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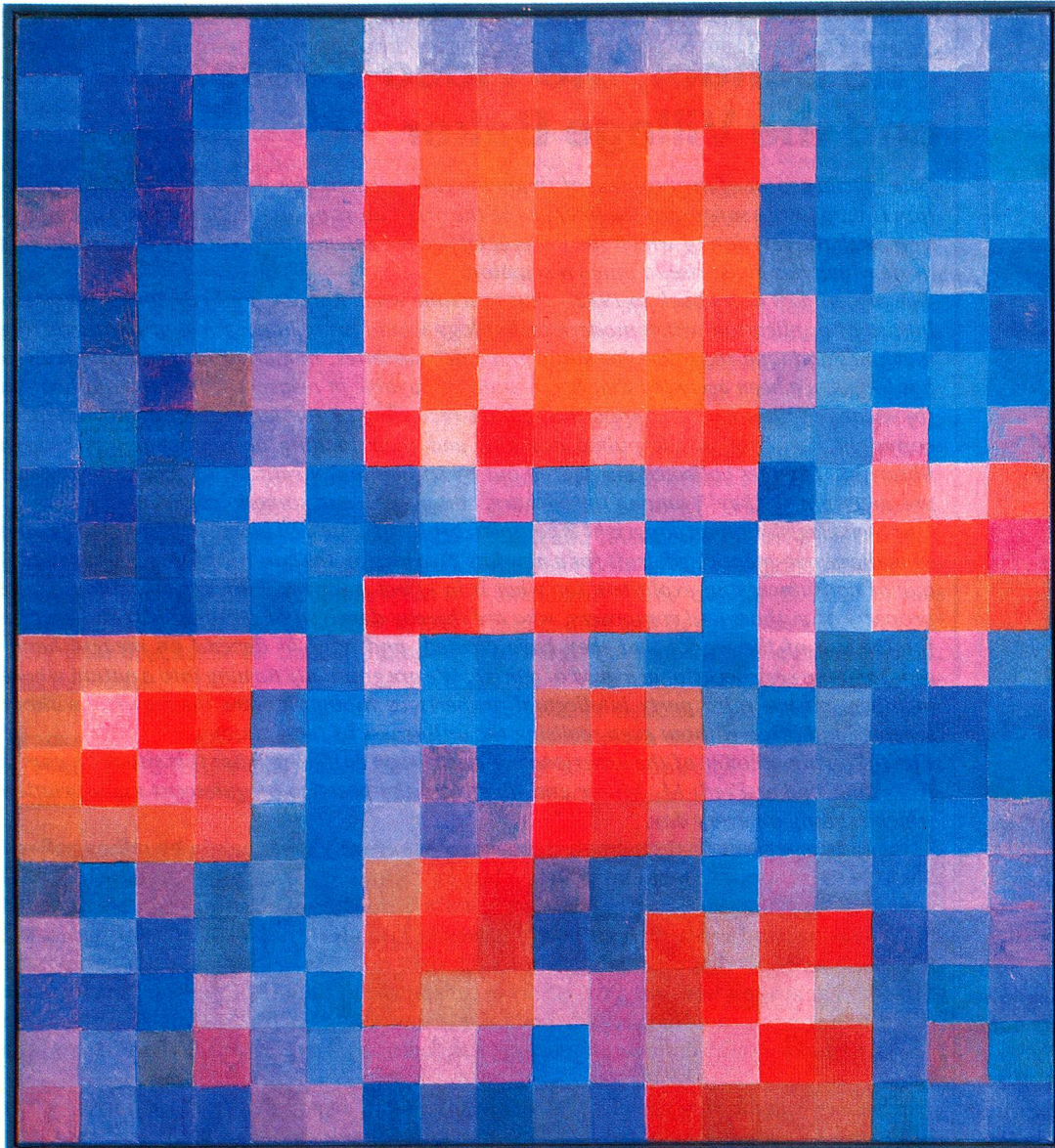
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Art and culture stubbornly elude definition, time and time again. Our picture: Johannes Itten (1888-1967). «Modulation in red and blue», 1964. Oil on canvas. Property of the Swiss Confederation. (Archive photo)

procedural rules applying at that time to referendums). Now the Federal Council is preparing a fresh attempt, and the draft wording of a new article for promotion of culture will before the end of this current year be circulated to all interested institutions for their comments.

Sponsoring and patronage

Let us now return to the important commitment of the private sector towards the furtherance of culture. The bodies and individuals in that sector, whose contributions cannot (and should not) be listed precisely (unlike those of the State), include all those firms and persons that are prepared to incur some expense in return for their enjoyment of works of art. As regards the establishment of prizes in the various fields, one could compile a whole book – opinions range from demands that everything should

“Pro Helvetia” has its 50th birthday

New Horizons

The Federal “Pro Helvetia” Foundation for Cultural Affairs celebrated the 50th anniversary of its existence at the end of last year. In January 1990, the Federal Council elected for the first time a woman as president of the foundation council: the member of the Council of States Rosemarie Simmen from Solothurn.

Originally (1939) set up for the protection of Switzerland’s cultural independence, it developed into the most important instrument of the Confederation in matters of cultural policy. The list of its functions defines for the domestic scene the care of our cultural heritage, the promotion of creative cultural activities, and the furthering of cultural ex-

changes between Switzerland’s linguistic regions, while in connection with foreign countries its task is the overall care of cultural relations.

The increasing mutual interdependence of the countries, the radical changes in Europe and the dialogue with the peoples of the Third World have not failed to exert influence on Pro Helvetia: there is little doubt that its activities in relation to other countries will soon open up wider horizons than those relating to domestic matters, where it seems mainly concerned with allocating subsidies and tackling the problem of the so-called “Röschigraben”. The financial resources of the Foundation are limited and considerably more aid from the Federal authorities is urgently needed.

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