

PRESS
RELEASE

SCOOP: A GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE PRESS

The Museum of Printing relates the 400 years of history of the press.

In 2008 the local connoisseur Bernard Gelin donated to the Museum of printing and graphic communication a collection of around 30,000 newspapers from France and other countries. Only the French part has been catalogued so far; it represents 5,473 papers, of which 3,201 dailies (including some published only on weekdays) and 14,173 individual copies (10,930 of dailies).

A bonanza for the Museum, since the collection includes examples of the very first French newspapers and also because of its rich coverage of certain periods of French history in which the press was intensely active, such as the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, the Paris Commune, the World Wars and so on. Many papers published at these times are not present in public collections; the examples in the Gelin collection therefore significantly fill gaps for historians.

Relating the graphic history of the press

The interest of this exceptional collection lies not only in allowing us to rediscover major French and international historical events, but also in showing the evolution of graphical style in the special context of newspapers.

From the earliest gazettes, laid out exactly like pages of a book, to the screens of tablets where news is now displayed several times each day, newspapers have been at the forefront of all the upheavals in printing and the graphic arts. They have evolved in response to technical developments, but also to economic, social and cultural changes; they have looked for – and often initiated – innovations so that they could be printed faster, look more attractive, carry more and better illustrations ... in short, be read and appreciated by as many people as possible.

With over 250 newspapers and other objects, the exhibition *Scoop: A graphic history of the press* tells the story of newspaper page layout, from the smallest (*La Dépêche*, Paris, 12 November 1870, 10.5 x 8 cm) to the largest (*Le Grand Journal*, Paris, 3 April 1864, 92 x 62 cm). (In fact, formats became steadily larger up until the end of the 19th century (except in times of strife), whereas they are smaller today with the success of the tabloid). Visitors to the exhibition will find a complete panorama of the evolution of newspapers: layout in columns, better and better organisation of topics, the introduction of headlines, illustrations and photographs. At the same time, the exhibition tells the story of the development of printing methods, from the hand-operated press, which could produce



→ *La Liberté de la presse*, anonymous coloured print, 1797



→ *La Presse*, Bulletin du soir no. 5, 8 May 1848, with stock exchange prices and a report of the session of the Assemblée Nationale. — *La Presse*, Édition du peuple, 5 centimes, 24 June 1849, with a series of quotations from good "red" authors (Tocqueville, Roger-Collard, Chateaubriand ...) in favour of the liberty of the press

Le Monde
FONDATEUR: HUBERT BEUVE-MÉRY - DIRECTEUR: JEAN-MAIRE COLOMBANI
MÉDIE 1^{er} JANVIER 2000



→ A triumph of page-layout: a special issue of *Vu*, 14 November 1936, to celebrate "Aviation, guarantee of French security, prosperity and liberty": a page laid out in a diagonal, the photographs in the form of a flag.



CURATOR OF THE EXHIBITION

The curator of the exhibition is Gilles Feyel, university professor emeritus, specialist in media, journalism and printing. His advisor is Bernard Gelin who has made a major contribution to the documentation of the collection which he has donated to the Museum.

large numbers of copies but at a high price, to today's digital and offset machinery, by way of rotary presses and Linotypes during the major period of mechanisation.

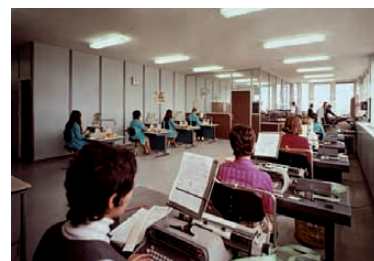
Newspapers, journalists, workers in the printing trades

The combination of objects from the Gelin collection and from the Museum (stereotypes and flongs, including the last page in lead of the *Républicain lorrain*, Linotype matrices, compositions for headlines, a Belinograph, publicity for machines ...) will enable visitors to understand the development of trades relating to the press, from the earliest "gaze-teers" to journalists, from individual proprietors to conglomerates who may be more interested in diversification than in producing information. Along the exhibition are to be seen printers using wooden, metal, rotary and steam-operated presses, linotypists and layout artists, reflecting the diversity of printing trades throughout the ages. The regional daily newspaper *Le Progrès* has made available its archive of photographs which illustrate the inventions which have transformed its production facilities from the heyday of the Linotype in the 1960s, all ink and hot grease, to the silent, clinical atmosphere of the rotary presses in its print works in Chassieu.

Recalling and demonstrating the driving force of the press

The exhibition *Scoop : a graphic history of the press* is not just looking backwards on 400 years of history. It provides a necessary pause for thought at a moment when newspapers are at a turning-point. Except in the developing countries, the paper press is losing ground; some American cities no longer have a daily newspaper. In June, Reuters Digital News in its report for 2015 indicated that 46% of inhabitants of the twelve industrialised countries investigated obtain news at least once a week via their smartphones, while for 58% of the French population the primary source of news is television, as against 3% for newspapers. As is to be seen in the exhibition, for example in the special number of *Vu* (1936), *Paris Match* of the 1950s, or the paste-up of *Le Progrès* which will be on display in November 2015, papers use all the weapons available – original and dynamic layout, full-colour photographs and so on – in the hope of conquering society's demand for images. Perhaps banking on the habit they have given us of feeling paper in the hand, newspapers are doing their best to maintain the role they have always played, that of giving shape and sense to the disorder of current affairs. This was the primary objective of the earliest journalist, Théophraste Renaudot, when his first *Gazette* was printed on a hand-operated press during the night of 29 May 1631. But there is no doubt that newspapers today have every reason to ponder what lies in store for them in the future.

In any case, one of the main themes of the exhibition is that the press has withstood many changes and historical, social and structural upheavals. Built up by great leaders and a legion of unseen workers, the press has changed its economic model many times; while this has had an effect on the editorial landscape, it has not altered the press's mission of creating opinion, as the exhibition shows.



→ The time of page-setting by the mile © Archives of Le Progrès

SCOOP: A GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE PRESS 8 OCTOBER 2015 – 21 JANUARY 2016

ALONGSIDE THE EXHIBITION

Catalogue of the exhibition, edited by Gilles Feyel, with an introduction by Joseph Belletante, director of the Museum of printing and graphic communication and text by the collector and donor Bernard Gelin, 40 pp 34 x 23 cm, bound in newspaper format (23 x 17), with quadrichrome illustrations. Price 10 €, on sale in the Museum shop or by post.

LECTURE

by Gilles Feyel "From Renaudot's *Gazette* to the Mediapart website: newspapers too have a graphic history". 30 November 2015 at 6.15 pm, Lyon Municipal Archives, entry free.

GUIDED VISITS, WORKSHOPS

Details can be found in the programme of activities in the Presse pages of our site www.imprimerie.lyon.fr

VISUALS

Available for download from the Presse pages of our site www.imprimerie.lyon.fr

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Opening hours:

– Wednesday to Sunday inclusive;
– 10.30 am - 6 pm.

