

Editorial

HANS-JÖRG HEUSSER, Managing Director

In 2008, the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) realised its plans to become an Institute for Advanced Study. SIK-ISEA has thus put itself in a more advantageous position for the future in the research and higher education landscape, which is currently undergoing radical change.



This repositioning is manifested in a new public image. We have said goodbye to the old logo and adopted a new corporate design, with both a refreshing and a revitalising impact. The abbreviation of 'SIK' – an acronym used frequently in the past but never officially adopted – has given way to the 'SIK-ISEA' logotype. By adding 'ISEA' – the Institute's acronym in French (*Institut suisse pour l'étude de l'art*) – the Institute is acknowledging the success of its 'Antenne romande' satellite office in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (*Romandie*). Indeed, this branch at the University of Lausanne (UNIL) was able to celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2008. I would like to congratulate Paul-André Jaccard, who has been in charge since the beginning, and his staff for the impressive contribution they have made to our Institute over the past two decades. The new 'SIK-ISEA' logotype bears explicit testimony to the fact that the 'Antenne romande' forms an integral part of the Institute and an essential component of its national and international identity.

Financed completely through private foundations and benefactors, the Research Promotion Programme represents the Institute's transformation into an Institute for Advanced Study. During the start-up phase, the programme will bring two professorial fellows and four doctoral fellows to the Institute for three-year research residencies. The two professors have already taken up work with us. Professor Dr. Beat Wyss, a professor at the Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe, joined us in autumn 2008. He has been 'loaned' to us for three years, on an 80% basis, in the context of a transnational cooperation programme with the Ministry of Science, Research and Art of the German State of Baden-Württemberg.

Holding a professorship at the University of Bern up until the end of 2008, and co-author of the catalogue raisonné of the paintings of Ferdinand Hodler, Professor Dr. Oskar Bätsch-

mann joined us at the beginning of February 2009. As of this date, he resigned as Vice President of the Foundation's Board of Trustees and President of the SIK-ISEA Academic Committee, in accordance with corporate governance policy. Serving in these functions over the past two decades, Oskar Bächtzmann has made a crucial contribution to the establishment and success of the Institute. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to him for this contribution – as well as for the particularly pleasant cooperation we have always enjoyed with him – and to cordially welcome both him and Beat Wyss to their new posts with us.

Working with two doctoral fellows each, as well as with SIK-ISEA staff, the two professors will be leading research projects, known as 'focus projects', centred on *Kunstbetrieb* (the art sector) and the history of art in the three years to come, as well as supervising the doctoral fellows. A third focus project in the field of art technology, which is being led by Karoline Beltinger, has also been launched. The full funding for this last project, however, is still pending.

The reorganisation into an Institute for Advanced Study does not constitute a turnaround at all but is a straightforward further development. In no way does the reorganisation involve a departure from the Institute's previous core mission. SIK-ISEA has been highly regarded as the main documentation and research centre for art in Switzerland for many decades. This will not change. As an Institute for Advanced Study, however, it will be possible for SIK-ISEA to further pursue its mission as the foremost national documentation and information centre in a credible and efficient manner, while also responding to the fundamentally altered conditions brought about by globalisation and the newly defined higher education and research sector. In this way, SIK-ISEA will also be making a significant contribution to Switzerland's status as a research location.

A national art documentation centre that aims to meet not only today's but also future requirements cannot limit itself to the passive collection of information media and data – it must also pursue its mission proactively by carrying out its own research. SIK-ISEA has already been doing this for decades. Together with the archives and library, the Institute's research and academic exchange generate the documents and competence that constitute and secure the reputation and authority of SIK-ISEA as a documentation and research centre on a long-term basis. An outstanding example of this is the catalogue raisonné of the paintings of Ferdinand Hodler, the first volume of which was published in the year under review. This was compiled in close cooperation with Oskar Bächtzmann right from the start. I would like to congratulate him and the SIK-ISEA Hodler team, under the direction of Paul Müller, for their admirable achievement. Patiently conducted over many years, this research work represents a milestone in the Swiss contribution to art history – and also in the history of SIK-ISEA.

Neither the catalogue raisonné of the paintings of Ferdinand Hodler nor the launching of the Institute for Advanced Study would have been possible without the loyal and generous circle of benefactors and foundations that have accompanied the Institute with their kind support – often for many years. They are listed in detail under the 'Acknowledgements' that follow, and I cannot mention all of them by name here. There are, however, two benefactors who have been supporting us as patrons for many decades, whom I would like to name. The first is our great 'guardian' Annette Bühler. I would also like to thank her for her generous contribution towards the setting up of the Institute for Advanced Study. It is with deep sorrow that we report that our second major benefactor, Erika Schnyder, died in 2008 at the grand old age of 96. With her passing, the Institute has lost a friend of many years whose friendship was extraordinary in terms of both its dimensions and manner. We will preserve her memory with gratitude and respect.