university. The two calligraphers shared the idea of communicating writing to the wider society. Hoefer founded the Klingspor writing workshop, and it was Gottfried Pott who provided significant support in running the courses. This gave him a special opportunity to reach people with his enthusiasm and knowledge. This happened not only many times in his solo exhibition at the museum in 2011, but also time and again in relation to the museum's holdings. His explanation of Rudo Spemann's calligraphy will remain unforgettable. The oeuvre of this student of Ernst Schneidler, Koch's "counterpart" in Stuttgart, is almost entirely in the Klingspor Museum. Gottfried Pott analyzed the compositional technique that Spemann developed specifically for his sweeping capital letters and impressively presented his findings to the museum audience (Evening for Rudo Spemann 2015).

Two hands. Two lines. One principle.

The portrait of Gottfried Pott, which he presents on his homepage, was created in 2009 in the cabinet of the Klingspor Museum. A master of the lecture, he adds in his speech: His eyes speak as well as his facial expressions, and his hands set clear accents of underlining. This captures the moment when, in juxtaposition, they perform the two simple and fundamental vocabulary of literal design: the curved line and the straight line. In his master writing book *A Letter Collection (Page on the O)*, he combines the two elements as highly stylized set pieces of semicircle, horizontal and diagonal slashes and straight lines to form a repeat. What at first appears to be a decorative pattern field is actually the dedicated representation of the systematic basis that constitutes Pott's literal design.

In his essay on writing in the basic teaching of the Wiesbaden School of Applied Arts, Pott explains: "The writing in the basic teaching concentrated on the study of form and proportion theory. But also

Stylistic features, rhythm and the ornamental effect of the font are insights that are gained through writing and drawing the font. Designing with font is always subject to the laws of composition. Mastery of the tool, the linework of the vertical, horizontal, curves and diagonals must be brought into harmony. These are the first and perhaps the most important tasks in mastering the form."

As rich as the abundance and vital movement determine the oeuvre of his writing, Pott emphasizes the connection to the basic geometric forms. This understanding of organized form and structure-building was of great importance in the visual arts and architecture during his years of training. This may be shown by the comparison with features of metabolic architecture, which propagated a rational, arbitrarily expandable "plug-in system" made up of a few basic forms as an efficient method of construction. Even Gottfried Pott's most extroverted and expressive writings cannot and do not want to ignore this spirit of rational structuring.

The sheet on which he arranges an indefinite number of P letters – the rhythmic condensation of round elements is reminiscent of features of the picture compositions of his teacher Vincent Weber (1902-1990) – marks the transition between the planimetric sign composite and the arrangement of written letters.

Semicircle, also circular segment, and the responding line - as unspectacular as this addition may be, it is an essential foundation for writing and the composition of the arrangement inherent in writing in Gottfried Potts' work. The geometric constructive forms one pole, the gestural advance into the width of the page the other.

A Letter Collection, 1997, excerpts. Circle and straight line

The variable angle ratio is important. A clear connection between vertical and horizontal is rarely decisive; rather, it is variations of a straight line running diagonally along or through the circle that provide a typical dynamism to the graphic presentation. Anchoring his eminently diverse repertoire in this basically simple gesture and figure and thus making it unmistakable is a significant basic means of Gottfried Potts' art.

In the background of the interweaving of open and closed formal arrangements, which Pott pursues with ever new variations, we should quote what P. Riani writes about Kenzo Tange's attitude: "The movement of life was viewed as if it had no order, although we do not know the true nature of life. The problem lies in the contradiction between fundamental order and freedom, between system and spontaneity, but the important fact remains that we can only achieve an image of the whole by bringing the extremes closer together. Getting close to a single one is insufficient."

The writing master book "A LETTER COLLECTION", 1997.

It is about two things: firstly, mastering the individual figure, and then training the flow of lines that allows the letters to be connected to form a word. What is reported here by Johann Neudörfer, the protagonist of the writing masters par excellence, could have happened in a similar way in the lessons given by Gottfried Pott. He did this at the Hildesheim school during the 1990s and then decided to create a comprehensive résumé. "Caris student bus he dedicated the resulting work to "Meis": A Letter Collection, which Pott describes as a master's book of writing and with which he adds a unique example to the genre (16th-early 19th century). An opus dedicated to his students, which spreads the effects of graphic mastery of the letter far beyond the academic world.

First of all, it corresponds to the classic type. A collection of sample examples demonstrates the correct letter forms in alphabetical order, in various fonts, from the Antiqua, Gothic, Schwabacher, and Fraktur genres. To continue the skills taught in this way, line by line, texts, mainly aphorisms, mostly of a religious and moral nature, are presented for viewing.

Gottfried Pott omits depictions of writing utensils, especially the cutting of the nib, as is the case in many historical examples. He is all the more concerned with the full range of his writing potential with the emphasis on creating an ever new coherence between occasion and execution, selected text and its obvious visualization.

The sequence of alphabets weaves its way through the entire book. For Pott, the classic task of the type artist is much more than illustrating the differences between the various fonts. He sees the alphabet as a textual framework, as a living store that carries all kinds of statements a priori. In this sense, Pott links alphabets and various texts that deal with them: that it serves as a container for letters that are not lost even when the text is destroyed (parable by Eli Wiesel);

...

Pott makes it abundantly clear what potential the ordered sequence of letters has to grow beyond itself to ever greater meaning. The mixture of texts chosen by Pott, consisting of literary and scientific content on the one hand, now a motto, now a legend, provides a further, sometimes contradictory, exciting source for the tireless creative power with which the artist launches his compositions.

Opulent in format and thus with plenty of space for a remarkable interplay in terms of the size and quantity of letters, alphabets or texts - not to be overlooked is the changing colouring of both the paper and the lettering - the considerable format of the horizontal sheets (Roma laid paper) brings with it a gentle wave movement which, together with the process of turning the pages, introduces a subtle additional movement into the flow of the written text. The flat sheet becomes the membrane of a casing that swings up and back, in which everything written down appears as if it had been arranged. Another trick contributes to this. All pages are double-walled. Folded and folded over at the side end, the parts lying on top are cut to form letters. When closed, the large forms of the letters (from A to Z) are therefore continuously present throughout the entire set of pages. So that, if you turn the pages in this way, you can follow a canon of the aforementioned capital letters. Only when you open and unfold the pages does the deeper content come to light. It is hardly necessary to notice how subtly Pott has balanced the play between the contours on the surface and the parts of the page below that partially show through. Each time you turn the page, you notice something that has been suggested and discover the overall picture that opens up.

As varied as the previously chosen accents are, they all combine to serve the actual goal of stimulating convincing connections between content and form. The starting point and end point is the rarely considered Roman italic. The solidity of the constructed-looking capitals contrasts with the slight slant, which gives the vertical stability a well-dosed flow. Pott undertakes the fascinating experiment of repeating and layering the individual forms, thereby making the process of practicing through repetition visible. The aim is not to achieve perfection of the same form over and over again, but to make specific changes that demonstrate the basic principle of forming the letter all the more clearly. The extent to which this also results in the creation of images, starting with the letter and transforming it into a graphic subject, is impressively conveyed by the marquette that Pott made as a template for the writing master book. This intention to derive a vision of the associative from the methodology of the literal, a sensual excursion from the coded determination, is particularly evident in the letters A and Z. Closely connected to these two brackets are the tracing paper pages, on which the consistent basic means of proportioning and dosing of lines according to length and curve reveal the inner coherence of their sequence to form a fully developed alphabet. But here too, concept and deviation correspond to form a living whole.

A strand is formed from the sequence of alphabets. They are differentiated not only by the different scripts, but also by the way they are arranged in sequence, layered or loosely arranged. Statements by important authors repeatedly emphasize the expressiveness of the alphabet.

In these ever-surprising formations, Pott's joy of experimentation is evident, scattering and condensation, emerging and receding swinging or angularly skeletal elements in a discussion of bound and unbound. Bound to the sequence of lines on the one hand, but detached from it - unbound - placing the geometric or the gestural in the principle of rapport - this is how Gottfried Pott maneuvers between the poles of possibilities, systematically and unsystematically (in the sense of a Cusan counter to the opposite). The method of forming letters and the freedom of his paraphrasing and transferring them into the harmony of the ornamental line - all of this is combined by Pott in his exhaustive approach to the essence of writing. It should only be noted here that his printed works are determined by this spirit.

The connection of this working method to the development of art history has already been envisaged. It mainly refers to the enrichment that the literal has brought to writing by discovering the expressive power at the edge of the established form and beyond it. However, the history of writing's own tradition of turning away from the legible letter must not be overlooked (see above: Neudörfer versus Frank). The literal and quasi-literal writing samples that appeared in the school of Rudolf von Larisch (1866-1919) as an outgrowth of Art Nouveau should be mentioned, as should Ernst Schneider's sketches from the 1940s.

However, the interplay of organic and inorganic structures that can be seen in architecture and the visual arts is probably an important source of Gottfried Potts's far-reaching exploration of the formal vocabulary of writing . Whether Paul Klee, Le Corbusier, Kenzo Tange, Bruno Munari, Cy Twombly, Walter de Maria and Carl Andre... the small potpourri of established names in art around and after the middle of the 20th century indicates the achievements of noticing nature in the rhythm of the same and similar and the possibilities of designing with and in contrast to it. A page from his famous book " Poème de l'angle droit " (1955) is an exemplary example of how important Le Corbusier was in establishing the angular and curved as decidedly structured alternating motifs of an order between the organic and the constructive. This perspective is a guiding principle for Gottfried Potts' methodical and yet poetic writing investigations with their diverse forms.

The formation of the literal in the spectrum of signs and drawings, readable and illegible plays a significant role. Only by exploring this range does Pott find it possible to express his aforementioned concern, the essence and breadth of the effectiveness of the written word. The page on which a verse from Josef Weinheber's Ode to Letters is discussed is particularly noteworthy. Trumpets (Drommeten) and standing in the storm are striking expressions in the text to apostrophize the blatant vibration of the S. To do this, Pott chooses to overlap and interlace the same lines over and over again, which is reminiscent of Ernst Schneider's corresponding sheets from the 1940s. But Pott uses the stark formation of his words and lines to make them look as if they had been torn to pieces by nature. Continuing from the form, especially the legible form, the composition leads to the letter W. The letters are reduced to their core particles, smallest arc segments, hooks, etc. and elevated to a concentrated graphic gesture.

This process takes up the long-standing tradition in calligraphy of scanning the interplay between letter-true and letter-extending form (and colour) . The pleasure in lines that escalate into flourishes and pirouettes, superimposed on pure bundles of lines, curls, snails and tendrils to the point where the letter (and word) is unrecognizable, can be read at least in the discourse of the writing masters of the Baroque period. Johann Neudörfer 's son , Anton, rejected the exalted play of lines of his contemporary Paul Franck and tried to curb it by taking up the work of his father. What happened between the Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque and Rococo with regard to figurative and ornamental design was always also elementary for the development of written forms. What applies to the letter itself was later to apply to the text page in general with and after William Morris: a turn towards ornamentation and a stark rejection. In Germany, a lively interplay emerged in the early 20th century. While the Bauhaus favored strict geometrical forms on the one hand, Expressionism found its means of expressing vehemence in the pointed line. Exaggeration and omission, loud and quiet forms - the 20th century pulled out all the stops to visually and graphically express attitudes and messages. Type was fully involved in this development, and the work of the Klingspor type foundry produced key examples of this.

How seriously Gottfried Pott takes this connection is evident in the small Marquette in the writing master book, in which he outlined his concept in advance. The most striking features are the colorful references to the letters C and Z and the white squiggles that mean W. All of them are based on a graphic concept that is influenced by the strokes and curves of informal painting and drawing, but which also aims to give the letter an organic capacity, even a breathing ability. It is this flexibility of the letter that allows it to say more than just being the symbol for A, B , C... Instead, it underlines, or rather, distinguishes, the word and text, giving them body and voice (Schiller) in the individual way that the writer intends. Pott measures this range of the literal with strategic precision in the layout and execution of the "Letter Collection". The preliminary high point of his extra-literal writing is the dialogue presented by a positive-negative composition of short brush strokes. Pott could not have made his ability to act from the letter beyond the verbal, full of eloquence, more clearly visible (images at the end of the text).

Zen. Circle. The premise of God.

Historical writing master books regularly contain text quotations from the Psalms and other parts of the Bible. Books of hours with their embellished prayer beginnings, floral-looking initial letters and compositionally highlighted first lines of text could be inspiration for pages in writing master books. For book religions, it is obvious to relate writing and what is written to God. The Ten Commandments written by God, the divine hand that writes King Belshazzar's doom on the wall, Christ writing in the sand, the scribe of the Apocalypse commissioned by God who has to devour the little book handed to him - writing is the most important means of making divine announcements and positions visible. Conversely, Christian Scheffler's assessment is interesting when he causally links secularized modernity with a writing art that is devoid of meaning and has been reduced to decorative ornament.

The sphere of the spirit, of essence, which has always given the letter a higher significance (also in Hebrew) - these are of great importance to Gottfried Pott. He sees himself anchored in this personally, and he also sees this as the challenge as a writer to find graceful, approximate forms of expression. The circular, the circling movement as an expansive gesture plays a role that is constantly being tested anew.

For Gottfried Pott, a canonical, hierarchical placement of God in a heaven that is far away and unattainable, towards which only piety in a subjugating sense would have a place, is out of the question. Rather, he expects the divine presence of God in existence as such; including critical dialogue, as the scripture for Tertullian's statement on the absurdity of faith exemplifies. It is the Christian God of Nicholas of Cusa, the God of the Jew Else Lasker-Schüler and the Jew Elias Canetti, always associated with lament and challenge. And a God to whom critical reason is opposed (as urged by Horace, as in the run-up to the Enlightenment; fig.). The representational impression of God in language and in the graphic translation are combined in the work on *Odyseea Elytis'* invocation: "My God, how much blue do you waste so that we cannot see you." In the two versions of the text – white on blue, blue on white – Pott succeeds in doubling the sense of astonishment; this increases to a maximum in the "not seeing", when this becomes minimally apparent thanks to the blind embossing at the bottom of the composition. The fact that Pott also extracts meaning from empty space is also evident here.

Einhard. Nicholas of Cusa.

The much older of the two, Einhard, is the last to occupy Gottfried Pott's attention in particular when he accepts an invitation to Seligenstadt in 2024 to present his latest writings in the monastery there. Einhard (around 770-840) is the biographer of Charlemagne. He is a student of the most important clergyman at the imperial court, Alcuin. The comprehensive intellectual re-anchoring of thought and worldview in this Carolingian period includes knowing the authors of antiquity and creating a new form of writing for the transcription and reproduction of their works. Latin is promoted and the Carolingian minuscule is used to create a convincing image of the texts to be read anew.

Einhard is a mediator, and he has to witness how, after the death of the Great Charlemagne, his vision of a united empire tends to fall apart. Einhard reports on this and writes of his deep concern about the state of the empire.

Nicholas of Cusa is considered a man of the Renaissance. Someone who attempted to perceive in many directions: God and his relationship to existence, the universe, nature... he was a theologian and mathematician. "The 'hunt for wisdom' was his elixir of life. Reflecting on the position of man in the world, on the meaning of the variety of things in the world, the relationship of God to his creation, the

human ability to understand, drove him throughout his life... Since there are infinitely many possible references, man cannot fully grasp anything, intellectual knowledge remains approximate knowledge," writes Gabriele Neusius . Gottfried Pott takes up this approach when he deals in particular with the HE that can be everything. Before Martin Buber, the Cusa accentuates a God who is to be included in the way of looking at his coincidentia oppositorum . Nothing can be considered without considering its oneness with its opposite. Freed from the classic one-sided, upward-thinking GOD figure, HE opens up the view of the all-encompassing in the ultimate. He can be everything that is there. And therefore also, Cusanus would think, his opposite. Only from this juxtaposition does the whole appear. Pott is a writer who acts comprehensively. He does not want to create one-sided beauty, but rather make a statement that lives from the wholeness of the diverse occurrence. In this sense, he writes the individual letter and the entire text, weighing black against white, large against small form.

Pott has a fundamental understanding of the sentence of HE, which can be anything. This leads him to the idea of turning it around and around in order to lead the interrelationship of the individual words to ever new apostrophes of the same basic assumption. "With every change in the word sequence, an understanding arises from a different perspective... As in a word anagram, the sequence can be varied and transformed into a new statement, sometimes questioning, sometimes exclamatory." In this respect, Pott does not prove himself to be a copyist, but rather manifests himself in the co-authorship that comes from the form he allows the content to become - reconsidered, rewritten;

typeface appeals.

One task remains to appreciate the texts chosen by Gottfried Pott over the years and the occasions that gave rise to them as an overall statement of his personality, his worldview and his attitude to life. It is clear that this involves an overall position to which the individual statements, maxims and more detailed texts contribute in a complementary way. The selection of texts is complemented by the corresponding formal elaboration. Leaving the line, sudden escalations and extreme bends, even jagged edges combine to form a repertoire of the precarious. Sheets such as the one on Max Frisch's definition of "crisis" or the inscription "have courage" about Horace's call to take the risk of independent thinking make this evident.

The fact that politics ferments within Gottfried Pott runs through his work. He reacts in an exemplary manner to the terrorist killing of human lives during the destruction of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York. The Roman numerals of the date XI IX MMI intertwine to form a relic of the burned-out and collapsing skyscrapers that brought death. The formal and color minimum condenses into a symbolic conglomerate of outcry in decline.

Different times. Different events. And yet also despair for survival - this is how it reads in the complaint of the biographer of Charlemagne, Einhard, because the newly created Carolingian Empire cannot be kept in tact by its heirs. What worried the chronicler of Charlemagne and his descendants worries the writer today in the face of the war against Ukraine. And that explains the choice of text, which Pott writes from line to line, alternating in Latin and German (red and black); with the carefully calculated irregular length of the italicized lowercase lines at the front and back. The text vibrates.

Shortly before (16.2.24), regime critic Alexei Navalny was killed in Russia. Apparently at the behest of the state. His defiant appeal is directed at fellow human beings to stand up against the threat of tyranny: Don't be afraid. For this paper, Pott continues with the pen style just outlined, but is able to bathe the tightly spaced capital letters in a dazzling light that comes into its own in conjunction with the tips of the fine pen strokes that stand out at the sides - the letters can say that the word means FEAR, but the writer has incorporated the damage it causes.

Conclusion.

With his oeuvre, Gottfried Pott succeeds in creating a network of enriching opposites: didactics in the sense of methodology, individuality of the writing process, which does not imitate writing, but writes. Letters and texts are presented as samples of writing stylistic and technical processes - in this respect, the expert in historical writing development - and at the same time reflect the world view and image of man of the type artist in updating insights and positions of old and contemporary statements. Teaching and love of form merge with a feeling for poetry and with the will to take a socially relevant stance. Similar to the evangelist shown (see above), who deliberately refers back to what has already been written in order to express himself anew, for Pott there is no reliability of the self-running continuum, but rather a critical connection to what has been created each time . One seeks the context with the other, but each takes the risk of a new attempt.

Google translation

Chapter 4, from page 58 Gottfried Pott: An unpublished book - an elementary etude.

In addition,

The cover shows the coat of arms of the Arches paper mill in Lorraine embossed in gold. The strong cardboard is bound in green linen and the book covers are closed with silk ribbons. The endpapers show the same solemn green tone. Everything exudes great value, as if intended for meaningful content. These 36 white areas, 37 cm high and 28 cm wide, terrified the original owner. Every empty page was an unpleasant challenge for him; he had to get the page right 36 times; these pages were glued firmly between two book covers without any ifs or buts; no page was interchangeable. To get rid of the task, he gave the demanding, empty book to his friend Gottfried Pott. Pott begins the book with the words of Meister Eckhart: "It is time to start something new and trust in the magic of the beginning." This also reflects Pott's personal destiny. He lost his wife in March 2020, was paralyzed for months, and in August found the strength to start over. He wrote the Meister Eckhart quote with a thin line in dancing letters. This calligraphy allows associations with a delicate beginning. On the next page, the "magic" itself is the challenge for him. On a tangle of intertwined letters of different colors, he lets the letters Z A U B E R appear. On the following 4 pages he devotes himself to magic symbols. So much for the pages dated August 2, 2020. Now comes the main part described by Stefan Soltek: The examination of Kandinsky's core sentences. The last double page of the book takes you back to the beginning, on the left side a colored circle of magic symbols, on the right side a rectangle with intertwined magic symbols. On August 14, 2020, the work is completed. With this, Gottfried Pott had once again come closer to his spiritual kin, Meister Eckhart. Felicitas Reusch

The book with seven quotes from Kandinsky's "On the Spiritual in Art" (1911) confronts the viewers and readers with a kind of quintessence that Gottfried Pott draws from the groundbreaking text in which the protagonist of the abstract composition debates the essence of image creation. And he, Pott, draws the quintessence of his own approach to form and composition.

And his formal language offers a self-confident eloquent proximity to the clean lines that visualize Kandinsky's announcements. These do not come from the passages on phenomenon of color but weave dense webs of meaning that deal with the concept and essence of the form.

Kandinsky explains: The form bears the stamp of personality.

Pott's method of correspondence is calligraphic-practical compared to the theoretical part of the word statements. Pott follows their diversity consistently. Because even if he various forms – all letters – they all have one thing in common: To condense the deepest of the lines, which Gottfried Pott in his lavish Oeuvre of calligraphic executions again and again into the field of white space led to.

We are talking about the connection of two elements: the curvature and the straight line.

What a simple 0 and 1 position seems to be, turns from his hand into a sensitive exploration of the possibilities to differentiate the finest. On the one hand, there are the two individual passages, the round and the straight line, which varies from case to case of their execution. Not only in the size, and in the thickness of the line, but in the dosage, intensity of the application and expelling the ink.

This includes Kandinsky's words: Every form is versatile.

Just as each of the two trains always leaves again, so does the necessary connection, they form a structure that encompasses both of them. This includes the transitions. How a vehicle exits the curve into the straight, and its speed adapts to pull from the straight into the curve without drifting out of it, so Pott trains his writing equipment to balance curve and straight, straight and curve and to gather in one form of the course. If curves and straight lines can be considered the content, then it is their course that leads to salary merges.

This includes Kandinsky's words: Form is the external expression of the inner content.

The task is set as precisely as will never be finished by the artist. Any approach must inevitably involve a review of the previous and that is exactly what creates the energy to achieve a new result. Kandinsky refers to a description by Henry van de Velde, who recognizes: "As soon as he (the artist) has drawn a curve, the one he places opposite it can no longer detach itself from the concept contained in every part of the former; the second in turn acts to this, which is now changing, remodeling itself in relation to the third and all those will follow" . Van de Velde, one of the greatest designers and creators of ornamentation that uses this principle of repetition, which is not repetition, can be described as the driving force behind Potts' approach. Quite individually all of the forms appear, arranged in star-shaped, cloud-shaped, rotating, or lined up elements. The individual characters are placed next to and on top of each other, spread out in a pattern and stage a delicate play of spatial impression of the surface. Everything lives from the fineness and vibration of the pen stroke. So many accumulations and layers arise, it remains throughout with a breathing, spherical "lightness of being". Yes, overall, from beginning to end, the issue forms a kaleidoscope of universal characteristic, of great movement, supported by artistic italics, bringing the searching and tentative nature of the text passages into a vivid balance. This fragrant esprit comes from a pulsating vein that is unique to the artist, and which relentlessly drives his work.

Kandinsky's words are relevant here: The most important thing in the question of form is whether the form inner necessity or not.

The idea of INNER NECESSITY permeates Kandinsky's text as guide to his argumentation of the artistic in itself. Alternately the words abstract and spiritually appealing, Kandinsky insists on an inner voice that Artists can act freely and arrive at a level where the interpretation of his created by book wisdom of striving exegetes. Pott, that shows unmistakably in every figure he writes in the book, is ready for this challenge of an artistic necessity. An agility that is more than the unwinding of a craftsmanship, but through and through according to the soul and the constitution of alienation.

This includes Kandinsky's words: The spirit of the artist is reflected in the form. No, Gottfried Pott is not a writer who skilfully presents an effective bon mot visually decorated. His writing is of the kind that Kandinsky sees as being called from within. His writing is not for the sake of a document or notice on behalf of the limits of calligraphy, which could find a place in the use of writing today, are narrowly set, and therefore not relevant for Pott. His handwriting explains itself on eye level with ability and – as Kandinsky says: Necessity creates form – mission to express oneself graphically, verbally, intellectually, in other words holistically. And: if the sequencing of his graphic signs gives the impression of a score and if Kandinsky's connections between the visual arts and music is to be considered, then it fits in with the registers that the passionate organist Pott knew how to pull it off.

Writing and music, both connected to the essential basis of rhythm, flow in life and work of the man Gottfried Pott together, as inseparable ingredients a creation out of INNER NECESSITY.

The unpublished book, which he kept secret, expanded in red lines to the black figures, is the most beautiful and perfect proof imaginable of practicing writing from the ground up, which was Pott's natural elixir as an artistic way of life. Writing master books from various times unite the gathering of

very different dimensions and forms. In this, the multi-line text has its place like the short sentence, then alphabet and individual letter, until finally the smallest of a serif. To create brilliant harmony from this, Gottfried Pott has most extensive and penetrating in his book "A Letter Collection" (1997)

But a concise, compressed bundling of the complexity of the simple literal or quasi-literal piece of writing he succeeds in small masterly bundle of double pages discussed here. It proves to be an Exercise book at the highest level. And as a consistent homage to the line visual "composer" Wassily Kandinsky.

Stefan Soltek

Chapter 5, from page 78 Friedrich Poppl Tamed or unleashed - Draw and write lettering

"With Poppl, German calligraphy has lost a qualified expert of international standing, whose work also set standards for the future," wrote Günter Gerhard Lange¹ in his obituary of the calligraphic artist Friedrich Poppl, who died on September 5, 1982 at the age of just 59. Poppl had developed a sophisticated curriculum for his classes at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden; in addition, he had created a large number of calligraphic works on his own initiative as well as commissioned works, mainly for publishers and cultural institutions. Poppl made a name for himself in the 1960s and came to the attention of Günter Gerhard Lange, who eventually invited him to design a phototypesetting typeface for H. Berthold AG. Between 1967 and 1982, Poppl then created a dozen typefaces, some of which were extensively expanded; these were "virtuoso, unique, full of warmth" and "enriched the typographic scene with new sounds", according to GGL.

An exhibition of international contemporary calligraphy at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in the fall of 1965, in which Poppl participated with works, made him known beyond Germany's borders. In England and the USA in particular, he was highly regarded by colleagues as a calligrapher and type designer. Extensive, richly illustrated articles in English-language academic journals bear witness to this, although many of them only appeared after Poppl's death. In 1988, Georgianna Greenwood² emphasized not only Poppl's calligraphic virtuosity, but also - as an "important, but harder-to-define element" - his working attitude; only "the artist's heart and character" turn a good work into an outstanding one. In his book *Calligraphy*, published in 1991, David Harris succinctly describes Poppl as "one of Germany's most influential modern calligraphers"³.

So who was Friedrich Poppl? What did writing mean to him? And how did he become the founder of the "Wiesbaden School"?

Comprehensive training

This book is about calligraphy. We don't know whether Poppl saw himself as a calligrapher. As a scribe? As a calligrapher? What we do know: He mastered the Ars

1 Günter Gerhard Lange (1921-2008), trained as an advertising draughtsman, studied calligraphy and type design, painting and printmaking in Leipzig; freelance member of staff at H. Berthold AG, Schriftgießerei und Messinglinienfabrik, Berlin, from 1950, artistic director from 1960. GGL, the well-known abbreviation, became Friedrich Poppl's most important professional companion.

2 Georgianna Greenwood: *The Life and Work of Friedrich Poppl*. In: *Calligraphy Idea Exchange*, Fall 1986, pp. 31-36

3 David Harris: *Calligraphy. Inspiration - Innovation - Communication*. London: Anaya Publishers Limited 1991. on Friedrich Poppl p. 104-107, quote p. 104

Scribendi in all its facets. And this was the basics for his characterful, beautiful typefaces, which were created for H. Berthold in an intensive exchange with Günter Gerhard Lange from 1967 onwards. The type designer Poppl cannot be separated from the writer and type designer.

Looking back⁴, it is clear that Friedrich (Fritz) Poppl developed a strong passion and talent for drawing at an early age, specifically for the drawing lessons at the secondary school he attended from 1933. Here, the focus was on disciplined work at the drawing board with rails and triangles, sharpened pencils, compasses, drawing pens, inks and paints - manual skills that proved to be good basics for Poppl's later work.

His discipline, zeal and talent did not go unnoticed by his teachers. After graduating from secondary school, they recommended training at the State School of Ceramics and Related Arts and Crafts in Teplitz-Schönau (Sudetenland, now the Czech Republic). Poppl followed this recommendation and graduated after three years. Prof. Johannes Watzal, sculptor and director of the school, then gave him the opportunity to carry out commissions under supervision. Poppl also passed examinations in fresco mural painting and sgraffito plastering techniques before he was called up in 1942, first for the Reich Labor Service and then for military service.

War, hunger and captivity in Russia as well as a life-threatening injury left their mark. In order to be able to continue holding a pencil and drawing, Poppl opted for the riskier option of amputating his right thigh in 1946; this enabled him to later be fitted with a prosthesis and one day walk without crutches. A lengthy process.

First, however, he wanted to continue his studies. He found his mother in the Hessian hinterland and so he finally applied for a place at the Werkkunstschule Offenbach, not without having to overcome problems caused by the war (e.g. missing academic transcripts). He began his studies in October 1950.

Writing or drawing?

Friedrich Poppl studied at the Werkkunstschule Offenbach from 1950 to 1953. After the first semester of basic studies, the type historian and principal Prof. Dr. Wilhelm H. Lange (1887-1954) noticed his diligence and special talent for lettering. Poppl was allowed to skip the second semester and from then on was free to choose with whom he wanted to study writing.

Work was carried out in the spirit of Rudolf Koch in the book and lettering art class. Poppl's teachers here included the Koch student Herbert Post (1903-1978) and the slightly younger Karlgeorg Hoefer (1914-2000), who had come to know and appreciate Koch's writings during his apprenticeship as a typesetter. This was

⁴ The most important sources for Poppl's professional biography are the conversations he has had with his wife Gertraude (1930-2019) since 2012 and her notes "Weg und Werden des Type-Designers Friedrich Poppl", which were completed in 1999 and are now available as a typewritten manuscript.

about writing. According to Gertraude Poppl in her notes, Post's handwriting provided an educational background, so the teaching had a formative effect. It was here that Poppl acquired a feel for dynamics and rhythm. At Hoefer, they experimented and improvised freely, including with new tools such as the Brause 505 nib, which Hoefer developed himself.

The graphic designer and photographer Erich Fornoff (1914-1953) and the type designer and typographer Hans Bohn (1891-1980), also a Koch student like Herbert Post, taught in the commercial art class. He took a skeptical view of Poppl's wide-ranging typeface interests. Bohn predicted that you couldn't get anywhere with typewriting these days.

Poppl mastered and appreciated both and passed his examinations in both subject areas in 1953: both in writing (writing and type application) and in advertising graphics (type drawing, typography).

Advertising agency or teaching?

The first stages of Poppl's professional life took him to the advertising industry in Frankfurt am Main, most recently to the renowned Heumann advertising company (since 1964 Ogilvy & Mather Germany). His field of work: type. Written, drawn, improvised, with a wide variety of tools and styles, always adapted to the task at hand. In his free time, Poppl continues to write and draw, designing book covers. For example, he experiments with a flat bristle brush, which he dips in rubber solution, then writes the word Sartre, brushes black poster paint over it and finally scrubs off the rubber solution so that the white lettering appears at the top. Underneath, he draws three lines in a neutral, narrow font, flush left. Playing with the contrast freely and strictly, white on black. That works. [Fig_Poppl_339_Sartre](#) A large number of book covers by renowned publishers in the 1950s show such compositions of written and drawn lettering. The designers were Martin Kausche, Werner Rebhuhn and Hermann Zapf, to name just three well-known representatives.

When Poppl learns that a job advertisement for a writing teacher has been published at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden, he applies for the position after careful consideration, despite foreseeable financial losses. "Opening new doors for young people, giving them something lasting" - this task appealed to him. On May 1, 1955, he was appointed to the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden and taught here until his death in 1982.

Curriculum for writing lessons

In 1955, Poppl designed a comprehensive curriculum "essentially tailored for commercial art"⁵ (p.5). And united what Hans Bohn found incompatible: he

⁵ The curriculum draft can be viewed on site in the Berlin Calligraphy Collection (BSK) of the Academy of Arts under the signature Poppl 3039. Poppl's oeuvre was donated to the BSK by his wife and son in

admitted writing not only to writing, but also to drawing. He differentiated as follows:

"Writing a letter that has been worked through to its final form requires the utmost sense of form and concentration. However, the pupil's emerging personality will always be reflected in the written / script. Drawn lettering requires mainly technical skills, but thanks to its impersonality and neutrality it is well suited to modern commercial graphics. This activity, which is more or less manual in the case of drawn lettering, also requires mastery of the writing technique in order to achieve an infallible sense of form and absolute certainty of expression." (S.5/6)

A "training on a broad basics" (p.6) was essential for Poppl. The repertoire of forms includes all styles, including the broken ("German") typefaces and the uncials with limited areas of application. He found it "irresponsible to give young people only the knowledge that is in demand or 'fashionable' at the moment" (p.5).

[Fig_BSK_Poppl_3090](#) After all, writing is "not only a means of communication from person to person, but also a carrier and form of expression of his spirit and cultural will" (p.7).

The core of his teachings are:

- Basis: From the capitals of the Kapitalis Monumentalis, he transfers the basic forms and dimensions to an equal stroke grotesque: "Only through the exact construction of the lawful will the student be able to correctly understand and absorb the relationships of the individual letters." This is followed by writing with the Redis quill (round quill ending), starting with the simple capital I and other letters made up of horizontal and vertical strokes. The spectrum expands to include characters with diagonals and finally those with curves. Words are written from the very beginning in order to get a feel for spacing and visual balance.
- Alternating between disciplined, strict drawing and relaxed, free writing, for example with the Brause 505 nib (rectangular nib end) for dynamic forms. This constant alternation runs through all regular semesters of study.
- Once the basic shapes have been internalized, the students compose alphabets with different stroke widths and widths and experiment with contrasts: round/angular, small/large, negative/positive, smooth/textured, cold/warm colors.
- Step by step, new tools such as the ribbon nib and round brush are added, as well as other writing styles, including historical ones, and finally practical applications according to a given theme, format, color and technique.
- In the term papers, "the cursive script developed from the handwriting should be combined with the drawn script" (p.63).
- Only in the last semester are "individual forms of writing" developed. "The student should avoid adopting the teacher's handwriting [...]. The teacher should only provide guidance and advice" (p.58).
- Everything serves the goal of internalizing the "tools" that "now [at the end of

January 2001. It is now also possible to search online.

the training] serve the creative thought in an unconscious-reflective way" (p.62) and prepare the next generation of creatives for working life in advertising agencies, publishing houses or in industry.

What does this have to do with calligraphy? A lot! If calligraphy is more than just writing beautiful letters, if calligraphy becomes an artistic statement with an additional dimension, then it needs mastery of the form and the tool as basics. And a great deal of tutorial. *Ars Scribendi* can then become the basis for both free and applied art. Tamed, when typescripts are created, unleashed, when the knowing hand, inspired by a text or a thought, conjures up free compositions on the page.

Writing exercises: Book covers, posters

The aforementioned cover design for Sartre was created in 1955/56 and is one of the few examples written with a brush. Other designs have been created on his own initiative since this time, such as for Louis Bromfield's "Vom Unfug der Gewalt" [Fig_Poppl_327](#) with mighty bold, animated and angularly frayed capitals that almost burst the surface, contrasted with the author and subtitle in drawn sans serif capital letters. This theme could hardly be more convincingly translated into type. The design for Theodor Heuss' "Profiles" also shows exclusively capital letters, but [Poppl_332](#) in a completely different style: in a capitalis monumentalis with a light feather style, white (author) and yellow-gold (title) on a dark background, radiating noble respectability. The cover title to a minuet by Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805) [Poppl_335](#) is composed differently again, in a drawn classical script with dancing, delicately moving, swelling and diminishing lines, white on a brown background.

At the beginning of the 1960s, Friedrich Poppl actually received his first commissions for book covers, initially from the publisher Evangelische Buchgemeinde Stuttgart. He pulls out all the stops for the variety of topics, [Poppl_KM_EBG_Experimente](#) also uses variations of the semi-uncial [Poppl_KM_EBG_Schütz](#), which is well suited to religious content. This also marked the beginning of a long-standing collaboration with F. H. Brockhaus Wiesbaden, for whom Johannes Boehland, his predecessor at the Werkkunstschule, had already worked. For the non-fiction books and novels by Brockhaus, Poppl, who signed his covers with Fritz Poppl, also used all styles of type classification, always with reference to the content. Be it Lapidar, [Poppl_378_Hellas](#) Mediaeval [Poppl_382+383_Norwich](#) or letters with a chancery or modern cursive character: they all radiate liveliness and spontaneity, displaying great mastery in their individual forms as well as in their overall composition. And an animated book title always contrasts with the author's name drawn in a matter-of-fact way. There is also color. White on blue, red and blue on white, even iridescent yellow gold where appropriate. [Poppl_334_Goldene Fracht](#) "The new Brockhaus. Lexikon und Wörterbuch in sechs Bänden" showed Poppl's typeface *Laudatio* in 1978, clear and

striking. [Poppl_KM_Brockaus_Laudatio](#)

In 1961, a completely new stroke was added. Gertraude Poppl describes Poppl's invention of the drawing pen as a writing tool very vividly. After meticulous final drawings of an outline grotesque for an advertisement, which suddenly had to be handed in earlier than agreed, the tension was released in an act of liberation. Poppl, obviously in a rage because of what he perceived as an imposition of a deadline, grabbed the next best tool when he was finished, the widest nib (the so-called Swedish nib), dipped it directly into the ink glass instead of filling it with a brush and threw a stroke onto the paper with a spirited swing. The nib scratched, screamed and the ink splashed in all directions. Poppl found the result so interesting that from then on he perfected the use of the drawing pen. It became his trademark on posters, for example for the Hessische Staatstheater Wiesbaden and other cultural institutions; [Poppl_268_Chorkonzert](#) he also experimented with it on book covers, [Poppl_343_Fliege](#) but above all in his free works. [Poppl_277_Sorbas](#), [Poppl_242_nonverbal](#),

Writing exercises: free script graphics and calligraphy

By the end of the 1950s, Poppl had fallen into a crisis. In addition to teaching, he had designed various title fonts and offered them to well-known type foundries, but without success. Only his Dynamische Antiqua font achieved more than draft status at D. Stempel, but was not published after all. It was a time of profound technical upheaval: phototypesetting and offset printing were beginning to replace lead typesetting and letterpress printing - not a favorable starting point for the production of new lead typesetting fonts. But in 1967, Poppl created his first phototypesetting font for H. Berthold and, until his death, many other internationally successful title and typesetting fonts. Their special, never austere but always lively effect is due to Poppl's masterly writing hand. But that is another story.

At the beginning of the 1960s, Poppl began to develop a portfolio, primarily with free calligraphic works. Gertraude Poppl admits that he speaks of original calligraphy. A large sheet with a longer text had already been created in 1956, "Männer von Athen" [Poppl_9_Männer](#) from the defense speech of Socrates before the court in Athens handed down by Plato. The title in large classical Antiquaversia is followed by sixty lines of smaller size. The result is a carpet of letters written without line spacing, which nevertheless remains legible thanks to alternating large indents and fluttering typesetting. It took three attempts before the sheet was finished. We are also familiar with such works by Rudolf Koch, but because they are written in bold textura, they have a completely different effect to Poppl's light-flooded sheet. The same applies to the text sheet with Albert Schweitzer's "The Ideas", white on blue, written in a beautiful humanist cursive. [Poppl_60](#) Accurate on line or dancing - the impression of a letter texture is also created by dispensing

with line, as for example in the heavy, dark text weave for Wilhelm Steinhausen [Poppl_94](#) or Hood's outcry "O, God! That bread is so dear and flesh and blood so cheap". [Poppl_96](#)

It is noteworthy that Poppl began with longer texts; "word communities" seem to have given him confidence. He initially found this easier to execute than writing shorter passages of text or individual words or letters. This gave him even greater formal confidence. His development led him from legible to difficult to decipher to non-verbal scripts. Sheets with these three different approaches were created in parallel depending on the occasion, mood or statement, most of them in the 1960s. [see image section: Poppl_19_Vergil, Poppl_121_Schopenhauer, Poppl_102_versuchen, Poppl_184_Zufall, Poppl_224_g](#)

We find quotes from great personalities side by side in every conceivable style of writing, from graceful to heavy. A few words such as the name Henry Moore, which beautifully symbolizes the sculptor's sculptures. [Poppl_216](#) Or the lettering "Der Korsar" ("The Corsair"), hastily scrawled with a pen after Poppl had seen the dancer Rudolf Nureyev in this very role at the Staatstheater. [Poppl_251](#) Strong emotions, great dynamism and an unleashed passion for movement are palpable here. Poppl created many theater posters with this wild style for the key words, always flanked by strict lines of text that serve purely informational purposes.

The scripts created with the nib became his trademark and made him famous, especially in the USA. In 1996, Paul Shaw devoted himself in detail to the not-so-easy-to-use retractable nib in the magazine *Letter Arts Review*⁶. In 1985, he had still suggested brushes as a writing tool, as the drawing nib sometimes leaves similar marks. Georgianna Greenwood corrected his mistake a year later⁷. Who "invented" the calligraphic potential of this once indispensable tool for technical drawing, when and where, is not entirely clear. In Germany, Poppl was the first to make it the focus of his work.

A conclusion?

Poppl wrote and experimented throughout his life and was one of the most influential modern German "writing masters". His insights flowed into the classroom and fell on fertile ground. Among the students who were awarded the Rudo Spemann Prize was Werner Schneider (1957). He became Poppl's assistant from 1958 to 1959, eventually becoming his successor in teaching. Gottfried Pott went his own way and was appointed professor of calligraphy, type design and font history at the University of Applied Sciences in Hildesheim in 1988. This triumvirate of Poppl, Schneider and Pott stands for the Wiesbaden School. All three were

6 Paul Shaw: Demystifying the Ruling Pen. In: *Letter Arts Review*, Vol. 13 (1996) No. 2, pp. 10-22 and pp. 44-56

7 Paul Shaw: *Typographic Treasures; The Calligraphy and Type Design of Friedrich Poppl*. In: *Calligraphy Idea Exchange* Vol. 3 No. 1 (1985), pp. 5-7. and Georgianna Greenwood: *The Life and Work of Friedrich Poppl*. In: *Calligraphy Idea Exchange* Vol. 4 No. 1 (1986), pp. 31-36

masters of their subject, both in the artistic expression of lettering and in the design of typefaces. They also inspired and inspired many young people to write.

Last but not least, let us add what Poppl prefaced his draft curriculum with. It is a quote from Prof. Dr. Wilhelm H. Lange, who once recognized Poppl's talent for writing and pointed him in the right direction:

"It cannot and should not be the task of the creative artist to invent new and unfamiliar typefaces. The basic forms are fixed, only their design according to the sense of style of the time is entrusted to each generation anew."

This applies to graphic design and the design of typefaces. It does not apply to Friedrich Poppl's free calligraphic works, which, with content or non-verbally, show great impulsive inventiveness. Those of his sheets that only appear to be legible, that pretend to be. One involuntarily attempts to decipher the letter-like characters of the rhythmically arranged lines. You think you recognize an X or a Greek chi, a g and a T, or do you? [Poppl_142](#) And this, this is Chinese calligraphy! [Poppl_153](#) Appearances are deceptive. These are Latin alphabets that cascade across the landscape-format sheet. Yes, Poppl could also play. [see picture section: Poppl_135, Poppl_139, Poppl_140, Poppl_182. Poppl_183, Poppl_205](#)

However, his real concern remained to translate language into written expression. "Every designer is an idealist, constantly striving to give form to the content of words," Gertraude Poppl quotes her husband as saying. "The word to be depicted provides the impulse - basic forms, processed in the subconscious, become monumental, striking, static, dynamic, graceful, detached or heightened to the point of expressiveness. In this way, versions are created that are based on the same laws as the other artistic disciplines."⁸ [Poppl_247 Einstein, Poppl_401 Watercolor](#)

Silvia Werfel

Chapter 6, from page 102 Werner Schneider: Real life means encounter

Katharina Pieper

"However, I find my greatest satisfaction in free calligraphic retreats. The magnificence of artistic design, whether in static or dynamic presentation, means fascination, creativity and thus true artistic exploration for me." Werner Schneider wrote this sentence in the 1990s, when he was still in the middle of his teaching career at the university of applied sciences in Wiesbaden and calligraphy was a balance between his work as a professor, his work for font manufacturers and the graphic application of his font creations for advertising agencies, the municipality or the district. "Especially at the transition to the 3rd millennium and in view of a changed media landscape, it is important to break new ground, also from an experimental point of view. Calligraphy is increasingly being used as a contrasting element to the sterility and perfection of typography as a personal, individual form of expression. In future, it will be even more associated with the expression of the ephemeral."

At this time, Werner Schneider was not yet using the computer as an "aid", as he used to say. In fact, he vehemently rejected the technology because it was time-consuming for him and limited the possibilities for expression. His students at the university of applied sciences and the "alumni" began working with Apple Macintosh at the end of the 1980s, which replaced the then current phototypesetting and reproduction processes, not least as a "typesetting machine". Werner Schneider was always very supportive of his students' graphic design projects and new ideas, whether it was for projects and term papers or in preparation for their Diplom.

However, a key experience forced him to rethink his approach from one day to the next. Werner Schneider drew typefaces for large type manufacturers, the most important of which was the Berthold company. Chief graphic designer Günther Gerhard Lange ("Gutenberg's machine gun") was relentless in his criticism and was not sparing with phrases such as "the Wiesbaden tear sacs" when it came to serifs on Antiqua's capital E's, or "what did your wife give you for dinner?" when it came to the form quality of individual letters. Werner Schneider experienced what today would be called a "flashback" through Lange, because his teacher Friedrich Poppl was just as relentless, even when Werner Schneider had long been a professor. But criticism made him stronger, and his "struggle for quality of form" received a new boost.

Typefaces published by Berthold or later Linotype bear names. Sometimes very imaginative ones, and often also the name of the graphic artist who designed the font. "Schneider Antiqua" was the name of Werner Schneider's first typeface, followed later by the classicist Antiqua "Libretto", and finally Senatus, Vialog, Sunetta etc. Werner Schneider drew the complete set of figures by hand, and a graphic artist/technician digitized the individual letters. Digitizing requires an experienced font expert, as the conversion from drawing to functioning letter and then to typesetting requires a great deal of dexterity. Werner Schneider was often disappointed and even bewildered when he saw some of the digital results. This was one reason that forced him to digitize himself. The second, equally important reason was that a font could only bear the name of the graphic designer who digitized it! The creator of the alphabet himself was virtually in second place. Important reasons to deal with the digitization software yourself, and software requires hardware. The hour of the first computer had come. From the end of the 1990s and

after his retirement, Werner Schneider used every free minute to work on his writings, which he increasingly enjoyed - despite the computer.

Teaching writing at the university of applied sciences in Wiesbaden

As a graduate of the University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden, I enjoyed taking handwriting lessons with Professor Werner Schneider from the very first lesson. I only realized who Werner Schneider really was and how highly regarded he was during the course of my studies and long afterwards. I took his classes throughout my studies. Writing was a compulsory subject in the first segment of studies, but in the second segment of studies you could choose the topics and projects you wanted to delve into yourself. I created posters, my first own book, a combination of photography and typography was born, I worked for competitions or even designed a wine label. We had to design logos, draw fonts and write exact Antiqua alphabets, but we were also able to experiment a lot. Precision and spontaneity went hand in hand, so to speak. Werner Schneider's criticism was never derogatory, but always constructive and encouraging. Many of the corrections to our drafts also took place in his (small) office, which he shared with a colleague. A long line of students often waited for hours in front of the office to get their turn. There were always three or four of us students in the office with Werner Schneider - we couldn't fit any more in. We always learned a lot from correcting our own work as well as that of our fellow students. But Werner Schneider also very often talked about technical matters beyond the classroom, talked about news in the field of calligraphy and was often annoyed by bad forms published by his colleagues. His judgment could be harsh and rigorous.

Werner Schneider was always open to experimentation and was tireless in his corrections. His writing demonstrations were a revelation for me at the beginning of my studies. For the first time in my life, I saw that it was possible to write calligraphically! Alongside the precise and disciplined pen strokes in which Werner Schneider conjured up an Antiqua, Quadrata, Rustica or Fraktur on paper, spontaneous strokes of the pen, reed pen or brush appeared as a counterpoint, at a speed I had never seen before. I looked forward to new demonstrations in every lesson and felt inspired and a deep desire to immediately pick up a pen or brush to try it out myself.

In addition to calligraphic writing, the studies included the drawing of type, type history, type application and typography, the design of posters and all printed matter, typesetting (phototypesetting on the Staromat, with diatype and slide text), printing techniques, reprographic techniques, repro photography, enlargement in the laboratory (black and white and color), photography in the studio and in the laboratory and photographic art. Writing and photography in the darkroom were closely intertwined in the 1980s.

Prof. Schneider's writing style, and in particular the free, spontaneous writing style based on cursive, was unusual at that time in the training of designers and in the application of type. It was even more unusual for his teacher Prof. Friedrich Poppl back in the 1960s. It was thanks to open-minded clients in publishing, industry, advertising and culture that such spontaneous, formally very convincing typeface creations found their way into the world of graphic design.

In 1983 - I was in the second semester of my studies - a group of former students founded the "Calligraphy Workshop". This community of interest met in the rooms of the university of applied sciences once a week on Tuesday evenings to indulge their passion for calligraphy. Gottfried Pott was also part of this group. He attended regularly

until the end of these meetings in 1986, writing for himself, but was also there to help and correct us students. Over time, more and more current students joined. As a second-semester student, I was the youngest at the beginning and was there from the start until it was disbanded in 1986. Werner Schneider, who still came to our group after his office hours for students in the evening, liked to tell us what he had experienced in contacts with his type colleagues, showed us books he had just received from America (of course he was represented in them) or introduced us to type artists. I experienced the first controversial technical discussions in these weekly calligraphy workshop lessons.

During our studies, visits to museums and exhibitions were organized by and with Werner Schneider, and we experienced type artists and designers from all over the world, whom the spontaneous and always open Werner Schneider regularly invited to the university of applied sciences to give guest lectures or demonstrate their skills. For example, Günter Gerhard Lange, Erik Spiekermann, David Quay, Noriko Hayashi, Gunter Rambow, Hans-Joachim Burgert, Christine Hartmann, Georgianna Greenwood (San Francisco), Karina Meister (Amsterdam) and finally Gertraude Poppl, who I often met in person during my semesters studied and who was invited to every lecture by an external speaker.

Aksharayoga

In 1986, Werner Schneider invited a group of type designers and lecturers from Bombay to Wiesbaden. This invitation was the result of his attending the "Aksharayoga" typography symposium at the technical university in Bombay in the spring of the same year, where he gave lectures, demonstrated his skills and, as a representative of the Western alphabet system, contributed his experience in optimizing Indian type systems. There he also met three Indian graphic designers who were subsequently invited to Wiesbaden in October 1986: Achyut Palav, calligrapher, Vinay Saynekar, typographer, and Satyanarayan Wadisherla, graphic designer at the Times of India. The Indian communication experts were experiencing major problems with the technical implementation of their complicated writing systems in electronic media, and so they wanted to gain further insights into the Western writing system in order to use them for research and teaching.

Werner Schneider organized the exhibition "Contemporary Type Art / Typography in India" from 2 to 16 October 1986 at the University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden. Achyut Palav and Vinay Saynekar demonstrated the complicated Indian alphabets, of which there are many in India, in front of us students.

In order to make the stay in Germany as pleasant as possible for the Indians, Werner Schneider and we, a group of students from the UAS, went on numerous excursions. We visited the Frankfurt Book Fair, whose main theme in 1986 was appropriately "India", took part in meetings at the Klingspor Museum Offenbach, went on a boat trip together across the Rhine, cooked together and spent interesting evenings with exciting conversations.

I am still close friends with Achyut Palav today. Prof. R.K. Joshi, legendary teacher at the Sir J. J. University of Applied Art in Bombay, later Mumbai, was the same age as Werner Schneider and

co-organizer of the typography symposium in Bombay in 1986. Many years later, in 1998, he and Werner Schneider had an exhibition together at the Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

In his speech at the opening of the "Akasharayoga" exhibition at the university of applied sciences, Werner Schneider said: "... With all due respect to Adrian Frutiger's artistic achievement with regard to the new version of your "Devanagari" about 20 years ago, I have doubts as to whether the optimal solution can really lie in a linear form. For this reason, I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of preserving the outstanding character of the style. To sacrifice this style to supposed technical conditions would mean sacrificing quality of form and reading.

Again with regard to the Western alphabet system, it is not surprising that the so-called Antiqua scripts are the world leaders, not least because of their human character and legible details. Renaissance Antiqua is the undisputed leader, at least in the area of mass text, because it offers much greater reading comfort than the monotonous typeface of linear fonts. Only incessant striving for quality of form can lead to optimal forms of communication¹

Wiesbaden as a geographical center

Studying in Wiesbaden had another major advantage: the capital of Hesse is geographically located in the Rhine-Main region and centrally located in Germany. Offenbach and the Klingspor Museum were not far away, as was the higher education institution for design, which at the time regularly held exhibitions on the subject of writing. Due to our proximity to Offenbach, we often listened to engaging lectures by museum director Christian Scheffler, met Prof. Karlgeorg Hoefler, who was bursting with enthusiasm and energy, experienced Christine Hartmann in her direct and blunt manner, viewed exhibitions by the Offenbach Writing Workshop, saw the results of competitions organized by the Type Directors Club or discussed the semester or Diplom theses on display at the higher education institution in Offenbach.

Mainz, with its world-famous Gutenberg Museum, was just on the other side of the Rhine, and it was here that we met Hans Adolf Halbey, who was the director at the time, together with our Indian colleagues. Other cities such as Darmstadt and Heidelberg were only a short distance from Wiesbaden and Frankfurt, and the "Bibliotheca Palatina" exhibition in Heidelberg in 1986 was a major highlight of my degree course.

In 1982, the exhibition "Schrift Bild", an exhibition of former graduates of the higher education institution for design in Offenbach, was shown in Darmstadt-Griesheim. These and other writing enthusiasts later came together in the "Schreibwerkstatt Klingspor Offenbach", which was founded in 1987 by Karlgeorg Hoefler and his wife Maria. As students in our very first semester, Werner Schneider took us to this exhibition and we had the opportunity to meet Gottfried Pott, who was represented in the exhibition and guided us through it. At the time, he was working as a freelance graphic designer in Wiesbaden. We students were very impressed by his knowledge and his friendly, open manner.

We visited Frankfurt and the Frankfurt Book Fair with Werner Schneider, where numerous typeface artists were still exhibiting in the 1980s, including Hans Joachim Burgert, Herbert Maring and the Kalligrafie-Edition or Walter Stähle, who was already very old at the time. These visits to the respective typeface artists and their views on the world of type have had a huge impact on me.

¹ fhw-Journal of the University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden, No. 12, June 1986

Quality comes from quality

Werner Schneider was vehement in his views on graphic quality. We students saw and experienced this in every, really every conversation, in the corrections, in lectures and on excursions. In an article from the 1980s, Werner Schneider writes: "German typography enjoyed a high international reputation after the turn of the century. Prof. Ernst Schneidler and Prof. Rudolf Koch in particular made great contributions in this field and were regarded as the leading representatives of this art. The intensive cultivation of writing and lettering was aimed at tasteful and artistic education and was practiced at arts and crafts schools and subsequent schools of applied arts like in hardly any other country. In the transition phase from art schools to universities of applied sciences at the beginning of the 1970s, the teaching of writing almost came to a standstill. In recent years, student training at higher education institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany has become increasingly important again. Currently, lettering and calligraphy are being taught again at around 10 to 15 higher education institutions, with special calligraphy training only taking place at a few schools. There are enormous reservations about this medium on the part of renowned font and typography teachers. The main reason for this lies in the tastefulness of calligraphy.

One of the most successful typography teachers, Prof. Friedrich Friedl from the Offenbach School of Art, incidentally the successor institution to the School of Arts and Crafts where Rudolf Koch once taught, put it in a nutshell by stating that calligraphy was being derailed into commercial illustration. A pseudo-art is indulged in through the superimposition of form and color, with the actual quality of form falling uncontrollably by the wayside. Unfortunately, too little attention is paid to the formal and creative aspect of these laudable activities. It is more important than ever to promote font awareness and an understanding of typographic values."

"Struggling for quality of form" was an important statement by Werner Schneider. Lettering or individual letters had to be written 100, even 1000 times before they were really formally convincing. It is a long and sometimes frustrating journey until a type design is really graphically "right" and the trained eye can judge this. Prof. Schneider always used his own pencil sketches to show us the way to better letters. "Quality comes from agony" is a core sentence of his teaching. In line with this sentence, a second sentence that was just as important to him was: "Form wants to be suffered." He quoted it in almost every lesson or later in the second segment of studies in the project-based courses. Werner Schneider liked to repeat himself often and his flow of words seemed inexhaustible. "Showmanship" was anathema to him. A typeface design had to be formally clear and not distract the eye with overlapping shapes or splashes of color. As students, we experienced more than once that he would get into downright arguments with colleagues when it came to good form.

Werner Schneider clearly taught us during our studies that there is no substitute for writing by hand. He preferred to see a pencil sketch, a pen sketch with a layout felt-tip pen or a small drawing of a design rather than a smooth, technically perfect design. He did not want to be "bribed" by glossy paper or designs that had already been further developed through repro photography. He always preferred an "honest" handwriting to technical perfection. Ultimately, it was about training his eye and hand, sharpening his own judgment and gaining confidence in form design.

We students often heard from Werner Schneider that a designer is not only trained to deliver graphically convincing designs and to harmonize form and function, but that we also form taste. Another of Werner Schneider's favorite sentences is worth quoting at this point: "One should not

base one's judgment on mediocrity, but only on the very best." This applies both to us learners and to those who consume graphic art or writing.

Teaching staff and learners

In 1989 and 1998, I was allowed to stand in for Werner Schneider during his research leaves for a semester as part of a teaching contract for type design at the University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden. This was a very honorable task for me. I had already been teaching at the Mainz University of Applied Sciences since 1988, and in 1989 I also started as an adjunct instructor at the Saarbrücken University of Applied Sciences, which was restructured as the University of Fine Arts in the same year. Typeface design has always been one of the most important subjects taught as part of training to become a graphic artist or designer.

At this point, I would like to talk briefly about training in type design in general. Until around the mid-1990s, type, which includes calligraphy as well as typography and photographic typesetting techniques, was part of any good graphic designer's training. This is no longer the case today. The field of work of a graphic or communication designer has changed fundamentally over the last 30 to 40 years. What created with a pencil and a talented hand until the end of the 1980s is now created on screen. There are fantastic possibilities here, and the results can be fascinating, even breathtaking. The technology is being developed further and there are no limits to the imagination. However, there is often a lack of a sound graphic basis and, in particular, a lack of a fundamental approach to type and typography. Far too much reliance is placed on what the technology provides without at least a basic knowledge of font application

Every font that we find on the computer was developed for this purpose at some point. Highly qualified type designers and type designers such as Werner Schneider, Friedrich Poppl, Hermann Zapf or Adrian Frutiger, to name but a few, are the ones create fonts for digital use. However, fonts today are wildly mixed, robbed of their original purpose and used without knowledge for content that ultimately nothing to do with the external form. In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, type designers or graphic designers were still a respected academic appointment that needed everywhere. From the end of the 1980s onwards, it experienced a decline, today type designers are no longer paid adequately for their qualified, professional work . Many have changed their academic appointment as a result. Young people are following in their footsteps, often with training that is dominated by technology; they have mostly grown up and been brought up purely screen-oriented. In advertising agencies or other creative think tanks, a designer is over 30 years "old". Today, designers are no longer graphic or communication designers, but media designers, media designers or media technicians, which includes the word new media. The work no longer takes place on paper, but on the computer. The connection to typesetters and printers is often fluid, and certain academic appointments that were related to these trades no longer exist, such as lithographersretouchers or repro photographers. Proper typesetters with good training are also in short supply these days. In the age of desktop publishing, any design up to the pre-press stage can be created on your own computer. Unfortunately, many people feel called to be graphic designers who have never had any graphic design training. There are autodidacts who can even distinguish themselves from professionals in terms of their knowledge and skills, but they remain the exception.

Atypl and other type

Werner Schneider was a member of the Association Typographique Internationale, or ATypl for short. The non-profit organization was originally founded in 1957 by type manufacturers (type foundries) with the goal of holding an annual main meeting and serving as a network for the typographic community. The aim is to preserve the culture, tradition and history of type and typography.

In the 1980s and 90s, independent type designers and typographers joined the association. Today, the ATypl is made up of members of the typographic community, in particular type designers, foundry representatives, graphic designers and typographers from over 40 nations. The annual conference is held in a different city each year, which is usually of typographic significance. The event is organized with the support of local members and institutions. Every four or five years, the ATypl awards the Prix Charles Peignot for Excellence in Type Design to a type designer under the age of 35 who has made an outstanding contribution to type design. The previous winners were Claude Mediavilla (1982), Jovica Veljović (1985), Petr van Blokland (1988), Robert Slimbach, (1991), Carol Twombly (1994), Jean François Porchez (1998), Jonathan Hoefler (2002), Christian Schwartz (2007), Alexandra Korolkova (2013) and David Jonathan Ross (2018). Its elected board and members are distributed and organized worldwide. Both the organization and the conferences are mainly held in English.

In 1988, Werner Schneider took me to an Atypl congress in Frankfurt. The President that year was Ekkehard Schumacher-Gebler. Great names from the international writing scene spent several days discussing, listening to lectures or examining the work of others in exhibitions and publications. Hermann Zapf, Adrian Frutiger, Herb Lubalin, Ed Benguiat, Aaron Burns, Jovica Veljovic, David Quay and Fiona Ross were just some of those who traveled to this congress. However, not only the type designers but also the type manufacturers were present, so that there was often more talk about fees, prices and typesetting technology than about graphics and type. Not to mention type as art.

Hans Joachim Burgert, who founded the Berlin Calligraphy Collection at the Akademie der Künste, also came to Frankfurt for the congress, as he was also a member of Atypl. On one evening, Werner Schneider invited some of the type designers, most of whom were also calligraphers, to the University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden to give them an insight into his teaching, show work by students and also present his own originals. Some of the above-mentioned lettering artists were there, such as Hans Joachim Burgert, Jovica Veljovic, David Quay and Fiona Ross. I was already teaching lettering, but I was also in my early days as a lettering and book artist. The exchange with the type experts was fruitful and interesting, and such a meeting was again an opportunity to see calligraphy from other countries via Werner Schneider and to experience new views

Photo evening FH Wiesbaden ...

The artistic line - the letter principle

In spring 1988, Werner Schneider invited Hans-Joachim Burgert from Berlin to lead a workshop at the university of applied sciences. He was an artist who was at home in many fields: painting, sculpture, music, architecture and, of course, calligraphy for use in book art. I took the opportunity to take part in the workshop. The topic was line management in the sense of an artistic line, and we were to draw lines on large-format paper using large flat brushes. The way Burgert taught was strange to me at the time and very different to what I was used to from Werner Schneider. In a slide presentation, he used his own work as well as examples from visual

artists to explain what he believes is important when designing an artistically convincing typeface. When he then entered into discussions with Werner Schneider during the lecture and began to criticize him, we listeners were quite astonished. Burgert always spoke of the letter as a principle. His way of seeing and thinking was strange to me at first, and it was only over the following years that it became increasingly clear to me what Burgert meant. The discussions with Hans-Joachim Burgert at the Frankfurt Book Fair, where I also bought book "Die kalligrafische Linie² at his stand in 1989, which only existed as a manuscript at the time, were exciting and instructive and were decisive for my further development.

It was only later that I understood why Werner Schneider and Hans-Joachim Burgert's views were so far apart. A graphic designer and an artist, both shaped by their own training - one from his studies of graphic design, his teacher Friedrich Poppl and graphic application, the other from his studies of the fine arts with Expressionist Karl Schmitt-Rottluff, Emil Schumacher and other artists from various disciplines and the mindset of an artist. It couldn't be more different.

Graphic designer or artist?

At the university of applied sciences in Wiesbaden, there were two directions in the faculty of communication design in which you could train and in which you could later go in your academic appointment. One was the "advertising" direction, which included layout techniques, concept planning, Marketing, a large part of the photography teaching and many of the project courses offered in the second segment of studies. The other area was the artistic direction, which was characterized by several lecturers who were themselves recognized artists. This included painting, portrait and nude drawing, etching and original graphic techniques. Illustration and scientific graphics, as well as writing, stood in between, so to speak. Werner Schneider always stood between the "advertisers", who worked in large advertising agencies in Frankfurt or owned their own agencies, earned a lot of money and were responsible for Germany-wide advertising campaigns, and the "artists". The artists with sometimes crazy ideas, simple lifestyles, holding long discussions in their lectures and courses and conceiving exhibitions in galleries and museums. Some of the "old" artists still came from the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden, the predecessor institution of the university of applied sciences. Werner Schneider was often ridiculed by both sides. And calligraphy was also ridiculed. It was only towards the end of Werner Schneider's teaching, shortly before his retirement, that his colleagues began to understand what he had achieved in the field of lettering. He was awarded prizes, many of his students won the Rudo Spemann Prize, which is awarded every two years by the Klingspor Museum and the city of Offenbach, or other competitions, including for advertising campaigns, gold medals from the Biennale in Brno (Prüm), the Type Directors Club and many other awards for Werner Schneider and the success of his typesetting ultimately taught his colleagues better.

Bruges, the secret capital of calligraphy in Europe

In the 1980s, a number of people in the medieval city of Bruges in Belgium began to develop writing as a cultural technique and make it known to a wider audience. One of these pioneers was Jan Broes (1938 - 2019). He owned a medieval house dating back to 1479, which he converted and modernized himself, in the heart of the historic city center, where he organized a calligraphy and writing exhibition every three years from 1986. Jan Broes was not only a

² Burgert, Hans Joachim: The Calligraphic Line (manuscript in English, translated by Brody Neuenschwander), Editor Konrad Bauer, Berlin 1989

passionate collector of calligraphic originals, but also a great lover of writing in stone. His collection of artistically designed lettering plates, stones and sculptures was unique, and he presented them in a highly aesthetic way in his house, which was always open to the public. He lived with and in stone. The old music that resounded through his house day and night right out into the street underlined the medieval, artistic atmosphere in the most authentic way. Werner Schneider was represented in these exhibitions from the very beginning and later played a decisive role in shaping them, as he not only admitted many of his calligraphic originals to Jan Broes, but also suggested other lettering artists as participants. So in 1989 I had the honor of being represented in the second exhibition, and then in several subsequent ones.

The best-known European lettering artists and stone sculptors were invited to take part in these exhibitions, for example John Skelton (GB), Jack Trowbridge (GB), Claude Mediavilla (F), Jean Larcher (F), Heinz Schumann (Chemnitz), Karina Meister (Amsterdam), numerous French stone sculptors specializing in lettering in stone (Jean Claude Lamborot, Roger Gorrindo and many others) and also young, promising talents from the calligraphy and stone sculpting scene. Each time, Jan Broes published a catalog³ of the works, which the then still young Elmo van Slingerland from Rotterdam/Netherlands, a talented designer and calligrapher and close friend of Jan Broes, designed in a very appealing and modern way. The requirement for participation in the exhibitions was that each participant had to create a work in Dutch/Flemish on a theme specified by Jan Broes.

he Oude Burg street in Bruges: the cross vaults of a shopping arcade were designed in calligraphy by Werner Schneider, Elmo van Slingerland, Michel Derre and Brody Neuenschwander and can still be seen today.

The interaction during the openings and the days that followed was characterized by mutual recognition, numerous professional discussions and friendly conversations, and many of the contacts made in Bruges have lasted to this day. Unfortunately, many of the artists are no longer alive today.

The last exhibition took place in 2002. For this exhibition, several lettering artists worked on a special project in Bruges. The medieval cross vault of a shopping arcade, not far from Jan Broes' house, was decorated with calligraphy and typography in different styles by several lettering artists. The artists were Werner Schneider, Brody Neuenschwander (Bruges), Michel Derre (F) and Elmo van Slingerland (NL). In 2002, Bruges was the European Capital of Culture and Werner Schneider was chosen as the patron saint of the city of Bruges to represent Germany. He also designed a logo for the city.

Installations and exhibitions on calligraphy and writing were shown throughout the city in 2002. There was a tour that led from station to station, and at every corner you could discover new interesting projects with writing. Galleries, churches and museums were exhibition venues for a wide variety of artists who presented objects on paper, in stone, on architecture, in fabric, as films or projections on water and combined them with music or sound effects. Medieval book collections were displayed in museums, and writing of the highest quality was honored in numerous places.

³ Catalogs of the exhibitions in Bruges 1986, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2002, edited by Jan Broes,

Brody Neuenschwander and Yves Leterme are world-famous and outstanding calligraphers who live in Bruges. The Boudens family is a well-known family of lettering artists in the city: Joke and Lisbeth Boudens as calligraphers, Pieter and Kristoffel Boudens as stone sculptors and Jeroen Boudens as a metal artist are the five children of the well-known lettering artist and teaching artist Jef Boudens (1926 - 1990), who are still active today and have given the city a great boost in recognition as the "Mecca of calligraphy"⁴. The Kunsthuis Manna gallery and publishing house, which holds several exhibitions on lettering and related arts every year, the "Symposion" store, which not only offers modern calligraphy but also courses, numerous young students of the above-mentioned lettering artists, who in turn train their students - they all have one thing in common: a love of lettering and the motivation to live and pass on calligraphy professionally at a high level. At the "European Lettering Institute" with founder Lieve Cornil, you can do a main or additional course of study and train to become a type designer.

Bruges has already hosted major symposia on calligraphy. The medieval monasteries as conference venues, the lively history and enthusiastic calligraphers are inviting, and participants come from all over the world, including the USA and Japan. In 2008, there was an exchange of Belgian and South African lettering artists under the initiative of Maud Bekaert, and around Bruges, stones with inscriptions could be viewed that were modern in design and blended perfectly into the landscape.⁵ Art in Construction, calligraphic logos and inscriptions in stone can be found on every corner in Bruges and are always of the highest graphic standard. Today, Bruges is home to numerous lettering artists who live and work with a lettering culture that is unique in Europe.

Homage to Jef Boudens in the Bruges City Library

One exhibition should not go unmentioned in Bruges: The exhibition "Silent tribute to Jef Boudens". It was initiated by Leen Gallet in 1993. All five children of the famous Belgian type designer were invited and their works formed the core of the exhibition. Other typeface artists mentioned above were invited to take part in the exhibition in the Bruges City Library, including Werner Schneider. I myself had been giving courses in Belgium for several years at that time, which Leen Gallet also organized, and was also asked to show calligraphic works. Werner Schneider was unable to attend the opening in person, but he was keen to see the exhibition. In 1993, the AtypI conference was held in Antwerp. Werner Schneider took part, and at the same time I gave a workshop in Antwerp. So we traveled together from Antwerp to Bruges to visit the exhibition. It was raining cats and dogs, and getting to the library seemed almost impossible, as there were long distances to cover on foot. But Werner Schneider spoke so enthusiastically about the conference, his colleagues and the news that the rain became a minor matter. Not only the organizer Leen Gallet was waiting for us at the exhibition, but also all five Boudens children Joke, Pieter, Lisbeth, Kristoffel and Jeroen, as they were eager to meet Werner Schneider. Werner Schneider, for his part, was so pleased with this reception that he still talked about it years later.

4 Quote from Werner Schneider for the catalog "Een stad vol letters", p. 6, ed. Jan Broes, Bruges 2002

5 Catalog Wor(l)ds, Letters in steen, Brugge 2008

East meets West: Werner Schneider and R. K. Joshi at the Klingspor Museum

In the fall of 1998, a joint exhibition by the two university professors Werner Schneider and R. K. Joshi was shown at the Klingspor Museum Offenbach. Prof. Joshi had traveled from India for the opening evening. Werner Schneider was particularly pleased about the presence of Prof. Hermann Zapf and Mrs. Gertraude Poppl.

Poster for the exhibition "Grace and Expression" with Werner Schneider and R. K. Joshi in 1998

"Lines must be energized, spirit must flow into the letters... The pursuit of perfect form must go on, forever, everywhere. Not just for the sake of writing, but for the ultimate hereafter." This excerpt from Prof. Joshi's commitment to writing may be representative of the overall character of the exhibition "East meets West". Prof. Joshi calls himself "Designer, Type Designer, Academician, Revivalist, Poet, Calligrapher", whose probably needs no translation. In years of studies, he has devoted himself to the different Indian writing styles, starting with Indus script, which originated over 3000 BC. Prof. Joshi created over 40 of his own writing styles, including Siddhanagari, Prachinagari, Meghanagari, Harshanagari, Kadambanagari, Brahmanagari and many more. They were named and developed according to their temporal, geographical or religious origin. Prof. Joshi quoted words or text excerpts from the old Tibetan book SIDHAM, whose texts were intended exclusively for the royal family. As a Brahmin (the so-called priestly caste), Prof. Joshi is allowed to make use of these sacred writings and put them into calligraphic form. Professor Joshi wrote in about 10 Indian writing styles. He had spread out the entire wealth of forms of the most important Indian writing styles in this exhibition. Even if we couldn't read his writing, we could still enjoy the forms. "Writing is also for looking at", the Hungarian typeface artist Imre Reiner (1900 - 1987) once said.

Director Christian Scheffler spoke the following words at the opening:

"Two artists, two cultures meet here in the exhibition. Two artists who have known each other for many years. Together they developed the idea of showing their very different works in one exhibition. At the center of the exhibition are 40 calligraphic sheets, twenty pairs, each containing the same text; twenty sheets were written by Werner Schneider in European script, twenty sheets were written by Raghunath Joshi in Indian script. The texts that the two writers have exchanged originate from both Indian and European cultures...
...And the scriptures in India and in Europe also have a common root in the Semitic scripts of the Near East. There was probably a first advanced civilization in the Indus Valley very early on, in the 3rd millennium BC, with a script that has not yet been deciphered. Which language was spoken there by which people is still unknown. Today's Indian scripts have Semitic origins; the first written documents date back to the 5th/6th century B.C. It is remarkable that two completely different writing cultures meet here in the Klingspor Museum in one exhibition, which most probably had common ancestors in the Near East over two thousand years ago...

In addition to Prof. Werner Schneider's free typeface art (scriptural) works, you can see here in the exhibition typeface designs for electronic media, posters, handwritten book titles, company logos - in other words, works from the field of type application in everyday life. Prof. Schneider has a preference for graphics for cultural purposes. For example, he presented the corporate design of the Wiesbaden Music Academy and the "Barock-Pfingsten" appearance of the Salzburg

Festival. He has also designed logos for well-known commercial enterprises and public institutions. His spectrum of typographic works ranges from the static expression of classical capital letters to unconventional writing techniques in an expressive and spontaneous style....
...As you can see, neither typeface artist is playing calligraphy in an ivory tower. For both, writing is the basics of their daily work in the wide world of communication design. This is also clearly documented in this Offenbach exhibition...

Gertraude Poppl remarked on the opening evening: "You can look for an exhibition like this anywhere in the world for a long time", and she was certainly right.

A serious matter is a real pleasure: lectures and workshops in the USA

In May 1999, Werner Schneider was invited to give lectures and lead workshops in the USA. After many years of unsuccessful invitations, he finally accepted the request to pass on his knowledge and skills in workshops. It was to be his only trip to America. I had the honor of accompanying him on this trip as a translator and assistant during his two-week stay. Mary Anne Wolfe, President of Society of Scribes in New York, and Paul Shaw, typographer, book author and type scholar, were the initiators and organizers of the activities in New York. Before the workshop started, Werner Schneider and I were able to spend a day acclimatizing to this lively city. We took in New York with its skyscrapers and the Empire State Building, its many people of all nationalities and its cultural and commercial extremes.

Photo Werner Schneider in front of the World Trade Center...

Paul Shaw, the "scribe" with whom Werner Schneider spent the night, had an immense collection of specialist books in all languages, and many a work that we can only find in antiquarian bookshelves was on his shelves. He didn't want to miss out on taking part in Prof. Schneider's workshop, and so we met him again among the other 22 course participants on the first day of the workshop. Just a few days later, he was to lead a field trip to Rome. Participants came from all over the USA to experience Prof. Werner Schneider live. Most of the course participants were well-known calligraphers and designers in the USA. They were amazed when Werner Schneider demonstrated his Roman Capitalis with a broad flat brush on a large sheet of paper that we had purchased the day before in New York.

Just one day after the workshop, we had planned a special kind of meeting: in a four-hour train ride along the Connecticut coast, we traveled to John Benson, the best stone sculptor in the USA, in Newport, Rhode Island. This smallest state in the USA was founded in 1636, and the first settlers from Europe were stranded here in the "New World". The studio of John Benson (1939 - 2024), which is now run by his son Nicholas, can look back on a long tradition: The Stevens family of stone sculptors founded the studio in 1705, and the academic appointment was passed down from father to son over several generations. All bear the name John, not to be confused with the American calligrapher John Stevens, a well-known virtuoso calligrapher and namesake.

Both in the studio and in the extensive cemetery, we saw gravestones and monuments that were masterfully designed and executed in capitalis, antiqua, rustic or cursive. Werner Schneider was impressed by the quality of the inscriptions. John Benson created famous monuments for several Presidents of the United States, including the "Roosevelt Memorial" and the "Kennedy Memorial" in Washington. As is so often the case between people who do and think alike, the meeting between the two great connoisseurs of the art of lettering was extremely open and cordial and was characterized by great mutual recognition and respect.

On Tuesday, May 18, at 6 p.m. in the auditorium of Fordham University New York, Werner Schneider gave his long-prepared lecture. In front of an interested audience and some well-known writing experts who had traveled from far and wide, Werner Schneider first demonstrated his Roman Capitalis. When the lights went out and the eyes of those present turned to the stage and the screen, Werner Schneider began his lecture. He ended his greeting, which he gave in his best English, with the sentence: "I am a New Yorker!", which helped to lighten the mood considerably. Werner Schneider also wanted to convey the fascination that this city exerted on him in this way. He then used slides to guide the audience through the world of his work and his work philosophy. The sentence from Seneca: "Res severa est verum gaudium." (A serious thing is a true joy) not only ran through the lecture, but also through the entire time in the USA, through workshops and technical discussions. One English translation reads: "A serious cause is a source of true joy", another: "A serious affair is a true delight", and the course participants in both courses were encouraged to write this sentence.^{e)}

In his slide show, Werner Schneider presented both free and applied type design, but above all the "Schneider-Antiqua" and "Libretto" typefaces and the preliminary designs for them. He repeatedly referred to his teacher Friedrich Poppl, whose former student and later colleague he was for 20 years.

On the afternoon of the same day as the lecture, the always spontaneous Werner Schneider changed the order of his slides. This took place in Paul Shaw's living room, where he was sitting on the floor on his knees making a draft in English script. Werner Schneider, who was noticeably nervous before the lecture, held the individual slides against the window and moved them one after the other. The presentation, which had been prepared weeks in advance with the descriptions of each slide, the translation of which I had taken over, was completely disorganized as a result. My part in this lecture was to translate Prof. Schneider's words and comments, which were formulated in German far from the manuscript, and then to translate the questions. Not an easy task, but I managed it!

After the workshop, we used the day off to visit the Metropolitan Museum to see treasures of art from thousands of years ago, including hieroglyphics from the Egyptians, cuneiform writing from the Sumerians, capitalis from the Romans and, in one of the many special exhibitions, medieval writing from the Books of Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux. Magnifying glasses were available for each work so that the initials, textures, glosses, marginalia and drolleries could be better viewed.

Once again, 23 course participants from all over the USA awaited us in Midland, Michigan at Northwood University to experience "their" weekend with Prof. Schneider. We were warmly welcomed by Sherri Kiesel, the local organizer of the workshop, and two very nice course

participants in an idyllic rural setting surrounded by beautiful forests and fields. The theme of the course at this university extended far beyond Roman Capital: day one: "Roman Capital", day two: "Italic" and day three: "Ruling Pen". Three topics that would normally take a week just to "touch" were covered here in just three days! However, as in New York, the participants at were also well equipped with knowledge, so that "getting through" the topics did not cause any problems. The highlights of the workshops were Werner Schneider's slides and, in particular, his demonstrations. Full of concentration and practiced precision, yet fresh and lively, he conjured up his Roman Capitalis or the Humanist Italic on the page. Be it a self-made bamboo nib or a music nib (no longer available in Germany), each tool with its own character is a familiar instrument for Werner Schneider.

However, the range of the nib was the highlight of this workshop. Each participant individually witnessed Mr. Schneider's expressive penwork: to see and to copy. All participants were unanimously enthusiastic about the course.

Finally, Jim Chin from Chicago, an American of Chinese origin and inventive manufacturer of special writing tools, accompanied us to a special kind of meeting on our last day. The plan was to visit the Newberry Library in Chicago, one of the largest libraries in the world. Director Paul Gehl welcomed us warmly and gave us a very private tour of the library's secret back rooms, where the greatest rarities and treasures are stored. We were able to hold and leaf through original Italian manuscripts from the 14th century, French medieval codices and an exchange of letters between Anna Simons and Edward Johnston, the reformer of the art of writing in England. The visit to the library was followed by a meeting with a Linotype representative, with whom Werner Schneider discussed future font design projects.

We left Chicago in the late afternoon American time and arrived in Frankfurt the next morning at 8 a.m. Central European Time. After the many impressions, Prof. Schneider and I were of the opinion that the trip had exceeded both our expectations in every respect. As an assistant and interpreter for my esteemed teacher, I dared to hope that he would take me with him again on a future trip. But unfortunately, his state of health no longer admitted this second trip to the USA. In 2005, Werner Schneider gave a lecture in London for Letter Exchange, an association of professional type artists and designers. I was able to accompany him there a second time and assist him with the translation of his lecture.

A short excerpt from his presentation: "My advice from colleague to colleague: attempt to work intensively with the visual laws of letterforms in order to create a contemporary, human and authentic design that lasts with the help of digital technology. This will be more sophisticated and fascinating than the random shapes of today. Believe me, those who do not deny the origins of this medium and spiritualize the form through the movement of creation will go far. The scratching pen, the handy tools that leave fascinating traces of letterforms, create better requirements in the creative use of one of mankind's most important cultural assets than just working with a mouse. These timeless examples are easier to understand with a wide range of writing tools."

Bad Laasphe

I had the opportunity to visit Werner Schneider four times at home in his studio and also in his private house. It is located in the Wittgensteiner Land, in an idyllic suburb of Bad Laasphe. The first time I came was in 1998 with the French lettering artist Claude Mediavilla and the Belgian

stone sculptor Frank Missant from Bergisch Gladbach, where Claude Mediavilla was leading a course for the "Ars Scribendi" society, for which I had organized the course as chairwoman at the time. Werner Schneider and his wife Luise gave us an open and friendly welcome in their house, which was simply furnished in the style of the 1950s. After a snack in the living room, we went down to the cellar, where Werner Schneider's workrooms were located. The visitors' English and French posed no problem, as the language of writing is universal. Werner Schneider showed us stacks of calligraphic originals, because Claude Mediavilla, whose book "Calligraphie"⁶ featured several works by Werner Schneider, was in the process of publishing a second edition of the book and selecting originals by Werner Schneider for it and for an exhibition in Paris. Even he was surprised by the works, not only by the quality, because this is not in doubt with Werner Schneider, but also by the quantity.

Together with my colleague Achyut Palav from Mumbai, I visited Werner Schneider for the second time at the end of the 1990s. Achyut is one of the three Indian type designers who came to Wiesbaden in 1986 at Werner Schneider's invitation. To this day, we have a good collegial and friendly relationship. In 2011, Achyut Palav, who is a highly respected type designer and artist in India, invited me to show an exhibition with him in Mumbai. He called it "Silver Calligraphy", as we were celebrating our 25-year calligraphic friendship. Achyut Palav had already been to Germany several times, where he gave courses and took part in exhibitions. Our visit to Werner Schneider was very special for my esteemed Indian colleague as he held him in high esteem. He could hardly believe that Werner Schneider is such a humble man, yet he is so famous in India! When he got himself a glass of water and offered one to Achyut Palav, the latter couldn't believe his eyes. In India, a professor of his rank would never think of getting himself a glass of water when visiting a colleague. In India, there are servants or one's own wife who are responsible for such "trivialities". The cultures are different...

The third time I was in Bad Laasphe was in 2000 with the Dutch philosopher and friend Dr. Loek Schönbeck from Amsterdam. He was not only a scientist, but also a type designer, and for his dissertation in Latin and Greek script, he designed the complete set of figures he needed for it, which he had not found in any other typeface. He worked for many years on the design and digital implementation. Werner Schneider, who liked to discuss and criticize, got into conversation with Dr. Schönbeck, and soon an argument broke out that one would never have suspected. Werner Schneider criticized some of the typeface forms and also criticized the fact that the entire typeface was created on the computer and that the drafts were hardly ever preceded by a pencil sketch. He, who had just started digitizing his own typefaces at the time and had drawn all his type designs by hand throughout his life, could not understand Dr. Schönbeck's approach. Admittedly, a great book of remarkable scope was created as the dissertation of a scientist, with letter combinations that must be described as ingenious and that had never existed before. Schönbeck designed and published the book himself. As is so often the case, everyone goes their own way, has their own point of view and individual background... Werner Schneider showed us numerous originals and posters and other printed matter designed by him, which impressed Dr. Schönbeck greatly. It goes without saying that the visit ended on a conciliatory note.

In 2004, I visited Werner Schneider in his home town for the fourth time. This time I came with my partner, the typeface artist Jean Larcher (1947 - 2015) from Paris. As a gift, Jean Larcher presented me with a large sheet of his incomparable English handwriting, which Werner Schneider was delighted to receive. He had known Jean Larcher from his early AtypI days and had met him at several conferences. After lunch, Werner Schneider took us to various places in

⁶ Mediavilla, Claude, Calligraphy, Imprimerie Nationale de Paris,

the Bad Laasphe area where he had designed typefaces. In a church whose pastor was a good friend of Werner Schneider's, Werner Schneider inscribed a wall behind the altar in a narrow capital font.

We saw logos, certificates and other typeface designs in various places and marveled at Werner Schneider's versatility. In his office in the basement of the house, he showed us the fonts he had just designed and digitized on his computer. The "Sunetta" font was current at the time, and he was very familiar with the programs for vectorizing fonts.

The following day, Werner Schneider had an appointment at the university in Marburg, where he often worked at the Institute of Paleography. He took us there and we visited the Faculty of Cultural Studies with him. Afterwards, he showed us around the city and we were able to round off our visit with Werner Schneider in a friendly and collegial manner over lunch.

Werner Schneider and Jean Larcher in Marburg in 2004.

The book that was never published

From the beginning of the 1990s, Werner Schneider wrote a book. On the one hand, it dealt with the Roman capitalis as the mother of all scripts and showed historical examples. Werner Schneider went into great detail about the structure of the individual letters and analyzed them down to the basic geometric forms. The basic forms, style and decoration of the Kapitalis Monumentalis covered many pages of the manuscript. His own examples and examples from his teaching clarified his statements. In the back of the book, entitled "Scriptur 2000", he showed numerous examples, works by well-known lettering artists, students and his own staff. He wrote: "The refreshing aspect of contemporary scriptural graphics lies in the fleeting, fragmentary and immediate. ... The spontaneously written word is still regarded as one of the most evocative means of expression in human communication. In an age that creates the means to imitate everything possible ever more perfectly, the self-creative form of expression has become a visual treasure. The awareness of still being able to create something with one's own hands promotes the creative experience to a high degree. Because no machine can feel what hands feel. The sensibility of the hand stands high above the insentient machine."

The content of the manuscript was ready, and one evening Werner Schneider presented it to Ms. Poppl, who was always very critical and whose opinion was important to Werner Schneider. I was lucky enough to be present at this meeting. We went through page after page for hours, discussing, criticizing and reviewing it. Now all that was missing was a publisher who would take on the manuscript and publish it as a book. In 1992, Werner Schneider found Schlütersche Verlagsbuchhandlung in Hanover. The publisher was prepared to publish the book and printed an advertising flyer, which was distributed to interested parties. The requirement for printing the

book was a certain number of pre-orders. Unfortunately, these did not meet expectations and the publisher withdrew from publication.

It was not until a few years later, around the year 2000, that Werner Schneider presented the book to Hermann Schmidt Verlag in Mainz. The publisher Bertram Schmidt-Friderichs and his wife Karin, who were still quite young at the time, were very open to news and creative ideas about type, and the publishing program corresponded exactly to the subject of Werner Schneider's book. After many discussions, Werner Schneider changed the content, shortened, corrected and rewrote. In 2000, Werner Schneider was awarded a prize by the Type Directors Club for his "Millennium Antiqua", which he published as an annual greeting, and on whose board Bertram Schmidt-Friderichs was represented at the time. Unfortunately, the publisher changed his mind about the book and it was never published.

In 1999, the year in which Werner Schneider undertook his trip to the USA, the typeface designer and calligrapher Michael Clark from Virginia/USA published a small square catalog, which he designed and financed himself as a token of thanks and because of his great admiration for Werner Schneider's life's work. The calligraphic originals, which were still in the USA at the time and were shown in San Francisco, Kansas City and Washington after the exhibition at Fordham University in New York, were reproduced in this catalog⁷. When Werner Schneider received the catalog, which he was very much looking forward to, he was very disappointed. The paper on which it was printed had the quality of copy paper. The image quality of the works on the small format and 32 pages did not match his perception of quality. I acted as an intermediary between him and Michael Clark, an otherwise excellent designer whom Werner Schneider greatly admired and was on friendly terms with, and the telephone calls to the USA were not easy. Unfortunately, the catalog did not become known in type design circles as a result. Werner Schneider did not want this catalog to be passed on under any circumstances. He never got over this disappointment.

The great world of writing

Werner Schneider opened the door to the big world of writing for me. He supported me, arranged my first teaching contracts and passed on the odd commission to me. I owe my first international workshop for the Belgian-Dutch calligraphy association "Scriptores" to Werner Schneider. He didn't give any courses of this kind himself, so I was able to gain my first experience abroad at the beginning of my now 37 years of teaching. Numerous courses followed. He wrote contributions for my books and gave the opening speech for one of my exhibitions at the castle in Dillingen/Saar in 1994. He even once wrote me an enthusiastic postcard from Rome, the most important city for the development of Western Kapitalis Monumentalis, which he visited together with his wife.

After completing my studies, I attended numerous training courses, seminars, symposia and workshops with international greats in the art of lettering over many years, as well as the Summer Academy in Hamburg several times, where I was later even allowed to hold a guest professorship twice. This broadened my view of the art of calligraphy and I finally went my own way. I developed my own teaching method, which I pass on worldwide. I can now look back on over 240 solo and group exhibitions, most recently in Korea, India, Russia and several times in the United Arab Emirates.

⁷ Werner Schneider, *Schriftkunst*, A catalog of recent works, Michael Clark Design, USA 1999.

I often had controversial discussions with Werner Schneider. His perspective came from a different generation, his life path was different from mine. But I learned so much from Werner Schneider and I am very grateful to have studied with him in Wiesbaden. I wouldn't want to miss the experiences he gave me and the people I got to know. My calligraphic skills were awakened by Werner Schneider, and without him I would not be who I am today.

My writing style was also very much influenced by Werner Schneider. His precision on the one hand and his free, spontaneous way of writing on the other have left deep marks on me. In my calligraphic forms you can see my teaching - to this day. I have adopted many writing forms from him, and Werner Schneider in turn learned them from his by Prof. Friedrich Poppl. Werner Schneider went his own way, just as I do today. Nevertheless, you can ultimately see the forms of the teaching of Friedrich Poppl in my forms, and I am proud of that. In turn, I pass these calligraphic forms on to my pupils and students in my own way, who are thus the "fourth generation" to learn this free writing style, which is unique in Germany. People around the world look up to Werner Schneider with respect, which I have experienced over the years and in many seminars. As a young student, I would never have thought that the world of writing was so big. Thank you, Werner Schneider!

Katharina Pieper

Chapter 7, from page 132 In the magic garden of writing

Werner Schneider's relationship to the Berlin Calligraphy Collection

Converting speech into writing is currently almost unthinkable without technical aids. As the primary means of conveying information, the function of handwriting has been drastically reduced and is mainly, if at all, limited to the private sphere. Notes, rare vacation cards, letters, handwritten birthday invitations and place cards today serve a self-chosen niche as an alternative to the digital world or out of nostalgia. Whether the current rapid pace of technological development will replace handwriting or even make it superfluous is anyone's guess. In archives, handwriting is a cornerstone of daily work - deciphering a person's handwriting or assigning it to them plays virtually no role in everyday life. What its loss could mean for cultural history remains to be seen.

When I was put in charge of the Berlin Calligraphy Collection overnight in 2004, I only had associations with handwriting, but not with calligraphy as an art form. I had to learn to read calligraphy. It was a new realization that you can change the shape of the letters, subject them to a deliberately chosen rhythm and thus give the writing a new message, creating a picture or painting. How different the formal language of calligraphers can be, which material aids they use and which texts or words they use, seemed to be a mystery that only gradually became clear, but even after 20 years has lost none of its fascination and my respect for artistic creation

The Akademie der Künste's library has been in charge of the Berlin Calligraphy Collection since 1999. It collects manuscripts in their freest form from the past 60 years as well as selected typographic works by the most renowned calligraphers and type designers in Europe and overseas. The focus is on the Latin alphabet. Legible to unrecognizable, sometimes there are hardly any associations with letters, opening up a whole new world for the visitor between handwriting and visual artwork. The boundary is fluid, although calligraphy is primarily a craft, even in the literal sense.

On the initiative of the collection's initiator Hans Joachim Burgert, Werner Schneider was invited to donate examples of his calligraphic and typographic works to the Academy. He gladly accepted this request and was very willing to contribute to its growth. When Burgert appointed his successor for further acquisition, he appointed Werner Schneider as one of four correspondents to the collection in 2008. The goal was to continue the initiative he had begun to preserve and disseminate the "visualization of the word" in his spirit. The collecti-

on is fed by donations and the calligraphers are selected by a committee. Thanks to Schneider's initiative, the complete estate of Friedrich Poppl, as well as the original drafts of Adrian Frutiger's typeface *Univers*, also came to the Academy. Following his recommendation, some of his students were invited to the archive.

Werner Schneider's passion for writing became apparent early on:

Both at elementary school and at grammar school (up to lower secondary school), I preferred a personal style. With a questionable handwriting grade, I applied for a traineeship in, of all places, a studio for typeface painting. During this time (1953-1954), I successfully took part in a national competition for typeface painters. This opened the door to my studies at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden (In: Die Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden 1949 - 1970, published by Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V., Wiesbaden: Reichert 2016, p. 84)

From 1954 to 1958 he was a student of Friedrich Poppl, later his assistant, worked as a designer for Breitkopf & Härtel and designed typefaces for H. Berthold AG and Linotype. His best-known typefaces are *Schneider Antiqua*, *Schneider Libretto*, *Vialog* (a design and its realization for the Munich subway), *Sunetta* and *Satero*. For almost forty years, he taught typeface and typography at the Werkkunstschule and the university of applied sciences in Wiesbaden.

His written artistic work was characterized by his fervent admiration for his educational background and teachers Friedrich Poppl, Rudo Spemann, Adrian Frutiger and later also in the spirit and work of Hans Joachim Burgert.

Werner Schneider's passion was discussing theoretical approaches to calligraphy and typography. He held the eternal beauty of Roman monumental letters in high esteem, had great respect for the aesthetic aspects of a cultural asset with a long tradition and felt strongly committed to it. At the same time, his work also shows how important it is not to simply copy the past, but to translate it into the present and lend it a modern spirit.

Although Schneider disagreed with the pure construction of typefaces, he by no means closed his mind to technical developments over the course of time, but remained a critical observer and advocate of elementary design principles.

For an understanding of form there is only this sequence: writing and drawing as a means of sensitizing the eye, followed by work on the computer. (Werner Schneider: Schriftkunst; a catalog of recent works. Paul Shaw, New York and others, s.a.)

As a lettering artist, it has always been important to me to show lettering in its purest form. In an age dominated by the computer, a machine that often disfigures and distorts writing, I feel committed to the aesthetic aspects of a cultural asset with a long tradition. I believe that classical forms deserve our deepest respect. My work is primarily about achieving high quality in both static and dynamic expression. I am also very interested in giving language a form that represents its original content in an adequate and modern form. The fascination for rhythm, which is an important aspect of handwritten writing, has led me to create my design drafts in scriptural form. Even though I prefer the expressive and spontaneous approach to writing, this art form should still be open to criticism and not dissolve into a jungle of designs. We already have enough of that, and we shouldn't add to it with calligraphic caricatures. (Homepage: Int. Exhibition of Calligraphy, Moscow)

For Schneider, the written letter was the basics for the studies and development of new letterforms and an essential part of general education. His credo was to use writing or typography as the visual staging of language, supported by the influence of contemporary style, the personality and creative will of the calligraphers as well as the technical requirements of the writing tools and carrier materials.

His productive engagement with Burgert, whose manuscript *Schrift als Kalligraphie* (Burgert, Hans-Joachim: Schrift als Kalligraphie: Betrachtungen zur Kunst des Writing. Berlin: Burgert-Handpresse, 1999), regarded as a standard work of modern experimental calligraphy, demonstrates his insistence on never losing the demand for the highest quality:

I notice that you use the term construction in connection with print type. This does not get to the heart of the matter and cannot be accepted. Sophisticated type form is felt and modeled, not constructed. Only dilettantes, technoids and computer freaks tamper constructively with type and degrade it to technical constructs. (W. Schneider to H.J. Burgert, 2003; Akademie der Künste. Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Burgert Archive 501)

I will immediately pick out your main concern, namely the term 'construction'. Your lines seem to me to clarify something: you confuse 'construction' with 'geometry'... please understand me: I need a term, [for] the 'not-written-by-

hand' sign. Your letter designs, where you know how to draw every millimetre precisely, are 'constructions' for me. I also notice that - against this background - you have a limited view. (H.J. Burgert to W. Schneider, 2003; *ibid.*)

In their written exchanges, they gave each other no quarter. Their mutual respect was the basis of their professional relationship, despite criticism in detail. Schneider's wish to convert Burgert's typeface designs into machine-readable fonts was no longer fulfilled; he was busy with too many projects at the same time.

Werner Schneider's life was his work; at the same time, it was his need and his passion. Even after his retirement, he continued to advise students and teachers. Beyond his professional life, he was involved in many projects, designed new characters, gave lectures on modern typography and the principles of type design and took part in numerous national and international calligraphy exhibitions. He loved special commissions, such as his designs for inscriptions on two bells for the Evangelical Lutheran parish of Crivitz in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, which he turned into reality in the 80th decade of his life.

Werner Schneider paved the way for my understanding of modern calligraphy and typography. His telephone conversations were lively, full of ideas and lasted a long time because he always had a lot to tell from his rich treasure trove of experiences and adventures. The correspondents of the Berlin collection also remember his lively attentiveness and the questions, always full of curiosity, at the meetings in Berlin.

Benno Aumann: ...when I think of him, I see before me a lovely, lively and caring person, with whom I went to the first meeting of the Berlin Calligraphy Collection, i.e. he led me there, as I didn't know my way around, briefcase in hand, walking fast and talking all the time. As a result, we missed the right stop and had to walk longer than planned, which didn't seem to bother him, who was in surprisingly good shape. On the contrary. So he... was able to continue talking about his long, successful time as a type designer, designer, teacher and calligrapher

Denise Lach: *I was always very impressed in Werner Schneider's presence. For me, he was a great master, a trailblazer for pioneering type design. He had high standards in terms of quality of form, contrast and composition...*

Thomas Ingmire: *Meeting Mr. Schneider for the first time was a welcome and memorable experience. I had somehow expected a reserved and perhaps even an aloof personality. What a pleasant surprise to find the opposite to be true. His welcome was warm and energetic. It seemed more like we were old friends who had not seen each other for a number of years."*

The works he left behind bear witness to his wide-ranging spectrum of calligraphic and typographic design - legible to expressionist calligraphy, final artwork of his typefaces, designs and documentary material - the archive database of the Berlin collection lists around 150 entries. The sheets and documents from his estate can be researched on the Akademie der Künste's homepage and are of course also accessible to anyone interested.

Werner Schneider passed away on January 12, 2022 at the age of 87. The calligraphic world has lost a master of his subject.

Susanne Nagel

I would now like to talk about a process that feeds on comparison. Three written life's works lie before us for consideration. Unlike us today, none of these three writers used an electronic search engine. They drew from their own bookshelves, from libraries, from radio broadcasts, from the daily newspaper. Without being able to provide proof of how this magical coincidence of text and author came about in retrospect, it remains a source for discovering valuable contexts from the time of their creation. After all, the selection of texts gives us the opportunity to visualize the writer's participation in the world and his world view in examples.

When Kunstarthe Wiesbaden received sheets from Gottfried Pott's "Kalligraphie Edition"¹ as an archive gift, the quote from Schiller's "The Bride of Messina" caught my attention. Poppl had written on black paper in 1966: But the greatest evil is guilt.

Needless to say, I was not present in 1966 and could not ask him how he came across this quote. I am reconstructing it from the year it was written, 1966, when the question of the guilt of the German people was the topic of the day. We can assume that Poppl, as a soldier in the Second World War, never forgot the question of the guilt of the National Socialist regime, even in Germany, the country of the economic miracle. The double guilt of his people as perpetrators of the war and the mass extermination of the Jews will have occupied him for the rest of his life. In 1963, the Hessian public prosecutor Fritz Bauer began to come to terms with the crimes of the Nazi era in Frankfurt. This reappraisal of the German past from the point of view of victims and perpetrators was not only the task of the judiciary, but also penetrated all families through the press and daily news. There, the question of guilt was hotly debated, especially

¹ The "Kalligraphie Edition" was founded in 1985 by Herbert Maring and his wife in Hardheim. In 1986, Gottfried Pott found this sheet by his teacher so valuable in its design and message that he selected it from Friedrich Poppl's widow for Herbert Maring's Kalligraphie Edition. - All other texts written by Poppl are taken from the database of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin Calligraphy Collection.

between fathers and sons (who had returned home wounded as participants in the war).

In 1960, Poppl also dedicated six lines from Schiller's *Räuber* to the father-son conflict. Here he denies legibility and uses his own expressive handwriting

"That you had to destroy the son
Savior of the Father! -
Behold, the Godhead does not tire
in mercy, and we miserable
worms go to sleep with
our resentment. Schiller/*The Robbers*"

In Act 5, Scene 2, the extent of the tragedy becomes apparent: the old father recognizes the final loss of his two sons. It seems typical of a participant in the Second World War that Poppl chooses these lines and does not write about the death of old Moor. Attention is paid to the "miserable worms" who did not see through the false statements.

Poppl takes another Schiller quote from the great trilogy about the Thirty Years' War. In "*Wallenstein's Death*", Wallenstein laments the difficulty of finding understanding for his change of direction with the statement: "For man is made of common things, and he calls habit his nurse." The text seems antiquated. Poppl wrote the word "habit" in a font that had long since been discarded. Is it intentional that the sheet is neither signed nor dated?

The quote from Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*, written by Poppl in 1969, also shows parallels to the Nazi era.

"Close your hearts
more carefully than your gates.
Times of deceit are coming,
freedom is given to him.
The unworthy will rule with cunning,
and the superior man will fall into their nets."

The cynical text by Thomas Hood (*1799, †1845) "Oh God! That bread is so dear and flesh and blood so cheap." Poppl's generation had experienced it first-hand.

In 1966, Poppl took the same line from Christian Morgenstern: "We are all battlefields on whose gods are at war."

While the Bundestag was dealing with the emergency laws (1958-1968), Poppl took a stand for the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany by referring back to the republic in ancient Rome. The statesman and lawyer Marcus Tullius Cicero, who went down in history as the savior of the Roman Republic by defeating the conspiracy of Catilina, becomes the author of his scripts: Cicero "We all obey the laws in order to be free" (1965) "No power may be above the law" (1966). Poppl reacts with Cicero's statements to the current topic in the Bundestag debate: how should the federal government be able to act in times of emergency without restricting the freedoms of the individual.

I linger on the content of Poppl's scripts because their selection is so revealing of German post-war history. As early as 1956, he was interested in conflict situations and court cases and worked his way through Socrates' defense speech before the court in Athens. Writing this dense thicket of text was certainly an enormous physical strain. The choice of script, Antiqua, was appropriate to the historical context. Socrates was sentenced to death in 399 BC, and the literary adaptation by his pupil Plato is part of world philosophical literature. This speech was therefore a great challenge in every respect for Poppl, the manuscript artist. He chose a design for this Apology that does not necessarily invite the reader to read it; on the contrary, it makes it more difficult to access and comprehend by placing letters and sentences close together without starting new lines. This is Poppl's method of symbolizing the impenetrable and questionable nature of this statement to the men of Athens in 63 continuous lines.

His assistant, Werner Schneider, on the other hand, an equally outstanding Antiqua writer as Poppl, wants the text he has chosen from Socrates' student Plato "Wohlan mein Freund wie steht es mit der Diktatur" to be read by everyone without difficulty; indeed, he prints a large number of copies of it at the university of applied sciences and uses it like a leaflet. Plato's text reflects Schneider's problems at the university of applied sciences with the rebellious students: "Is it not the case that democracy dissolves itself through a certain insatiability in freedom? When fathers get used to simply admitting and letting their children do as they please and are almost afraid to speak a word in front of their grown-up children; or when sons want to be like their father, neither shying away from their parents nor caring what they say, not wanting to be told anything in order to appear grown-up and independent! And even the teachers tremble before their pupils ... They become rebellious and finally can no longer

stand it if they are asked to submit just a little. In the end, they also despise the law because they no longer want to recognize anyone or anything as their master. And that is the beautiful, youthful beginning of tyranny." Is there a comparison with the APO at the university of applied sciences in Wiesbaden?

With these words from Plato, Schneider seems to be getting his own fears of the sixty-eight movement at the university of applied sciences off his chest. This movement met his and Poppl's teaching methods particularly harshly because photography was not integrated into the graphics classes. The photography course by Harald Mante from November 1967 onwards was not included in the student's grades, as the semester assignments were set by the full-time lecturers.

In contrast to his teacher Poppl, who saw his calligraphies as unique pieces, Werner Schneider also practiced printing the sheets with his students at the university of applied sciences. These sheets radiate statesmanlike dignity and elegance in the contrasting fonts. The reproduction was virtually demanded by the client and published as an annual gift. For example, the speech by Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker "Let us honor freedom ..." or the sentence by Antoine Saint Exupéry "To be human means to feel responsibility", also an annual gift from the Hessian Minister of Social Affairs, or the statement by Bhagawan Mahavir "Non-violence is the highest way of life" (1998).

In 1979 (16 years after Kennedy's assassination), Schneider dedicated a commemorative sheet to John F. Kennedy, the American President with whom the people of Wiesbaden have a special connection because he first visited Wiesbaden and then Berlin on his trip to Germany in 1963. Kennedy's Berlin speech (Ich bin ein Berliner) had raised hopes of a West-East reconciliation. When Schneider wrote in 1979 from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country. ... What we can do together for the freedom of the people." The world powers were frozen in the Cold War and the arms race and nuclear threat made diplomatic relations with the GDR difficult. The path to freedom was blocked for people in both the West and the East. Then as now, the paper was a reminder of collapsed hopes.

If, on the other hand, Schneider had chosen a text for his inimitable spirited handwriting, these do not demand a high moral standard, but these texts reflect a cheerful discoverer, e.g. when quoting Hermann Hesse:

"Occasionally we take up the pen and write characters on a white sheet, they say this and that, everyone knows them, it's a game that has its rules."

With this spirited pen, Schneider devoted himself to the Psalms in 1986, 1988, 1997 and 1998, and in 1999 to the whole of Psalm 90, choosing ancient translations. Psalm 45, a wedding song, deals with the parallel between oral and written language " ... my tongue is the pen of an expert..." written by him in English on red and blue paper for a congress overseas. Right at the beginning, the psalmist compares his tongue to the pen of the nimble scribe. This reference will probably have been the deciding factor for this psalm.

As far as I know, Schneider is the only one of the three scripture artists presented here who devoted himself to the Psalms. None of the three wrote the "Our Father". From the New Testament, Schneider wrote John 16:22 "Let your heart rejoice and let no one take your joy from you" and in English John's Gospel 3:1 "When all things began ..." and Mark 15:33-41 "Eli, Eli lama sabach tami, truly this was a son of God."

Poppl wrote a deeply religious statement in 1965 on the twentieth anniversary of the death of resistance fighter Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He noted in the concentration camp Osterm? Our gaze falls more on dying than on death ... Socrates overcame dying. Christ overcame death.

As a calligrapher, Gottfried Pott, a practicing Catholic in civil life, refuses to make this clear. He takes a stand with a legendary defense of the ancient writer Tertullian for the young Christianity "I believe, although it is absurd" in white lettering on black paper and in red block letters "Credo quia absurdum est." This remains characteristic of Pott's sheets, the bilingualism and the use of bright colors. Pott is a wisdom-seeking calligrapher in the texts of Nicholas of Cusa (see article by Stefan Soltek). Nor does he praise God's creation as an avowed Christian, but instead creates the Lao Tzu quote "The universe is perfect. It can be improved in nothing. Whoever wants to change it spoils it. Whoever wants to possess it loses it." in circles that taper towards the center. His symbols for God's eternal kingdom are Alpha and Omega, the beginning of the Revelation of John, corresponding to the A and O in the German alphabet. Pott had a slope for texts in which he could begin with his inimitable circle. For Lao Tzu, for example, "By kneading clay one forms vessels. But only their hollow space, the nothingness, makes the filling possible. The visible, the existing, gives form to the work. The invisible, the nothing, gives it essence and meaning.

Pott also uses a quote from Lao Tzu to work against the East-West tensions before the outbreak of the war of aggression in Ukraine: "Violence breaks itself" is his ticket for 2022. In contrast to Poppl, Pott's texts are not cynical, but always offer hope for insight, including meditative perseverance in silence.

Schneider and Pott wrote of Goethe: "Everyone can see the material, the content can only be found by those who have something to do with it, and the form is a mystery to most." One of Gottfried Pott's last sheets before his death (August 5, 2024) shows the old Goethe's statement, as noted by his secretary Eckermann: "The highest that man can attain is astonishment." He wrote another of Gottfried Pott's old modesties on a card: "Remember, we are always at the beginning."² On the back of this folding card, he wrote four statements by the Protestant theologian Jörg Zink, with which Pott identified. Here is just the last one: "I believe that there is another wisdom at work in the world than that of man."

I have now introduced or only hinted at many of the differences between the three text seekers. This book may encourage the reader to trace these texts. In Pott's work, the texts are captured in an image. Text, writing, image was his great concern! These calligraphies are well published in his books published by Hermann Schmidt Verlag at and have therefore had a much broader impact than the sheets by Schneider and Poppl, which have never been published in book form. Pott's focus on making the typeface resonate and exploring all the parallels between making music and writing has also been documented. In "Schrift Klang Bild, The Music of Lettering" (1994), for example, he shows his calligraphy "Sound" with the Kandinsky quote "The sound is the soul of the form" as the first illustration.

The connection to world literature as a whole applies to all three Wiesbaden writing artists. Finally, Amir Hassan Chehelan's novel "The Calligrapher of Isfahan"³ with its statement: "I write for my own joy" should not go unmentioned. Gottfried Pott lived this emotional power of joy for himself in his studio in old age.

And now the question: Why does German calligraphy have such a hard time in the public perception? Why do most people associate "calligraphy" with sheets of paper from Asian culture?

² also published as a folding card by www.action365.de, order number 20988.

As a large sheet 71 x 41 cm "Never forget ,we are allways at the beginning" Zeami, gouache 2006, estate Community of heirs Gottfried Pott.

³ Amir Hassan Chehelan, The Calligrapher of Isfahan, C.H.Beck Munich 2015, 2nd edition 2016

The sheets of our calligraphers have not found any walls. This is probably due to the fact that we are not used to hanging them up and down, like the Japanese hang their scroll paintings or the antependiums in churches. In our private homes, we usually buy one picture for a wall and it stays there until we move. In a drawer, calligraphy cannot develop its full effect and in a book it is reproduced in too small a format. Are calligraphies a message that is not part of our European living culture? Does the furniture obscure our view of the calligraphy? It will be exciting to see how future generations will deal with this.

Felicitas Reusch

Chapter 9, from page 158 Art form in transition On the perception of calligraphy in the present .

Even in his old age, the former lecturer Gottfried Pott was still a great creative force. This had a considerable impact through his publications. This is why the graphics student Ole Freytag from the higher education institution in Wismar sought out Gottfried Pott in his studio in Wiesbaden in 2023 for his Diplom thesis "Why we write, calligraphy: an art form in transition". Ole Freytag was welcomed by Gottfried Pott as the 2022 Rudo Spemann Award winner and had already introduced him to the circle of young calligraphers. He interviewed Pott as an artist, contemporary witness and educator and a collaboration developed that we would like to continue in this book after Gottfried Pott's death († 5.08.2024)

Fundamentals of calligraphy, from the perspective of calligrapher Ole Freytag

Calligraphy, the art of beautiful writing, does not have to be legible. What may seem like an appeal at first glance turns out to be a happy coincidence full of possibilities on closer inspection.

Calligraphy differs primarily from other visual art forms because it is not abstract in its basics. It is a visual system of signs and conveys content in this way.¹ In order to understand how artistically abstract forms of representation can be derived from a visual sign system, it is necessary to trace the development of the sign system, the alphabet. The visibility of writing systems is subject to constant change over the course of time. Due to the invention of letterpress printing in the 15th century by Johannes Gutenberg, the original function of calligraphy became secondary. The pure communication of information took a back seat. From then on, books were primarily printed and reproduced in large quantities, while the handwritten book took on a more representative character. In the Baroque period, the forms of calligraphy became increasingly complex and ornamental. The virtuosity of the master scribes was to take pride of place.² New printing processes such as copperplate engraving made it possible to reproduce calligraphy on a massive scale. In this way, motifs could be precisely adapted for the intaglio printing process. For this reason, the forms of writing became increasingly complex and ornamental until they could hardly be written at all.³ The works of this era outlive their masters, but the knowledge of calligraphy itself cannot. With the industrial revolution from the beginning of the 19th century, a great deal of knowledge about calligraphy and book design was lost in Central Europe. This happened for two main reasons. The popularity of neoclassical fonts and pointed nib calligraphy led to an alienation from the broad nib tradition.⁴ The broad nib shapes the appearance of Central European writing systems. Its ductus allows tapering and thickening in the letter forms. This creates natural contrasts in the typeface, making it easy to grasp and process. The mechanization of letterpress printing and book design during industrialization led to inferior products compared to those of the past.⁵ It is particularly thanks to William Morris (1834-1896) and Edward Johnston (1872-1944) that they countered this development. Morris, as an innovator of book design,

1 Alber Kapr, *Ästhetik der Schriftkunst*, Fachbuchverlag Leipzig 1977, p. 11

2 Gottfried Pott, *Schrift Klang Bild*, Herman Schmidt Verlag Mainz 1995, p. 101 "Gutenberg's invention of book printing with movable type did not extinguish the tradition of the art of writing. The medieval scribes in the second half of the 15th century certainly feared for the future of their work, but they soon realized that the new technology continued to offer opportunities to develop their skills."

3 Jost Hochuli, *Kleine Geschichte der geschriebenen Schrift*, Verlag Typophil Sankt Gallen, p. 54

4 Inge Druckrey, *Modern Pioneers in Typography and Design: Anna Simons, Edward Johnston, Rudolf von Larisch, F.H. Ehmcke*, Graphics Press Connecticut 2024, p. 16

5 Ebendort, p.15 "Until then punch cutting, typesetting, and letterpress printing had been done by highly experienced craftsmen with sensitivity and feeling for their craft; once they were replaced by machine operators, and aesthetics were no longer a consideration, book design and production suffered commensurately. This resulted in shoddy layout, paper, typefaces and printing."

and Johnston as the initiator of the calligraphy revival.^{6,7} Johnston's teaching was disseminated in Germany primarily by his student Anna Simons (1871-1951), also a respected calligrapher. Her contribution to German writing culture is less well known than that of her male colleagues and has unfortunately been somewhat forgotten over time.⁸ Compared to English calligraphy, her German counterpart is visually much more experimental. This is partly due to the use of broken script compared to the English writing tradition, which is based primarily on pointed nib calligraphy and humanist cursive. The names of the great German calligraphers of the early 20th century are probably familiar to readers of this publication. These in particular are often associated with expressive and experimental members of staff. Names such as Rudolf von Larisch (1856-1934), Rudolf Koch (1876-1934), Rudo Spemann (1905-1947) and F. H. Ernst Schneidler (1882-1956) have now achieved legendary status among calligraphers and those interested in calligraphy. The different understanding of calligraphy that existed in England and Germany at the beginning of the 20th century seems to have survived. In 1987, the calligrapher Karlgeorg Hoefer founded the "Klingspor Writing Workshop" in Offenbach, which was very well received.⁹ In England, by comparison, there is "The Society of Scribes & Illuminators", which is dedicated to the dissemination of the classical calligraphy tradition, following the educational background of Edward Johnston.¹⁰ Experimental calligraphy therefore has a long tradition in Germany. But before we take a closer look at this discipline, in which rigid blocks of text are broken up and letter forms are rearranged, it is important to clarify what makes these works so special.

If one accepts that calligraphy does not have to be legible, a new world opens up to the viewer. From the viewer's point of view, several scenarios arise in which it is necessary to fathom what kind of calligraphy they are dealing with. The factors that are decisive here for viewing and understanding are legibility and content. This gives rise to several possibilities. Most people associate calligraphy with calligraphy. They may imagine the term to mean a witty quote, neatly and elegantly rendered in an English script. At the same time, calligraphy can be legible, but it does not have to convey any content. The letters themselves can become the subject of the picture. Although the viewer recognizes it as calligraphy, it is now detached from its original function. In contrast to the previous example, it is possible for calligraphy to appear illegible, but at the same time convey content. The writing can be visually alienated as a pictorial element so that it is no longer recognizable as such. For example, lettering can be written on top of each other many times or the proportions of letters can be distorted beyond recognition. In this way, calligraphy can appear completely abstract, even though it has an inherent meaning. Finally, calligraphy can be completely abstract. Letters and words can be treated as separate pictorial elements and composed completely anew, without regard to their original reference. This type of calligraphy is not necessarily dependent on conveying content or

6 Ebendort, p.16 "Just three years later, in 1891, Morris started the first fine press, Kelmscott Press, with the help of a few retired typesetters and printers. His goal was to produce books whose every element - typeface, layout, paper, ink, printing and binding - would be of the highest quality. And this he did. Printing beautiful books again was revolutionary and led to an explosion of private presses in England. "

7 Ibid., p. 17

8 Ebendort, p.67 "Anna Simons was, as the inscription on her tombstone beautifully stated, a true master in all aspects of her craft, the only such master who focused her entire career not only on the skill and application of writing and lettering, but was also deeply knowledgeable about the history of her craft. Her oft-repeated epithet "student of Edward Johnston" undervalues her own well-deserved place in the history of the writing movement. "

9 Karlgeorg Hoefer, *Schriftkunst Letter Art, Kalligraphie Edition Hardheim*, p. 11 f.

10 Illuminators, T. S. Society of Scribes & Illuminators. From Society of Scribes & Illuminators About Us: <https://callygraphyonline.org/time-line/> retrieved on 06.09.2024 "In 1898, 26-year-old Edward Johnston gave up his medical studies in Edinburgh and moved to London where he subsequently began reviving the practice of formal penmanship. In 1921 his students founded the Society of Scribes & Illuminators to promote and advance high standards of craftsmanship in writing and illumination. These aims remain at the forefront of the Society today."

being legible. It can therefore be described as non-verbal or gestural calligraphy.¹¹ Legible calligraphy can accordingly be classified as verbal calligraphy. Whether a calligraphy ultimately conveys a content is not decisive, as the viewer communicates with the image as with any other work of art, whether figurative or abstract. There is always a communication with the content of the picture.¹² Contrary to a separation of the above-mentioned categories, mixed forms are still possible. Non-verbal and verbal calligraphy can be mixed together. The respective pictorial elements are thus given an additional context that enriches the other pictorial element. So when both types of calligraphy, non-verbal and verbal, are combined, a double communication takes place. The non-verbal calligraphy visually supports the verbal calligraphy, while the verbal calligraphy adds context to the non-verbal. Together, the pictorial elements can create new synergies. The style and composition open up completely new possibilities for image design. It should be noted that the same evaluation criteria apply when analyzing calligraphy in the cases mentioned. Whether verbal or non-verbal, the quality of calligraphy always depends on its composition, stroke and style. The criteria for evaluating calligraphy are to a certain extent universal. Whether you are looking at a manuscript from the Baroque period or a recently written page, the criteria for analysis remain the same. As soon as legibility takes a back seat in calligraphy, the calligraphic expression comes to the fore. Much more than legibility, it is about an aesthetic experience when looking at a picture, as soon as writing itself becomes a picture.¹³

If we look at non-verbal calligraphy, it becomes even clearer how essential a visually appealing stroke and an exciting or balanced composition are, as here no content can distract from a lack of craftsmanship. The basic element of all calligraphy is the stroke. This basic element already offers a variety of design possibilities. Characteristics such as tension, serenity or rhythm can be depicted in a single stroke.¹⁴ This play with dynamics and tension, calm and chaos makes it possible to create calligraphy with the most essential basic forms of the respective writing tool. Even if you were to limit a calligraphic sheet to one stroke, the results would be different on every sheet. The choice of format, writing surface and writing instruments opens up a variety of possibilities. The most important factor, however, is the personality of the writer. Gottfried Pott compares the calligrapher in this case to a singer who modulates a tone while singing: "I would like to take a differentiated look at the musicality in writing and come to the calligraphic stroke - the basic element. The stroke should not simply be drawn from top to bottom, but should be "lively" and "swinging". It is given modulation and tension through pressure, pressure reduction and intensification. Just as the stroke characterizes a good drawing, the calligraphic stroke dominates the typeface through its character. The calligraphic stroke has the same significance for the writer as tone formation for a singer. (...) And now one should attempt to transfer the tension of the stroke to the whole letter, to its form, proportion and rhythm, and thus incorporate it into the overall composition."¹⁵ Just as the sound is only part of a larger piece of music, the stroke is usually only part of a larger composition. The composition of calligraphy can be analyzed using the same criteria as painting, for example.¹⁶ The regular contrast effect that lettering

11 Gottfried Pott, *Calligraphic Symphonies*, p.166 "The gestural writing movement demands a serenity freed from all fear. The requirement for this is knowledge of the form, the tools and all the materials in question. Letter form and quality depend on this."

12 Paul Watzlawick, *On Human Communication ...* <https://www.paulwatzlawick.de/axiome.html> retrieved on 13.09.2024.

13 Gottfried Pott, *Calligraphic Symphonies*, Herman Schmidt Verlag Mainz 2010, p.56 "The recipient also invests time in viewing, deciphering and understanding. They receive information from the text as well as aesthetic enrichment, which can be enhanced by the way it is interpreted."

14 Nicolette Gray, *Lettering as drawing*, Taplinger Pub Co. 1982, p. 34 "The way in which a line moves, and the direction in which it moves can convey ideas of the static or the dynamic, of tension or mobility; the rhythm with which it moves will suggest balance, stress, or chaos and so on. "

15 Gottfried Pott, *Schrift Klang Bild*, Herman Schmidt Verlag Mainz 1995, p. 25

16 Ebendort, p.43 "Let us turn to a further instrument of design, to contrasts. Here are just a few: contrasts of line, form, proportion, quality, quantity, complementarity and simultaneity."

must have in order to be legible and stand out from the background is less important here. This way of looking at it makes it clear that calligraphy is also an art form, and not originally a communication tool. Gestural writing sets itself apart from calligraphic conventions by ignoring parameters such as reading direction and baselines. This expands the scope for compositions. The arrangement of the letters in space and, above all, the negative space surrounding them can be explored anew. Pott himself says: "I come back to composing. It starts with practicing. I am speechless when the page is started from the top left and finished at the bottom right. The writing has no "air" to breathe. One basic rule, and none is so fundamentally disregarded as this one, is that the free space is just as important as the space covered by writing or other pictorial elements. Do I compose a picture towards the center or in an asymmetrical design? Where do I direct the viewer's gaze and how do I lead the viewer's gaze there? These questions demand an answer."¹⁷ In addition to the stroke and the composition of the image, the personal expression of the calligrapher is crucial. Personal expression can manifest itself on two levels. The first level is content-related. By selecting existing texts, quotations or their own words, calligraphers commit themselves to statements, philosophical viewpoints or world views that they take up or represent in their work. The second level is visual. The design should convey a mood. This can only happen if emotions and one's own personality can flow into the creation process. Only through this emotionality in the creation phase can the viewers themselves understand these feelings.¹⁸

In contrast to verbal calligraphy, non-verbal writing offers another challenge: determining when a picture is finished. Finding the conclusion in a non-verbal work is not simply a constant sounding out. The content of a text comes to an end at a certain point. In non-verbal calligraphy, however, the form must be brought to an end. This requires tutorial and a trained eye. It can often happen that you miss the end. The preliminary sketch may already exude a lightness that you don't want to destroy with a finished work. Or you may forget a page that you have started for several months. If you want to continue writing it, it is usually already too late and you have lost the feeling for the motif. At the same time, it can happen that in the attempt to complete a work, you overload the composition, add too many new elements and make it worse in the attempt to finish it. Nevertheless, there can also be a liberation here. It is better to finish five sheets badly and excel at the sixth than to create ten unfinished sheets that never grow beyond a half-baked sketch stage. Further opportunities for experimentation open up for calligraphers through the construction of their own writing tools. The construction of tools makes it possible to adapt them precisely to one's own ideas or to create new, customized tools that do not yet exist. At the same time, it is possible to alienate the purpose of existing tools and use them for writing. An example of this are drawing nibs, which were originally used for drawing maps and are used by calligraphers as expressive writing instruments.

The more you delve into the subject, the clearer it becomes how far-reaching and demanding the sphere of non-verbal calligraphy is. While the initial focus when learning calligraphy is largely on reproducing letterforms and styles as accurately as possible, more experienced calligraphers can break away from this very framework, deconstruct letters, reassemble them and explore the origins of the forms. Non-verbal writing can be a mere finger exercise before the actual work to loosen up, or a work of art that demands the utmost concentration. In both cases, writing does not have to be legible - what a happy coincidence!

17 Gottfried Pott, *Calligraphic Symphonies*, Herman Schmidt Verlag Mainz 2010, p.154

18 Ebendort, p. 200 "Only if the writer really admits his emotionality into his work can he hope to evoke emotion in the reader. The conventional function of writing undergoes a reorientation. The emotional aura and the meaning-supporting function of its outer form are now equally important."

Improvisations and letter games, in a contribution from the perspective of calligrapher Ole Freitag

What do you think of first when you hear the word play? Of social gatherings, sporting competition, or of children who effortlessly create fantasy worlds, draw from their subconscious and improvise without any claim to perfection. The older you get, the quicker you can forget what kind of access you had to this type of game. It may seem almost impossible to find your way back to it. But art is one way.

"Man only plays where he is man in the full sense of the word, and he is only fully human where he plays,"¹⁹ Friedrich Schiller stated in 1795. This quote comes from Schiller's fictitious letters "On the Aesthetic Education of Man". In these letters, he describes how man is determined by two drives. The substance drive clings to matter, the form drive to reason. Schiller hoped to find a balance between the two extremes through art. It is the result of a third instinct - the play instinct, which unites the other two instincts. The goal of art must be to ennoble man. This desire to ennoble is also known to the calligrapher, who transforms mere text into an aesthetic form when writing by hand. Information becomes art.²⁰ If you take a closer look at calligraphy, you will learn that writing follows a logic that determines the appearance of the written form. From the choice of script used, the writing materials, to the angle at which the writing tool is held, a multitude of parameters must be included in the process. However, these rules are not a be-all, end-all. Precisely because it is an art form, calligraphy can free itself from these rules. Abstraction makes it possible to detach oneself from the original meaning of the letterforms and thus also from their appearance. For this reason, Schiller's quote: "Man only plays where he is man in the full meaning of the word, and he is only fully man where he plays." can be applied to non-verbal calligraphy. Here it is possible to free oneself from conventions and let go. To a certain extent, non-verbal calligraphy opens up a playground for calligraphers

But how does a calligrapher find non-verbal calligraphy in the first place? Does a player look for the game, or does the game find him? Depending on where you are in your calligraphic development, different variations are possible. For beginners, the rules of calligraphy offer a valuable framework within which they can move. At the beginning, they are reluctant to deviate from the familiar grids and are content with improving the familiar forms. Playing with letters may reveal itself to them on a piece of scrap paper on which they stroke their pen, or when testing new writing instruments that enable new writing movements. It is important to recognize the play as such when it reveals itself and not to dismiss it as a mere warm-up exercise or smudge sheet. For experienced calligraphers, playing with letters is less distant. They are already more aware of the abstract nature of letters and can look for the game more specifically.

In order for the game with the letters to begin, you look for, find or create a place to play. On the one hand, this playground is physical. More importantly, it exists in the mind. When I create a place to play calligraphy, this means that I create a physical space in which I can create. I place my writing materials on a work surface, set out various supporting documents such as papers and sketchbooks

¹⁹ Friedrich Schiller *German Text Archive*. Retrieved from Schiller, Friedrich: Ueber die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen. [2nd part; 10th to 16th letter] In: Friedrich Schiller (ed.): Die Horen, vol. 1, 2nd part. Tübingen, 1795, pp. 51-94: https://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/book/view/schiller_erziehung02_1795?

²⁰ Albert Kapr, *Ästhetik der Schriftkunst*, Fachbuchverlag Leipzig 1977, p.10 f. "In order to determine the position of the art of writing in the aesthetic appropriation of reality, one must start from the special character of writing as a visual system of signs. Its existence as a material entity with a potential aesthetic effect brings it close to applied art. The fact that it is a carrier of meaning creates references to the liberal arts, especially since every work of art also has an associative aspect. In a certain sense, the art of writing is even comparable to the interpretative arts of theater and music, because there, as here, given linguistic and musical structures are brought to the recipient with the intention of an aesthetic effect."

and make sure I have good light. The experiment can begin. But the crucial playground is in my head. I have to put myself in a state that allows me to play and let go of my own expectations. The game can arise unexpectedly. On a practice sheet for drawing strokes, for example, an exciting composition reveals itself. At the same time, I can also invite the game to me by creating the right spaces. With prepared material and, above all, the right state of mind, I can consciously bring about the game. Playing with letters can be intentional and is not necessarily a product of chance, once you are aware of the mechanisms of creation. There are other ways to influence the development of improvisation and letter play. The direct involvement with other art forms or music in the creative process can be more than mere inspiration and influence the creation of the work. Indirect collaboration with other artists becomes possible. Nevertheless, it should be noted at this point that it is also possible to play with calligraphy without pursuing a gestural or non-verbal approach. The degree of abstraction can vary. It is possible to combine the two forms of calligraphy in one work. It is precisely this synthesis that offers opportunities to explore the relationship between legibility and abstraction in greater detail.

The calligraphic experiment can be like an addiction. Once you have fallen under its spell, you can't do without it for long and always return to it. Because as a calligrapher, you never stop learning. You can keep perfecting your own forms of writing. In their practical experience, some calligraphers strive to achieve mastery in as many styles as possible and combine them in their work. Others concentrate on achieving mastery in one particular style, exploring and exhausting its visuality. Beyond these possibilities, there are other aspects of writing that captivate calligraphers. Gottfried Pott, for example, was fascinated by the changeability of the design of characters in Western alphabets.²¹ The constant exploration and variation of these has accompanied him throughout his entire creative life and is reflected in his work. Although the words perfection and mastery are mentioned here, it is in the nature of calligraphy that something like perfection is practically unattainable. And so one always begins anew with each new work in the search to further improve one's own skills.

The process of a letter game is similar to that of regular calligraphy, but can have significant differences. After preparing the materials, the first stroke must be made on the writing surface. The first stroke requires the most effort. There is often a lot of nervousness that this particular stroke must be of particularly good quality so that the rest of the work will also be good. However, it is precisely this initial pressure that can torpedo work before it has even really begun. If you tense up right at the start, it is much more difficult to get into the flow of writing. But this is precisely where the letter game offers a decisive advantage over verbal calligraphy, which claims to produce forms that are as legible as possible. The letter game does not have to be legible and therefore forgives imperfect strokes and other mistakes. Coincidences become welcome events. If the nib breaks when a stroke is drawn, the writing fluid can splash across the page. What would be an annoying mistake in regular calligraphy that requires correction, or even leads to the page having to be started all over again, can be a dynamic pictorial element in non-verbal calligraphy. In the play of letters, coincidences are happy coincidences that enrich the picture. The looseness gained here remains with calligraphers and can in turn flow into their formal work.

Playing and experimenting with letters offers opportunities for learning and further development. Our own skills in stroke, ductus, composition and expression can be put through their paces. At the same time, we can enjoy the gestural and non-verbal works of calligraphers such as Gottfried Pott and Friedrich Poppl and use them as a guide for our own attempts. Their non-verbal works reveal the

21 Gottfried Pott, *Kalligrafische Sinfonien*, Hermann Schmidt Verlag Mainz 2010, p.102 f. "I have often asked myself, what has fascinated you about writing for so many years? The answer to this question is different today than it will be tomorrow, and it is certainly different this year than it was the year before. (...) For me, the fascination of writing lies in the joy of creatively varying the variety of forms of our occidental characters."

range of calligraphy. In some works, one thinks one can perceive letters, but one is deceived by the calligraphic style, which in reality conceals abstract forms. They reinterpret letter forms and at the same time explore their original essence. They admit the freedom they achieve in their abstract works back into their verbal works. Both fields of calligraphy are in constant exchange and influence each other. The play with letters knows no end. The possible combinations of letters and their individual forms, compositions and writing tools are almost endless. Pott demonstrated that he knew how to make full use of this scope. On the occasion of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, he created a work in which he abstracted the same date in Roman numerals. The sheet radiates an anxious mood. The true content of the picture only becomes apparent to the viewer on closer inspection and recognition of the Latin numerals.²²

Although the possible combinations of forms in Western scripts may seem endless, this does not mean that they have to be the only sources of letter play for calligraphers from this culture. If you get bored playing with letter forms, you can always try a new writing system and immerse yourself in a new cosmos of languages and writing systems. There are new playgrounds here. Playing with letters is neither an isolated nor local phenomenon. Non-verbal calligraphy shows that improvising and playing with written forms connects all literate cultures.²³ This is particularly evident in the mutual appreciation of other writing systems without being able to understand them. The expressive expression of a brushstroke in Chinese calligraphy and the ornamental use of Islamic calligraphy in a mosque can be admired even if you cannot read them. It is the design itself that fascinates people.²⁴ For calligraphers in the 21st century, it is easier than ever to familiarize themselves with new writing systems. As a result, calligraphers sometimes mix writing systems in their work. One example of this phenomenon is the Russian calligrapher Pokras Lampas. He combines Latin, Cyrillic and Chinese letters in his work.²⁵ Lampas calls this unusual but harmonious synthesis "calligraphy futurism". This fusion is just one way of developing calligraphy further.

It becomes clear that playing with letters can be much more than just a pastime. At its core, the game is much more than a mere pastime and should therefore not be underestimated. Calligraphers have the opportunity to let go and communicate content indirectly. By abstracting the letter forms and experimenting with materials, they achieve unusual results that are difficult for other art forms to

22 Gottfried Pott, *ibid.* p. 198 "In 2002, I was asked by my colleague Frank Dietmar to submit a calligraphic work commemorating the great arithmetician Adam Ries(e) for an exhibition in Erfurt. The only condition was that the work should be designed with numerals to create a reference to the arithmetic genius. The whole world was then, and probably still is today, under the shock of the 2001 terrorist attack in New York. I decided to design the date of this attack with Roman numerals. Using a plant stem and Chinese ink, my hand wrote the numbers XI, IX, MMI on the sheet as if "by itself". The signs and the atmosphere of the entire pictorial effect were given an impressive expressiveness. (...) If the text then confirms or even reinforces the first impression of the picture, the viewer's astonishment is all the more understandable. I felt speechlessness and silence or, to put it in one word, being touched."

23 Gottfried Pott, *Schrift Klang Bild*, Hermann Schmidt Verlag Mainz 1995, p.50 f. "One of the most important sources of energy for improvisation is the innovative value of handwriting. It is characterized by inventiveness. Free improvisational play with forms, signs and letters is the hallmark of a truly creative exploration. Improvisation stimulates the imagination. (...) Improvising with letter forms, the free play with letters, we encounter in the Indian word "Aksharika". All major writing cultures know how to play with characters without the obligation to read them. Without meaning, reduced to the joy of the play of shapes of the letters, the hiding and concealing of a theme or an idea takes place. The hidden wants to be uncovered in the artistic, the goal is to engage in dialog. Therein lies the communicative aspect of art."

24 Gottfried Pott, *Kalligrafische Sinfonien*, Hermann Schmidt Verlag Mainz 2010, p.164 "The language of forms is inter- and multicultural. We enjoy the typeface of Chinese, Japanese and Arabic characters without being able to read them. In the broadest sense, it is the design that captures us.", p. 164

25 Patrick Hartl, *THE ART OF WRITING YOUR NAME: Contemporary Urban Calligraphy and beyond*, Publikat Verlag Großostheim 2017, p. 278

comprehend. So if we free ourselves from rigid strokes, uninspired compositions and the obsessive desire to convey a concrete content, the play with letters can begin.

Ole Freytag

Chapter X10, from page 172 Biography of Friedrich Poppl

born on March 1, 1923 in Soborten, district of Teplitz-Schönau

1938 to 1941

State technical school in Teplice-Schönau

Subjects: Painting and graphics, nature drawing, fresco and sgraffito (wall decoration), lettering, color theory; classes with Prof. Böhm, Prof. Baum, Prof. Zoff, Hans Lifka

1941 State final examination. Reich Labor Service

1941 Conscription to the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front

1945 Prisoner of war, approx. 800 km south-east of Moscow

1946 right thigh amputation, release from Russian captivity

1947 to 1949

Freelance; partly active as a painter, partly as a graphic artist; post-amputation

1949 Application to the Werkkunstschule Offenbach am Main (now a higher education institution for design); initially no place at university

1950 (October 1)

Commencement of studies at the Werkkunstschule Offenbach am Main; commercial art with Erich Fornoff; lettering with Prof. Herbert Post and Karlgeorg Hofer; drawing with Georg Eisenhauer; painting techniques with Hans Schminke.

Permission from the director Prof. Dr. Wilhelm H. Lange to participate in any class in writing

1953 two state final examinations: 1. lettering and lettering application, 2. commercial art

1953 (December) Marriage to Gertraude Marzin

1953 to 1955 Studio work in Frankfurt am Main

1955 Academic appointment at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden (from 1971 University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden)

1962 Board of studies

1966 Oberstudienrat. Secondary occupation: Type design

1970 Birth of the only son Rainer Hartwig

1973 Professor at the University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden (today RheinMain University of Applied Sciences)

1982, September 5, died in Wiesbaden

Poppl's phototypesetting fonts for volume typesetting and awards were all published by H. Berthold AG, Berlin:

Poppl-Antiqua, typeface family, 1967-1971

Poppl-Stretto, cursive handwriting, 1969

Poppl-Heavy, headline font, 1971

Poppl-Exquisit, cursive 1970, medium cut 1983

Poppl-Pontifex, font family, 1976

Poppl residence, handwriting, 1977

Poppl-Leporello, bold headline lettering, 1977

Poppl-Saladin, headline font, 1979

Poppl-College, cursive script, font family, 1981

Poppl-Laudatio, font family, 1982

Poppl-Nero, Versalschrift, 1982

Poppl fracture, 1986

Dynamic Antiqua, created in 1960, remained unpublished.

Poppl's original typefaces and his designs for posters and commercial work are in the Berlin Calligraphy Collection of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin. Rights holder: Gertraude and Rainer Poppl.

Solo exhibitions during his lifetime

1965 Klingspor Museum, Offenbach

1966 Gutenberg Museum, Mainz

1968 Phototypesetting center Essen

Solo exhibitions after his death in 1982

1983 H. Berthold AG, Berlin: In memoriam Prof. Friedrich Poppl

1984 Touring exhibition from Berlin to the cities of Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main, Stuttgart, Vienna

1985 New York, ITC Center

Participation in exhibitions

1961 Klingspor Museum, Offenbach: Annual Conference of the Association of German Book Artists (BDB)

1965 Victoria & Albert Museum, London: International Contemporary Calligraphy

1966 Klingspor Museum, Offenbach: Selected Works of Lettering Art

1966 Gutenberg Museum, Mainz: Schrift unserer Zeit. Subsequently on display
in Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Barcelona, Düsseldorf
1966 Biennial of Applied Graphics, Brno
1967 Paris, UNESCO building: 10th Congress of the ATypI
1968 Prague, Cross Hall of the Old Prague Town Hall: 11th Congress of the ATypI
1969 Munich, BMW Pavilion: ICTA Typomundus 20/2
1980 New York, ITC Center: Calligraphy Today
1982 Iceland: International Exhibition of Calligraphy "Living Letters"
1991 Munich: Exempla 1991

Publications in magazines and books

1962

Commercial art 5/1962

1964

Graphic 3/1964

1965

Commercial art 5/1965

The Polygraph 21/1965

1968

Commercial art 1/1968

Modern Publicity, London

1969

Modern Publicity, London

Graphic 4/1969

Book: Die Urkunde, Karl Gröner Verlag, Ulm

Exhibition catalog Typomundus 20/2, ICTA Munich

1972

Graphic Design in the BDG, Rhine-Main Group

1974

Berthold Phototypes E1

1976

Idea extra Issue Graphic (Japanese academic journal)

Book: Calligraphy Today by Heather Child

1980

Berthold Body Types E2, Berthold Headlines
Upper & Lower Case 12/1980

1981
Upper & Lower Case 3/1981
Berthold Exclusive Sample 003, Poppl-Pontifex

1982
Berthold Exclusive Rehearsal 009, Poppl-Laudatio
Book: International Calligraphy Today for the international exhibition at ITC
IIInternationale Typeface Corporation, New York)
Deutscher Drucker 30/1982 18th vol.
Druckwelt 19/1982
Graphic 11/1982
The Polygraph 19/1982

1983
Invitation card from H. Berthold AG for the exhibition "In memoriam Prof.
Friedrich Poppl", in three languages

1985
Alphabet. The Journal of Friends of Calligraphy, Summer 1985, Vol.10, Number
2

1986
Calligraphy Idea Exchange, Fall 1986, pp. 31-36

1987
Die deutsche Schrift, issue 83, 54th volume, 2/1987 (Poppl-Fraktur as a set
typeface)

1988
Studio Magazine, March/April 1988, Vol. 6, No. 2
The Polygraph, Presentation of the Poppl Fraktur

1989
26 Letters, Calendar: November sheet with Poppl-Pontifex

1990
Berthold Aktuell p. 6, 7, 8 on the creation of the Poppl-Pontifex
Arte, Magazine Internationale, Belgium

1991
The marathon to the perfect character (example Poppl-Pontifex) in: Type &

Typographers, published by V + Kleur BV, Netherlands
Book: Calligraphy. Inspiration - Innovation - Communication by David Harris,
Anaya Publishers Limited London

1996

Paul Shaw: Demystifying the Ruling Pen. In: Letter Arts Review, Vol. 13, No. 2

1998

Gertraude Poppl: In: Ars Scribendi, vol. 5, no. 1 (April)

Biography Werner Schneider

1935, April 7, born in Marburg/Lahn

1954-1958 Studies at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden under Vincent Weber (painting) and Friedrich Poppl (graphics).

1957 receives the Rudo Spemann Prize of the City of Offenbach.

1958-1959 Assistant to Friedrich Poppl at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden.

1959 Lecturer in graphic design at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden. Marries Luise Benfer; their children Christoph, Stefan and Dorothee are born.

1973-1997 Professor of communication design with specialization in typeface and typography at the University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden, faculty of design.

In addition to his teaching activities, he works as a freelance graphic designer.

In 1975 he became a member of the Bund Deutscher Buchkünstler, 1987 member of the Type Directors Club New York, 1988 honorary member of *Letter Exchange*, London, 1995 honorary member of the British society *CLAS, The Calligraphy and Lettering Arts Society*, London, 1999 honorary member of the *Society of Scribes New York*.

received numerous awards for his graphic type work, including several from the Type Directors Club, New York "For Typographic Excellence", 1987 from the Art Directors Club, New York, 1988 the Merit Award Biennale of Graphic Design Brno, CSSR, 1992 The Artia Foreign Trade Corporation Award and Gold Medal for Book Graphics/Type Design *Schneider- Antiqua*. Further Awards of

Excellence followed for calligraphic works from American galleries and specialist publishers.

In addition, originals can be found in renowned museums and collections in Germany and abroad, including the Klingspor Museum Offenbach am Main, San Francisco Public Library (Book Arts & Special Collections), Musée des Arts de l'Écriture Paris, Victoria and Albert Museum London.

Submits his correspondence with Prof. Dr. Albert Kapr to the German Library in Leipzig.

Since 1980 he has shown his calligraphic, typographic and lettering works in solo and group exhibitions worldwide, including several times in New York and numerous other cities in the USA, Bombay, South Africa, New Delhi, Tokyo, Puerto Rico, China, Tasmania, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Seoul, CSSR, Reykjavik, London, Italy, The Hague, Paris, Salzburg and in Düsseldorf, Leipzig, Marburg and Chemnitz.

1986 Continuation of the exhibition series "*Letters op Papier in Steen & in Glas*" in Bruges, which took place every three years until 2002.

In 1987, his first typeface "Schneider Antiqua" was published by Berthold AG. He later designed "Libretto" and "Senatus".

1988 Exhibition at the Büchergilde Gutenberg Wiesbaden, the start of a series of exhibitions by his former students.

From 1993, "Vialog" (in collaboration with Helmut Ness from the Wiesbaden design office Fuenfwerken), "Satero" and "Sunetta", a calligraphic handwritten font, were created for Linotype GmbH. For Tiro Typeworks, Vancouver, the additional Greek and Cyrillic versions of "Aeneas" are being created.

1998 Joint exhibition with R. K. Joshi at the Klingspor Museum: "*Indo-German Encounter of Modern Writing Art*". "*Grace and Expression - Anmut und Ausdruck*".

He retired in 1999 and devoted himself not only to design but also to the digitization of his typesetting using computers, a process he had previously vehemently opposed.

1999 only trip to the USA, on which he gives workshops in New York and Michigan at the invitation of Paul Shaw, gives lectures and shows his works in

a traveling exhibition. Start: Fordham University New York at the Lincoln Center.

In 2007, the "Werner Schneider Archive" is established in the Calligraphy Collection at the Berlin Academy of Arts.

2008 Group exhibition "Im Zaubergarten der Schrift" exhibition pavilion of the Akademie der Künste Berlin, Tiergarten.

2010 Exhibition "Die Kunst der Form gewordenen Sprache, Kür und Pflicht" at Wiesbaden Town Hall.

In the last years of his life, Werner Schneider designed numerous inscriptions for church bells, using his own alphabet designs especially for metal casting.

2022, January 12 dies in Bad Laasphe.

Biography Gottfried Pott

1939, June 21, born in Lahnstein

1959-63 Studies at the Werkkunstschule Wiesbaden, including graphic design with Friedrich Poppl and painting with Vincent Weber, graduating as a graphic designer (after founding the university of applied sciences: Dipl. Graphik-Designer FH). He moves to Wiesbaden and is trained as an organist by church musician Peter Kempin.

1964 Marriage to Lieselotte Lay (+2020), who will help him with all his projects. Their children Stephan, Christiane and Tobias are born.

1964-1974 Worked as a layout artist and art director.

1974- 1988 Self-employed as a freelance graphic designer.

1985 Participation in the 5th Los Angeles Calligraphy Conference with Karlgeorg Hofer. Birth of Team Teaching.

From 1986 he develops writing courses with international demand. 1988 Calligraphy Conference Washington.

1987 Co-founder of the Klingspor Offenbach writing workshop.

1988 Academic appointment as professor of calligraphy, type design and type history at the university of applied sciences in Hildesheim (now the university of applied sciences and arts). Participation in the 8th International Calligraphy Conference in Washington.

1989 classes at the International Calligraphy Conference in San Francisco.

1990 He contributes "Carolina" (based on Carolingian minuscule) and "Duc de Berry" (based on French Bastarda) to Adrian Frutiger's "Type before Gutenberg" project, published by Linotype- Hell AG. The PostScript fonts Rulingscript and Arioso are also published there.

- Calligraphy week in Casore del Monte (Tuscany), repeated until 1993.

1992 Grote Prijs voor Kalligrafie VVV-Westerlo (Belgium). This was followed by an exhibition and catalog "ALPHABETA Concertino".

In 1993 Linotype-Hell AG publishes "Ruling Script", a handwritten improvisation of Cancellaresca, as a PostScript font.

1994 September Type I Congress in San Francisco.

In 1995, he summarized his findings on the interaction between music and calligraphy and published them in a bilingual edition entitled "Schrift Bild Klang" - "The Music of Lettering", published by Hermann Schmidt, Mainz.

In 1997/98 he produced his writing master's book "A Letter Collection" (since 2007 in the Klingspor Museum Offenbach).

2003 Emeritus status. Private publication "Alphabeta Concertino".

Japan trip with workshops in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto.

2004 Canada trip with various workshops

2005 "Kalligrafie - Erste Hilfe und Schriftraining" Hermann Schmidt Verlag.

2006 "Calligraphy - Intensive Training" Hermann Schmidt Verlag.

2007 "Approaching Cusanus" exhibition in Bernkastel-Kues in the birthplace of Nikolaus von Kues.

2008 Linotype Matrix "My Source of Calligraphy Impulses".

2010 PostScript- Font Potpourri. "Calligraphic Symphonies" German/English Hermann Schmidt Verlag.

2011 Exhibition at the Klingspor Museum "The Passion of Writing" with catalog, foreword by Stefan Soltek, and calendar project of the Schreibmeisterbuch. -

Triggered by the destruction of the World Trade Center, he writes the date in Roman numerals and hands it over to the Akademie der Künste - Berliner Sammlung Kalligraphie along with other sheets.

2015 "Evening for Rudo Spemann" at the Klingspor Museum.

2016 Exhibition at the Kunstarche Wiesbaden "Writing with Passion" at the same time his book "Schreiben mit Herz und Hand" is published again by Hermann Schmidt Verlag.

2017 Exhibition "Text Schrift Bild" (on the occasion of 500 years of Reformation) in Sankt Peter auf dem Berg, Taunusstein-Bleidenstadt.

2019 Calligraphy master class with Gottfried Pott, Hermann Schmidt Verlag.

2022 Exhibition at the Lorsch Museum Center, UNESCO World Heritage "Text Writing Image".

2023 Exhibition in the former Benedictine Abbey Seligenstadt "Hommage à Einhard".

2024 Group exhibition at the Kunstarche Wiesbaden "Calligraphy in dialog - positions of Ukrainian calligraphers with sheets by Friedrich Poppl, Werner Schneider and Gottfried Pott". He hands over twenty calligraphies to Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

He receives the Hessian Order of Merit with Ribbon. He donates 20 calligraphies to the RheinMain University and State Library in Wiesbaden.

2024, August 5 dies in Wiesbaden.

He is posthumously elected an honorary member of the Friends of the Klingspor Museum.

Chapter X11, from page 178 List of authors and list of figures

Freytag, Ole, Dipl. Designer, interviewed Gottfried Pott for his Diplom thesis "Why We Write, Calligraphy: Art Form in Transition" 2023. Won 1st place in the Rudo Spemann Competition, Klingspor Museum Offenbach with the project "I'm nervous" in 2022. He is a communication designer and calligrapher in Wismar.

Nagel, Susanne, graduate in Northern European Studies and subject librarian at the Akademie der Künste, was responsible for the "Berlin Calligraphy Collection" from 2004 to 2024. In 2008, she curated the exhibition "Im Zaubergarten der Schrift". Since 2022 board member of the Schreibwerkstatt Klingspor Offenbach, Förderkreis Internationaler Kalligrafie e.V.

Pieper, Katharina, graduate designer, book author and author of numerous articles on writing, runs the Schriftkultur e.V. foundation in Homburg (Saar), which she founded in 2016, as a workshop leader and curator of exhibitions. As a calligrapher, she has shown her work in over 240 solo and group exhibitions worldwide. She has been a lecturer in type design at various universities of applied sciences and international workshops since 1988.

Reusch, Felicitas, a companion of Gottfried Pott, chairwoman of Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V., curated the exhibition "Gottfried Pott, Schreiben mit Passion" there in 2016, works on topics from the art history of Wiesbaden, a book series published by Reichert Verlag.

Soltek, Stefan, PhD in art history, curated the Linnel Collection of Book Art and Ornamental Engraving at the Museum of Applied Arts in Frankfurt. In 2002 he became director of the Klingspor Museum and as such curated the exhibition "Gottfried Pott, Die Passion des Schreibens- Text Schrift Bild" in 2011 with a contribution to the catalog.

Werfel, Silvia, freelance journalist and specialist author, writes articles on typography, printing history, book design and production for academic journals and specialist books. She is an active member of the International Working

Group on Printing and Media History (IADM), the Typographische Gesellschaft München (tgm) and the Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen (Society of Bibliophiles), where she was secretary of the board from 2015 to 2024.

of illustrations

The chapter headings show capital letters from a "Schneider Antiqua" font designed by Werner Schneider.

Gottfried Pott, ABC Symphony III, Roma laid paper, gouache, 12.7.1987, 67 x 49 cm

Left Johannes Boehland, quote by Jacob Burckhardt, 1951 dedicated to city councillor Johannes Maaß, 78 x 53 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 8

1 Johannes Boehland, Logo for the Hessian State Theater Wiesbaden, antiqua verse drawn with a pen. Printed here on a program for the May Festival, 17.5 x 10.5 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

2 Max Bollwage, Fest der Blume, poster design from the 1950s, 60.5 x 43 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 9

3 Max Bollwage, Wiesbaden Kureck, drawing 1956, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

page 10

4 Johannes Boehland, advertising brochures for Brockhaus Verlag, 1954 and 1958, 17.5 x 10.5 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

5 Werner Schneider, The speech of Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker before the German Bundestag on May 8, 1985, designed for the Hessian Minister of Social Affairs as an annual edition 1991, printed at the University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden, 44 x 63 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 13

6 Gottfried Pott, Reibe deinen Tuschestein ... Wen Tianxiang, Chanson Büthen Gouache, 2002, 75 x 50 cm, Erbegemeinschaft Gottfried Pott

Page 14 and 15 **Chapter opener** Detail from Gottfried Pott, Pinsel Poesie, 2024, 44 x 63 cm, privately owned.

Page 18

1 Werner Schneider, Psalm 45, excerpt, cover of Letters Arts Review 1996, Volume 13, Number 2.

Page 19

2 Gottfried Pott, Musica Praeludium Vitae Aeterna, 1988, cover of ALPHABET, 2002, Volume 27, Number 2.

Page 21 and 22 **Chapter opener** from Gottfried Pott, "Schreibmeisterbuch", 1998/1999, Klingspor Museum Offenbach

Page 22

1 Gottfried Pott presents his "Schreibmeisterbuch" at the Klingspor Museum, Offenbach, June 2009, photo Kristian Bjonard.

Page 23

2 Evangelist Mark, Lectionary, Regensburg (?), c. 1250, Berlin State Library Cod.theol.lat. fol.52, Catalog of Regensburg Book Illumination, Munich 1987, no. 50, Berlin State Library.

3 Philipp Roth, American author, 1933-2018 (Credit Ethan Hill; Getty Images), see article by F. Steffens, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 21.4.2021.

Page 24

4 Ivory panel with Pope Gregory the Great at the writing desk and copyists below, late 10th century, Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna.

Page 26 and 27

5 Gottfried Pott, excerpts from the photo series by Kristian Bjonard at the performance in the Klingspor Museum 2009 to illustrate the basic elements of writing: circle, semicircle, straight line. Examples from his "Schreibmeisterbuch", 1998/1999, Klingspor Museum Offenbach

Page 28 and 29

6 Gottfried Pott "Schreibmeisterbuch" open: circle and straight line and also from the "Schreibmeisterbuch" a grid of letters with accent on the O, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

7 Gottfried Pott "Schreibmeisterbuch" excerpt with basic elements of the typeface, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

8 Kenzo Tange, Plan for the development of Tokyo Bay, 1960, public domain.

Page 30

9 Gottfried Pott "Schreibmeisterbuch" P Variations embossed, Klingspor

Museum Offenbach.

10 Vincent Weber, Quattro Venti, painting from around 1970, detail, privately owned.

Page 31

11 Gottfried Pott, his "Schreibmeisterbuch" opened twice with the A-page and the Z-page, 1997/98, 65 x 49 cm, Klingspor Museum Offenbach. All the following pages of this unique work are photographs by Patrick Bäuml.

Page 35

12 A juxtaposition of signs and letters from the "Schreibmeisterbuch".

13 Eli Wiesel, "A Talmudic legend ...", left page in the "Schreibmeisterbuch".

14 A palindrome from Virgil's "Aeneid" in the "Schreibmeisterbuch".

Page 36

15 Francois Villion, "Le Testament" left page in the "Schreibmeisterbuch".

Page 38 and 39

16 The open "Schreibmeisterbuch" with a transparent page turned back.

Page 41

17 Le Corbusier, "Poème de l'angle droit", 1955, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

18 Gottfried Pott, composition with serifs in the "Schreibmeisterbuch".

19 Gottfried Pott, "Die Form des Schönen ist nur ein freier Vortrag ...", calligraphy 2009, 78 x 53 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

Page 42 and 43

20 Gottfried Pott, Markette zum "Schreibmeisterbuch", 1997, 8.5 x 11 cm, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

Page 44

21 Gottfried Pott, "I am the Alpha and the Omega" Revelation of John, verse 8, 2003, 76 x 56.5 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

22 Gottfried Pott, "So he who is the center ...". Nikolaus von Kues, 2014, 77 x 56 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

Page 45

23 Johann Neudörfer, Lines of prayer and two Roman capitals in his scribe's book, c. 1600, Museum für Angewandte Kunst Frankfurt.

Page 46

24 Gottfried Pott, "Es ist ein Weinen in der Welt ...", Else Lasker-Schüler, 2023,

54 x 75 cm, private collection.

25 Gottfried Pott, "I believe, although it is absurd" Tertullian, 2023, 79 x 53 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

Page 47

26 Gottfried Pott, "Mein Gott wieviel Blau verschwendest Du ...", Odysseas Elytis, 2010, 79 x 56 cm, Klingspor Museum Offenbach, photographer Patrick Bäuml.

Page 48

27 Gottfried Pott, "He is all that can be", Nikolaus von Kues, 2019, 100 x 70 cm, Higher Education Institution Library.

page 49

28 Gottfried Pott, Einhardi Epistola, 2023, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 50

29 Gottfried Pott, "ER omne id quod esse potest" 2023, Pott community of heirs.

page 51

30 Gottfried Pott, September 11, 2001, date in Roman numerals XI IX MMI, chin.ink. on Fabriano laid paper, 75 x 56 cm, Berlin Calligraphy Collection 1,434.

Page 52

31 Gottfried Pott, "Crisis is a productive state ...", Max Frisch, 2023, 76 x 56.5 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

32 Gottfried Pott, "Have courage ...", Horace, 2023, 78 x 53 cm, RheinMain University and State Library.

33 Gottfried Pott, "Have no fear" from the last interview with regime critic Alexander Navalny before his death on February 16, 2024, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

Pages 56 and 57

Gottfried Pott, "Pinsel Poesie" 2024, 97 x 134 cm, privately owned.

Page 58 **chapter opener**, double page in the green book, 2020, private property.

Page 60 The green book, a blank book from the Arches paper mill in Lorraine, no. 5484, here with an insight into the quotation from Meister Eckhart.

Page 61 In the green book Page 3.

Page 62 and 63 In the green book, last double page with letter games, dated August 14, 2020.

Page 64, In the green book Page 24

Page 65, In the green book page 16.

Page 66 In the green book Page 23 Excerpt.

Page 68 and 69 In the green book Page 12 and 13 closed

Page 70 and 71 same page folded out, dated by Gottfried Pott August 2, 2020.

Pages 72 and 73 In the green book Pages 27 and 27

Pages 74 and 75 In the green book Pages 30 and 31.

Pages 76 and 77 In the green book Pages 26 and 27.

Page 79 and 80 **Chapter opener** Friedrich Poppl, Nonverbal, drawn pen lettering, 1970; 28.3×33 cm, Akademie der Künste. Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Friedrich Poppl Archive 1.

Page 80 Friedrich Poppl at the repro table, 70s.

The illustrations in Silvia Werfel's article are from the Akademie der Künste, Berlin Calligraphy Collection Friedrich-Poppl-Archiv. Only the illustrations on pages 84/85, nos. 6, 7, 9 and 11 are from the Killingspor Museum Offenbach.

Pages 102 and 103 **Chapter opener** Werner Schneider, "Occasionally we take up the pen ... "Hermann Hesse, letters, 1998, 34×50 cm, Akademie der Künste. Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Werner Schneider - Archive 76

Page 104

1 Werner Schneider, "True life is meeting people - Real life means encounter ..."
Martin Buber, annual edition 1993, printed at the university of applied sciences in various formats, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

2 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 107

3 Poster of the exhibition at the university of applied sciences "Zeitgenössische Schriftkunst/Typografie aus Indien" 1986, 61 x 29 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 108

4 Werner Schneider "Ask not what your country can do for you ..." Speech by John F. Kennedy in 1963, printed at the university of applied sciences in 1979, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Werner Schneider - Archive 8.

Page 111

5 Werner Schneider, "For artists it is the highest honor to be hanged" Berliner Sammlung Kalligraphie Werner Schneider - Archiv 71.

Page 112

6 Werner Schneider, Alphabet, 2002, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Werner Schneider Archive 88.

Page 114

7 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 115

8 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 116

9 Archive Katharina Pieper.

page 117

10 Poster for the exhibition "Grace and Expression" at the Klingspor Museum Offenbach 1998, 56.5 x 37 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 118

11 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 119

12 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 120

13 Poster for Werner Schneider's exhibition at Fordham University New York in 1999, design by Werner Schneider. The light gray list of figures for the typeface "Schneider-Libretto" in the background is an almost finished design for the Berthold company with annotations in pencil by Günter Gerhard Lange, Katharina Pieper Archive.

Page 122 and 123

14 Werner Schneider "We are not masters of our work ..." Henri Matisse, 1982, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Werner Schneider - Archive 26.

page 124

15 Exhibition poster by Werner Schneider in the basement gallery of the Büchergilde Gutenberg, Wiesbaden, 1988, 59 x 42 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 125 and page 126 and page 129

16, 17, and 18 Archive Katharina Pieper.

Page 131

Katharina Pieper "In music, God has left mankind a reminder of the lost paradise" Hildegard von Bingen, 2010, 38 x 56 cm, property of the artist.

Page 132 and 133 **Chapter opener** Werner Schneider - In the magic garden of writing

All illustrations in Susanne Nagel's article are from the Akademie der Künste, Berlin Calligraphy Collection, Archive - Werner-Schneider.

Page 146 and 147 How do calligraphers come up with their texts?

Chapter opener Gottfried Pott, "In heaven as on earth ..." , Wen Tian-xiang, 2019, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 148

1 Friedrich Poppl, "The greatest evil ..." Friedrich Schiller, The Bride of Messina, 1966, original Berlin Calligraphy Collection, published by "Kalligraphie Edition" Hardheim 1981.

Page 149

2 Friedrich Poppl, "That thou mayest have the son ..." Friedrich Schiller, The Robbers, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Friedrich Poppl Archive 130.

Page 152

3 Werner Schneider, "Occasionally we take up the pen ..." Hermann Hesse,

letters, 1988, 50 x 34 cm, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Werner-Schneider - Archive 78.

Page 153

4 Friedrich Poppl, "Easter", Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1965, 48 x 62 cm, Berlin Calligraphy Collection - Friedrich Poppl - Archive 46.

Page 155

Gottfried Pott, "Kneading clay to form vessels ..." Lao Tzu, Chapter 11, 2021, 76.5 x 56 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 156

6 Gottfried Pott, Brush Expression, Hahnemühle laid paper gouache, 1990, 40 x 40 cm, Gottfried Pott Heirs' Association.

page 157

7 Gottfried Pott, "Gewalt zerbricht an sich selbst" Laotse, Arches Bütten Cin.Ink Gouache, 2021, 76 x 56 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 158 **Chapter opener** Art form in transition - On the perception of calligraphy in the present day

Gottfried Pott, a sheet from the folder "Aksharika" 2015, 29.5 x 20.5 cm, Kunstarche Wiesbaden e.V.

Page 160

1 Ole Freytag, "Law is our Master's degree ...", Marcus Aurelius, Mediations Book 10, Verse 25, 2024, 30 x 40cm, property of the artist.

Page 165

Ole Freytag, cover of his Diplom thesis "Why we write - Kalligrafie im Wandel", 2024, detail.

page 167

Ole Freytag "Deconstruction - Reconstruction" 2024, 24 x 29 cm, property of the artist.

Page 170

Awarding of the Rudo Spemann Prize 2023, second prize to Lola Mais, student at RheinMain University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden, with the work "A love letter to the notebook", Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

Page 171

Anna-Lena Unger, winner of the 1st prize 2015, student at RheinMain University

of Applied Sciences, letter S from an alphabet drawn in ink, Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

Biography Friedrich Poppl

above: left: Friedrich Poppl with GG Lange and H Bordihn, exhibition opening at the Essen Photo Center, 1968.

Below: Friedrich Poppl at his desk photographed by his son Rainer.

Biography Werner Schneider

Werner Schneider at Wiesbaden Town Hall, on the occasion of his exhibition "The Art of Language Made Form, Freestyle and Duty", on the occasion of his 75th birthday, 2010 (Photo Silvia Werfel).

Biography Gottfried Pott

Gottfried Pott at his presentation of the calendar "A Letter Collection" at the Klingspor Museum Offenbach.

Gottfried Pott at a workshop in Tokyo, 2003.