

### Editorial : *Back to sources*

After so many months spent among screens, in the parallel world of video meetings, digital interfaces and metadata, we rediscover with emotion the touch and the smell of paper, the sounds of book-bindings when we open them, of pages when we turn them. There are leaves to be cut in books that no one has ever read, covers that come off those that have been read too often, the cheap brochures, the annotations in the margins, the handwritten notebooks...

For this first *PuppetPlays* digitisation assignment, we chose the Sammlung Puppentheater of the Stadtmuseum in Munich [the Puppet Theatre Collection of the Munich City Museum] with its collection of books and manuscripts, but also of puppets, sets, posters, and theatre props. The main objective of our selection is to document the transformations of Kasperl, Polichinelle's cousin in Germany and Austria: an insolent and almost asocial clown in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, a national hero during WWI, a youth organisation pioneer as the "Red Kasperl" of the 1920s-1930s, a slayer of Jews and democrats as the "Brown Kasperl" of Nazi propaganda, a model boy in the educational sketches of Road Safety since the 1960s, a naïve and lunar child in the theatre for young audiences... The many avatars of this popular figure reveal the plasticity of puppet theatres in adapting to the social and political changes of their time.



Picture : Some plays with Kasperl, Sammlung Puppentheater, Stadtmuseum, Munich

[Prof. Dr. Didier Plassard]

## Our first digitisation campaign

### The Sammlung Puppentheater of the Stadtmuseum in Munich

The Sammlung Puppentheater of the Stadtmuseum in Munich, currently directed by Mascha Erbelding, was founded in 1940. It gathers objects and documents on all areas of traditional puppetry from the late XVIII<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and materials on contemporary figure and object theatre.

The internationally oriented collection comprises about 13,000 figures. In addition, there are donations of complete puppet theatres with sets and textbooks.

Find out more at : [muenchner-stadtmuseum.de](http://muenchner-stadtmuseum.de)  
& [figurentheater-gfp.de](http://figurentheater-gfp.de).

By focusing on popular and artistic puppet theatre in Germany, the collection has become a reference point for researchers on popular entertainment culture with its library, archive and graphics collection open to researchers.

In addition to organising special exhibitions, theatre performances are regularly staged especially during the Internationales Figurentheaterfestival [International Figure biennial].

The PuppetPlays project launched its first digitisation campaign Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> of July. It began at the Stadtmuseum of Munich. We warmly thank the team for their welcome, and in particular Mascha Erbelding and David Schuster-Stengel.

We digitize puppets plays chosen by our scientific team for their literary or historic interest, for example a Rotkäppchen [Little Red Riding Hood] written in 1907, adapted from a text by Ludwig Tieck, and played by the Bavarian company of shadow puppetry Schwabinger Schattenspiele. Digitised texts will be freely available on our platform.

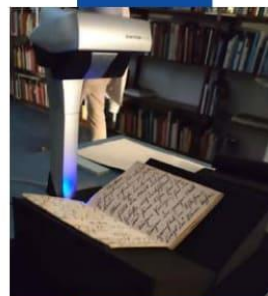
These documents, dating from the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> centuries, are fragile and their handling requires to be very cautious to not harm them. We then bought many items: book supports, leaded ropes, sand bags...

We were also accompanied throughout our preparation by members of the digitisation-photography team and the conservation-restoration team of the 'Service de Coopération Documentaire Interuniversitaire de Montpellier' under the direction of Hélène Lorblanchet. Huge thanks to Audrey Cogoluegnes, Anne-Sophie Gagnal, and Benjamin Sandri for their valuable support.

We are glad to find back the way to institutions and to finally begin our digitization campaign. We wholeheartedly hope to keep on working with institutions!

[Ma. Paul Robert]

Pictures : Stadtmuseum of Munich / PuppetPlays mission at the Stadtmuseum of Munich, July 2021 / Digitisation-photography workshop, 'Service de Coopération Documentaire Interuniversitaire de Montpellier'



The 'Service de Coopération  
Documentaire Interuniversitaire de  
Montpellier'



This department, created in January 2021, has three missions: documentary computing, heritage and logistics, documentary networks. It integrates the conservation-restoration and digitisation-photography workshops. In particular, it is responsible for managing, conserving and promoting the heritage collections of the two Inter-University Library's Common Documentation Services, including the Atger Museum and the library of the Montpellier Academy of Sciences and Letters.

Slovenly Peter

It is a shame that Heinrich Hoffmann (1809-1894) didn't write any play for puppets: a Frankfurt psychiatrist, he also was the author of comedies as well as numerous children's books, the most famous of which, *Der Struwwelpeter* ("shock-headed Peter", first published in 1844), was even translated into English by Mark Twain under the title *Slovenly Peter*.

Yet the puppeteers did notice this lack and tried to handle it. Several plays in the archives of the Munich Stadtmuseum take their title from this work, beginning with the one of the Saxony puppeteer Heinrich Apel (1875-1920) in 1902.

It tells an original story with several new characters. Hoffmann nevertheless gave the puppet Struwwelpeter his eponymous character, this boy who doesn't cut hair or nails, as well as a few motifs: as punishment for his misdeeds, the protagonist is immersed in an inkwell – by Hoffmann, it was indeed the correction inflicted on children who mocked a black man. The puppeteer could not fail to notice that one of them was called *der Kaspar*, just like the favourite character of traditional puppet theatre in Germany.

[Dr. Jean Boutan]



Engraving after an original illustration by Heinrich Hoffmann, *Der Struwwelpeter*, Frankfurt am Main, Literarische Anstalt Rütten & Loening, 1917. A puppet representing the Struwwelpeter is on exhibit at the Musée Gadagne in Lyon.



an den Händen  
Lief er sich nicht  
Seine Nägel faß  
Kämmen ließ er  
Pfui! ruft da ei  
Dack'her Struwwelpeter!



## A look back at some important actions for the year 2020-2021

Free access online resources on our website :

[puppetplays.www.univ-montp3.fr](http://puppetplays.www.univ-montp3.fr) :



### What is a repertoire for puppets?

#### First publications for

the 2<sup>d</sup> international seminar 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> October 2020

- *Pulcinella, Punch, Polichinelle... Continuity and discontinuity in glove-puppet repertoires (17th - 19th centuries)*, Didier Plassard (UPVM3)
- *The repertoire of travelling puppet theatre in XIX<sup>th</sup> -century France: The case of the Chok-Pitou Theatre*, Yanna Kor (UPVM3)
- *Dom Roberto Theatre*, Christine Zurbach (University of Evora, Portugal)
- *Puppet plays in Britain*, John McCormick (Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland)

To be continued...

### Meetings on Facebook Live (January-April 2021)

- Drammaturgia della figura: il repertorio d'autore
- Marionnette et théâtre documentaire
- Répertoire populaire, répertoire littéraire : emprunts et circulations (à propos de *La Tentation de saint Antoine*)
- Plays for living puppets around 1800

### Puppets and digital humanities : the chronicles of a digital humanist

- La question de l'identification des personnes et des oeuvres au sein du projet *PuppetPlays*
- Le traitement des données de la recherche au sein du projet *PuppetPlays*

The *PuppetPlays* team wishes you a nice summer.

We'll be back in september  
for a next newsletter.

Pictures : *PuppetPlays* meetings  
on Facebook Live and  
[puppetplays.www.univ-montp3.fr](http://puppetplays.www.univ-montp3.fr)

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 #PuppetPlays

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Notre site / Our website : <https://puppetplays.www.univ-montp3.fr/>