

Visitor information

Display Window Archive

The Langmatt as a musical meeting place

25th September to 11th December 2022

The *Display Window Archive* has, since 2019, been displaying selected material from the museum's extensive collection archives, with a new theme chosen twice yearly. In 2017 and 2018, the archive was largely made accessible, and was partially digitalised. Its contents include documents, letters, postcards, diaries, and photographs from the Brown family's possessions. The preserved documents date from a period from 1850 to 1987.

Harry F. Brown (1905–1972) had a passion for music. Jenny and Sidney Brown's youngest son raved about the works of Bach and Wagner. In his chosen home of Paris, he trained as a composer, worked on baroque works and sought his own colorful language on their basis. His oeuvre, however, remained rather small. What has survived are about fifteen pieces of music, for string instruments, piano and voice. Brown's works were performed at various concerts and broadcast on the radio.

In Paris, Harry Brown established friendly contacts with renowned musicians. The pianist Clara Haskil lived for a time in his neighborhood on the Rue du Bac and practiced on the grand piano in his apartment – as well as occasionally in the Langmatt in Baden.

The harpsichordist Claude Crussard taught Harry Brown counterpoint, a compositional technique in which several equal voices are conducted side by side. Brown supported the instrumental ensemble *Ars Rediviva*, directed by Crussard, as a silent patron. He accompanied the musicians on their guest appearances and took care of all kinds of organizational matters. In 1947, nine members of *Ars Rediviva* died in a plane crash on their way to Lisbon. It was only by chance that Harry Brown and the flutist Fernand Caratgé did not take part in the ill-fated flight – they should have come by train. Eight years later, with the help of Harry Brown, Caratgé and

cellist Jacqueline Heuclin founded the *Nouvel Ensemble Ars Rediviva*.

From the 1940s on, the Langmatt regularly hosted carefully planned house concerts for invited audiences. The hostess, Jenny Brown (1871-1968), was happy to offer the musicians a suitable stage in the picture gallery and, together with her son, arranged other performance opportunities in the area. Unforgettable musical evenings are evidenced, among other things, by portraits of artists with personal dedications, surviving expressions of gratitude from happy guests, handwritten guest lists, and favorable newspaper reviews.

A selection of documented guest appearances in Baden:
1946 Ensemble *Ars Rediviva*
1948 Dinu Lipatti
1950 Trio Pasquier
1955 Clara Haskil (Kursaal Baden)
1959 Quintette Caratgé
1961/62: *Nouvel Ensemble Ars Rediviva*

Harry Brown recognized the talent of the now internationally famous harpist David Watkins around 1960 and promoted him to the best of his ability. During his visits to the Langmatt, Watkins was inspired by the assembled impressionist masterpieces. He loved to practice in front of Cézanne's *Trees and Rocks in the Park of the Château Noir*. In 1968 he gave his mentor, whom he still calls "Uncle Harry", a portrait photograph with the dedication "For Harry without whom this picture could not have been taken / with much affection, David."

LANGMATT

Museum Langmatt
Stiftung Langmatt Sidney und Jenny Brown
Römerstrasse 30
CH-5401 Baden

info@langmatt.ch
+41 (0)56 200 86 70
www.langmatt.ch