



Libraries through the lens

Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz, Austria

LOOKING through my catalogue for another festive image to end the year, I landed on the photographs I took of my visit to the Vorarlberg State Library a few years ago, writes photographer and librarian Thomas Guignard.

Since 1985, the library has been located inside the former St Gallus Benedictine monastery on a hillside in Bregenz. The monastery chapel was built by Swiss architect Adolf Gaudy in Historicist style in 1910-11 as an extension to 14th-century Babenwohl Castle, the former residence of the Counts of Bregenz. In 1993, the chapel was desecrated and transformed to become the main reading and events room of the library. The rich plaster and gold

details combine with the colourful spines of books arranged vertiginously along the walls to form a truly impressive space.

The rest of the library, filling out the rest of the former monastery complex, is equally as impressive, for the recent renovation of its spaces as well as its services and collections. A modern “universal” library, it serves both researchers, students and the broader public in well-equipped contemporary spaces. Focused on the Vorarlberg region, collections range from reference works to general interest literature to rare books, manuscripts and incunabula.

I wish all *Information Professional* readers a very happy holiday season, and many library discoveries in the new year!