

PRESS
INFO

November 2021



Press preview:
Tuesday, 16 November 2021, 10:30 am

Opening:
Tuesday, 16 November, 6:30 pm

Pressematerial:
tinguely.ch/en/press-download

Merci Seppi. A wonderful gift
17 November 2021 – 13 March 2022

Josef «Seppi» Imhof was Jean Tinguely's assistant from 1971 until the artist's death in 1991. As Tinguely's closest and most constant companion during those years, he collected a large number of works on paper, including drawings, prints, collages, letters, sketches and carefully executed watercolours – all of which attest to the intensity of the relationship between the artist and his assistant. This exhibition presents the collection of works on paper by Jean Tinguely that Seppi Imhof has kindly donated to the museum. Merci Seppi will run from 17 November 2021 until 13 March 2022.

There are all kinds of stories about Seppi Imhof's work as Tinguely's assistant. Starting with his recruitment in a railway station canteen (where the «really crucial question» was whether he played the Swiss card game Jass), to the accounts of their travels together and the bizarre lodgings they took as well as their visits and meetings with artists like Alexander Calder and Keith Haring – Seppi was almost always there. Hence his vast stock of impressions and fond memories, which he enjoys sharing with others.

Also to be numbered among his souvenirs of that time are the many letters, posters, prints, notes, scraps of paper, instructions, invitations and drawings of various projects that Tinguely (and sometimes Niki de Saint Phalle too) wrote specifically for him or dedicated to him. All are milestones that tell of Seppi's collaboration with his boss and friend on many of Tinguely's major projects of the 1970s and 1980s as well as significant places: Le Cyclop, Le Crocodrome de Zig et Puce, Il Giardino dei Tarocchi, Chaos No. 1, Klamauk, Pit-Stop as well as the towns of Basel, Fribourg and Charlotte where they were built.

After working as a conservator at Museum Tinguely until 2008, Seppi Imhof decided to donate his collection of Tinguely's works on paper to that institution.

The over 400 objects, organised according to theme, place and project, are now the subject of a special exhibition. Viewed as a whole, they visualise the intensity with which these two men worked together – and often actually lived together – for twenty years. It was an almost symbiotic relationship, but one with clearly defined tasks and responsibilities. The exhibition is thus a homage to both our generous donor, Seppi Imhof, and to the friendship between Jean and Seppi that made this wonderful gift possible.

General Information Museum Tinguely:

Exhibition title: Merci Seppi. A wonderful gift

Address: Museum Tinguely | Paul Sacher-Anlage 1 | 4002 Basel

Opening: Tuesday, 16 November 2021, 6:30 pm

Duration: 17 November 2021 – 13 March 2022

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday, daily from 11 am–6 pm

Website: www.tinguely.ch

Social Media: [@museumtinguely](https://twitter.com/museumtinguely) | [#museumtinguely](https://facebook.com/museumtinguely) | [#tinguely](https://instagram.com/tinguely) | [#merciseppi](https://instagram.com/merciseppi)

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Museum Tinguely is subject to the Covid certificate requirement. Therefore, we ask you to present your certificate and your identity card at the entrance.

Caption: Jean Tinguely, Letter collage to Josef Imhof, Sali Sepi / Guet's Neuis, 1975, collage, ball pen and watercolour on paper, 21 x 29.5 cm, Museum Tinguely, Basel, Donation Josef Imhof
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