

History of the Shakespeare Illustration Archive Oppel - Hammerschmidt

1946 - The renowned Shakespeare and Goethe researcher Prof. Horst Oppel starts collecting Shakespearian illustrations, which leads to the foundation of the Shakespeare Illustration Archive.

1956 - Horst Oppel accepts a chair at Marburg. The Shakespeare Illustration Archive is now located at the Institute of English Philology at the University of Marburg.

1963 - Oppel becomes a member of the Academy of Sciences and Literature at Mainz. From now on (with interruptions) the archive is promoted by the academy.

1967 - Based on the study and evaluation of visual material from the archive the first dissertation is completed: Heidemarie Spangenberg, *Illustrations for Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'*. In the years to follow, further dissertations are published for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, *Pericles*, and more.

1976 - Horst Oppel applies to the German Research Council for funds enabling him to carry out a research project (working title: "The Shakespeare Illustration"). He intends to write a comprehensive 'History of Shakespeare Illustration'.

1979 - Oppel suffers a severe stroke from which he did not recover.

1979 - 1982 - Prof. Hammerschmidt takes leave of her *venia legendi* at Mainz to become German Consul for Cultural Affairs at the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Toronto, Canada.

1980/81 - Horst Oppel's disciples commission Prof. Hammerschmidt to take over as the leading research team member of the orphaned project and compile an edition of the existing archive materials. German Research Council project managers include: Prof. Rudolf Böhm (University of Kiel), Prof. Horst W. Drescher (University of Mainz) and Prof. Paul Goetsch (University of Freiburg).

1982 - Horst Oppel dies.

1982 - In October 1982, Hildegard Hammerschmidt takes up the job of leading research team member of the Shakespeare Illustration Archive. The archive is once again located at the University of Mainz. Prof. Werner Habicht (University of

Würzburg) succeeds Prof. Oppel at the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature. The expansion and development of the Shakespeare Illustration Archive begins.

1982 - 1996 - While inspecting and appraising the existing inventory, Prof. Hammerschmidt-Hummel discovers a number of gaps, which required a systematic survey to be carried out along with a campaign to contact hundreds of museums and galleries in Western Europe and North America. Through extensive research and on-location efforts, Hammerschmidt-Hummel is able to increase the archive's inventory from approx. 1,600 to c. 7,000 illustrations. With a changing team of employees (mostly graduates), the large amount of new illustration material is procured for the archive, photographed at the Mainz university's photo lab, archived, edited and catalogued. Hammerschmidt-Hummel makes a selection of 3,000 illustrations for the planned three-volume work, has all of the descriptions entered into the database interface (adjusted for the Shakespeare Illustration Archive) and all of the 3,000 selected illustrations scanned in at the photo lab of the university. Simultaneously, she begins compiling a dictionary of artists (with approx. 550 entries), a classified bibliography (with more than 5,000 entries), and four indexes of artists, engravers, Shakespearian characters and actors. She authors an introduction for the three-volume work: 'History, function and interpretation of the works of artists on Shakespeare's plays' with around 200 illustrations (see Part I, pp. 1-201) as well as 'Editor's Notes' (see pp. xvii-xxiv). A time-consuming and costly process follows in order to acquire the reproduction rights for the illustrations.

1989 - Hammerschmidt-Hummel becomes editor of the planned publication - according to an agreement of the German Research Council project managers, Professors Böhm, Drescher and Goetsch.

1996 - The archive changes locations again. It is now located at the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature.

1996 - 2002 - All work is continued at the academy and eventually completed there. Hammerschmidt-Hummel contacts domestic and international publishers and does her best to secure non-repayable grants towards publishing the books.

2002 - Her efforts result in a publishing contract between the Harrassowitz Verlag Wiesbaden, the Academy of Sciences and Literature Mainz, and herself as the author - after the President of the Mainz Academy and Director of the academy's Fund Raising Trust, Prof. Clemens Zintzen (University of Cologne), secures the financial means to print the three-volume work containing over 3,000 illustrations. In-depth preparations for the layout and printing are made for the volumes.

2003 - The work is published: *Shakespearian Illustrations from 1594 to 2000: The Work of Artists on Shakespeare's Plays - Catalogue, History, Function and Interpretation*, including a dictionary of artists, a classified bibliography and indexes. Compiled, authored and edited by Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel on behalf of the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Ver-

lag - Mainz: Academy of Sciences and Literature, 2003), 3 volumes, approx. 3,100 illustrations.

2005 - Donation Deed as of September 9, 2005 / September 16, 2005 / September 15, 2005 between the University of Mainz (represented by Library Director Dr. Andreas Anderhub), the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature (represented by General Secretary Dr. Wulf Thommel) and Prof. H. Hammerschmidt-Hummel (authorised by Prof. Horst Oppel's widow). Ownership of the unpublished portion of the Shakespeare Illustration Archive (approx. 3,500 illustrations) is donated to the Central Library of the University of Mainz. According to paragraph 4 of the agreement, the library is obliged "to digitalise the illustration archive and make it available to the public". Taking account of the "Authority and Letter of Intent" of Mrs Ingeborg Oppel, the rightful successor of Prof. Horst Oppel, as of March 16, 1988, the name of the archive is to be: "Shakespeare Illustration Archive Oppel – Hammerschmidt".

2005 - 2008 - The creation of an electronic version of the archive with 8,400 scans is overseen by Heike Geisel, graduate librarian at the Central Library of the University of Mainz. She is also responsible for further developing the collection and connecting it with a range of interdisciplinary sites (in particular, with a database of the Institute of Art History). She receives invaluable support from Dr. Annette Holzapfel-Pschorn from the Central IT Department at the University of Mainz. Holzapfel-Pschorn sets up an extensively linked-up Internet version using the latest application technologies. The site is made freely available to users at the Central Library of the University of Mainz as a new arts and cultural studies research tool.

2008 - November 17th - The new digital Shakespeare Illustration Archive Oppel - Hammerschmidt is presented to the public along with the Internet version of the previously unpublished collection.

November 11, 2008

Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel