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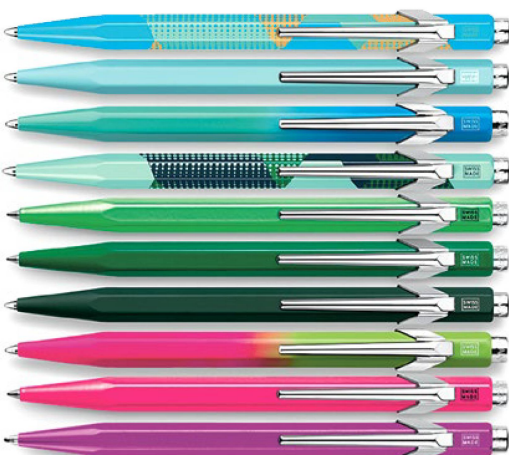
From small pencil factory to global brand

“Hopefully every Swiss living abroad will soon be using Swiss Caran d’Ache pencils to support the economy back home,” wrote the “Correspondenzblatt für die Schweizer und Schweizervereine im Auslande” in 1925. Geneva-based pencil manufacturer Caran d’Ache – still a fledgling company in those days – had just opened a shop in Berlin. This was the beginning of a success story that saw Swiss writing and colouring products become a global hit. Freelance author Ralph Brühwiler tells the story of Caran d’Ache in a new, lavishly illustrated book. His evocatively written chronicle contains a wealth of facts and details. Company founder Arnold Schweitzer, an industrialist from eastern Switzerland, features prominently – Brühwiler describing him as a kindly businessman who experienced his fair share of setbacks. The author also explains why the company name transliterates the Russian for pencil, how the company’s laboratories and workshops became a conveyor belt for new products, and why Caran d’Ache pencils are just as popular among Swiss school children as they are among famous artists. Caran d’Ache is a global brand these days, and is still owned by three Swiss families.

SUSANNE WENGER

The Neocolor wax pastel crayon was brought to market in 1952. Artist Pablo Picasso soon began using it for his sketches. (CdA company archive)

“Die Caran d’Ache Saga. Von Genf in die Welt.” (The Caran d’Ache Saga – the story of a global Geneva brand) NZZ Libro 2020 (in German), 264 pages; CHF 49



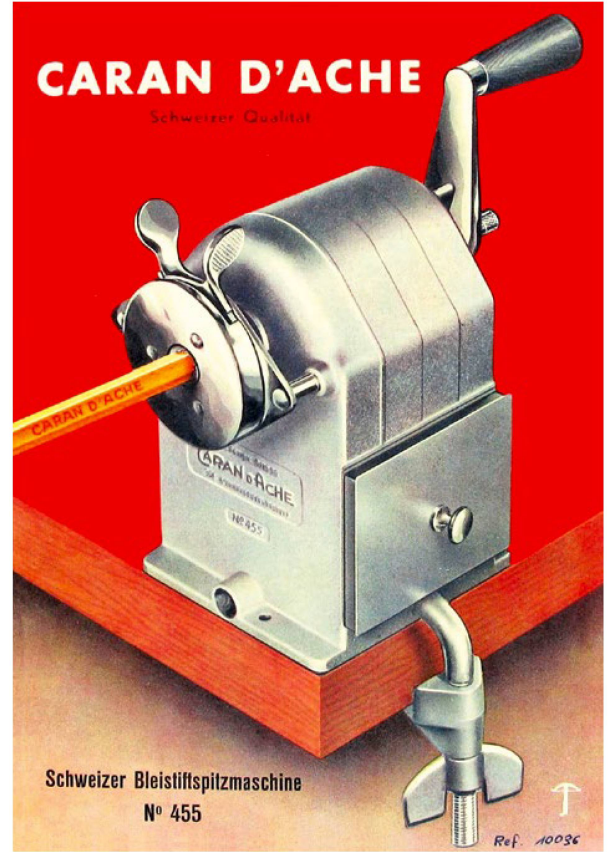
“A contemporary writing fashion statement” – the ballpoint pen that came to be known as 849 from the 1960s onwards. (CdA company archive)



Caran d’Ache developed the Prismo watercolour colouring pencil in the 1930s. The cases containing multicoloured rows of pencils were popular among generations of Swiss children. (RB)



Pencil rocket – Caran d’Ache went on an advertising offensive at the end of 1920s. (CdA company archive)



The iconic Caran d’Ache pencil-sharpening machine was a common feature in Swiss school classrooms during the post-war years. (CdA company archive)



Caran d’Ache patented the Fixpencil in 1930. This new form of mechanical pencil was particularly popular among technical illustrators. (CdA company archive)



The Ecrivor – millions of these luxurious hexagonal pens were sold from 1953. (CdA company archive)