

A training system for the graphic designer

The problems with which the graphic designer of today is faced demand an exhaustive knowledge of his materials, keen interest in the problems of production and understanding of the questions of market research and advertising. The designer must carry part of the responsibility for the success of the form and method of the advertising. His work should be well thought out and clearly designed, the sole purpose of the medium being to clarify the idea, the direct statement of which should determine the character of the imagery. All graphic work based on these principles presupposes some understanding of the rules governing design, typography, photography and illustration. The method of training which I have established in the graphic design faculty of the Zurich School of Applied Arts has been built up in accordance with these views. The course takes four years and the curriculum includes lettering, typography, photography, graphic design, life drawing, methods of reproduction and exhibition design. During the course industrial design problems are also tackled. The first year is devoted to the study of basic questions of form, the rules of typography and the rudiments of photography. The knowledge acquired is then put into practice by means of a simple exercise, the solution to which is to be found in the nature of the problem itself. A number of actual commissions which have been assigned to the school by various industrial and cultural organizations are carried out during the second and third years. It is, however, a matter of principle that no piece of work should be attempted which does not conform to the aims of the training course in terms of scope and subject. Such tasks enable the student to judge whether his work is in accordance with current practice. At the same time through direct contact with the client he becomes acquainted with those problems of production and marketing upon which his considerations must be based, and his knowledge of the technical processes is fostered by his association with the block-makers and printers who carry out his

design. During the fourth year all the experience the student has gained both practically and as an artist is summed up in two pieces of work each occupying one term. Each student is given the task of designing all the printed matter required by a specific firm for both internal and external use, all the advertising matter, the lettering on the facade of the building and on the delivery van, the neon sign and a small exhibition. In the second half of the fourth year he has to do a similar piece of work, though for a different firm. This gives him an opportunity to correct any mistakes and omissions he may have made in the first exercise and to profit from his experience.

The student has no choice in the kind of leaflets, prospectuses, etc., which he has to design for the firm assigned to him. He must get in touch with the manager or head of the advertising department; in order to be well informed as to the character of the firm the student is advised to study the style of the building both inside and outside and to make himself familiar with details such as the furniture, hangings, colour schemes, etc., as well as with the form and design of the products.

In this way the students learn to emancipate themselves from ideas which are too remote from life and to arrive at a proper evaluation of their future professional products of the four-years course. The grouping is not strictly chronological but has been arranged more or less according to subject.

The first important exercise for the student who has just joined the graphic design faculty requires him to grasp and define the laws of proportion both theoretically and concretely, and to apply them. This exercise, which is illustrated by drawings and photographs of completed models involves the following important individual problems:

a) Eight circles of varying size are to be drawn in proportion to one another. These proportions must correspond to a logical principle and must also make a visual aesthetic impact.

b) Each of the eight circles must be placed within a square field. The eight squares must be so arranged on the sheet of drawing paper that they themselves, the intervals between them and the margins are all determined by a defined unit of proportion.

c) A composition is to be built up from the eight circles and this composition must have a logical or formal basis and must be aesthetically satisfying. The intervals between the circular shapes must follow defined proportions.

d) The composition with the eight circles is to be regarded as the ground plan of eight three-dimensional bodies. The shape and size of these bodies are to be defined. Each dimension again must conform to a logical system of proportion.

e) The student is to carry out the three-dimensional composition unaided in a material of his own choice (wood, metal, synthetic material, etc.) in so far as this is possible. In order to carry out this work the student must be extremely careful and precise in handling the material. This stimulates his feeling for its nature and for the use of his tools.

In order to emphasise the factors and conditions that are considered valuable in these exercises, some of the models have been specially singled out for their proportions and formal relationships. One example shows how eight different large metal discs have been arranged on a square ground. The four larger forms are organised in the same way as the four small ones, the diameter of the largest disc corresponds to the height of the tallest pillar, the diameter of the next largest equals the height of the second tallest pillar.

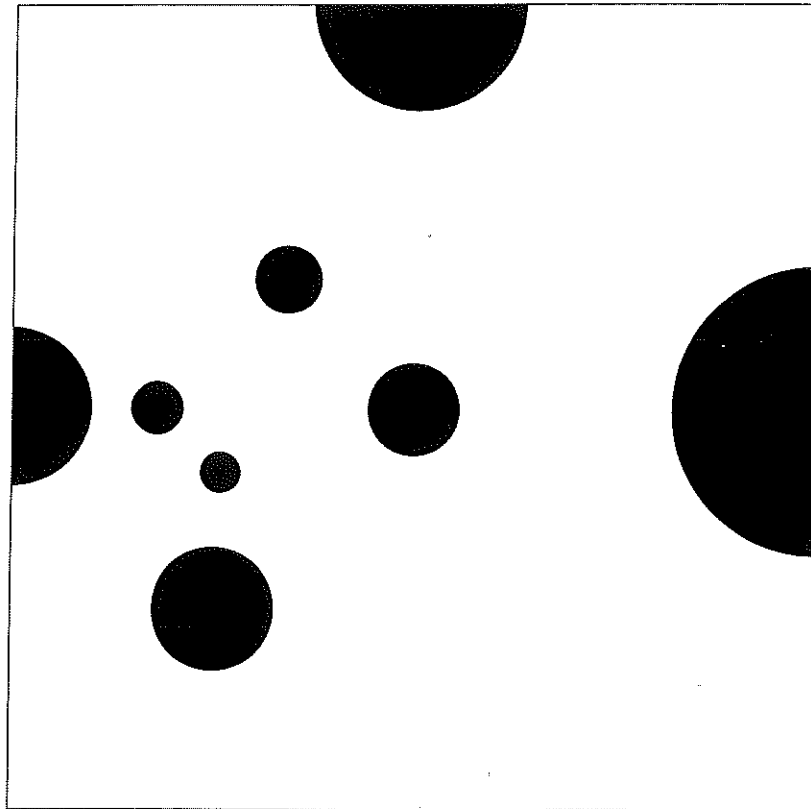
In a second model the proportions of the discs are differently ordered from those of the model already described. Here all the circular components penetrate the upright members, the largest disc by about $\frac{1}{10}$ of the wall thickness, the second largest by about $\frac{2}{10}$ of the

wall thickness, the third largest by $\frac{3}{10}$, etc. The circular forms are of the same thickness as the upright members. In this way depressions occur at the back of the wall which are the same dimensions as the projections on the front. The position of the upright in relation to the ground area was determined optically. The depressions at the back make a closer approach possible. The space required is relatively small, whereas the front with its projections demands to be looked at from a distance and consequently takes up more space. The other illustrations show other solutions to basically similar tasks. The object of these exercises is to make the student familiar with the range of formal design possibilities.

Exercises such as these are followed by problems relating to surface division, letter forms and composition. Simple typographical exercises are succeeded by design problems that include the use of photography and illustration. The models illustrated show the results of this method of training. They reveal a close connection with the requirements of practical graphic design.

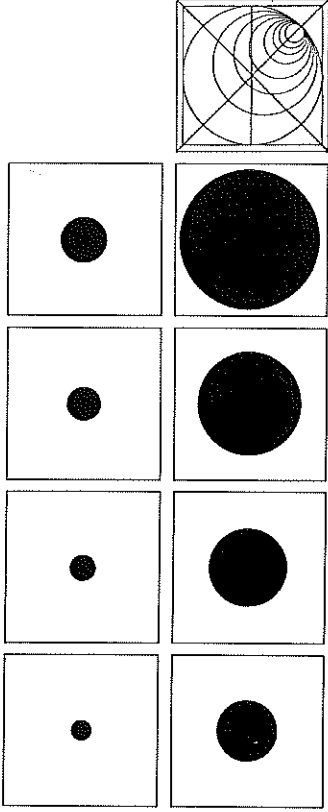
There may be other methods for training the graphic designer* but those described here have proven their worth. It seemed to us important to document the wide scope of a training system which is only experimental to a certain degree. Most of the work reflects the requirements of the clients.

Plastische Proportionsarbeiten
Exercises in three dimensions
Les proportions dans les travaux

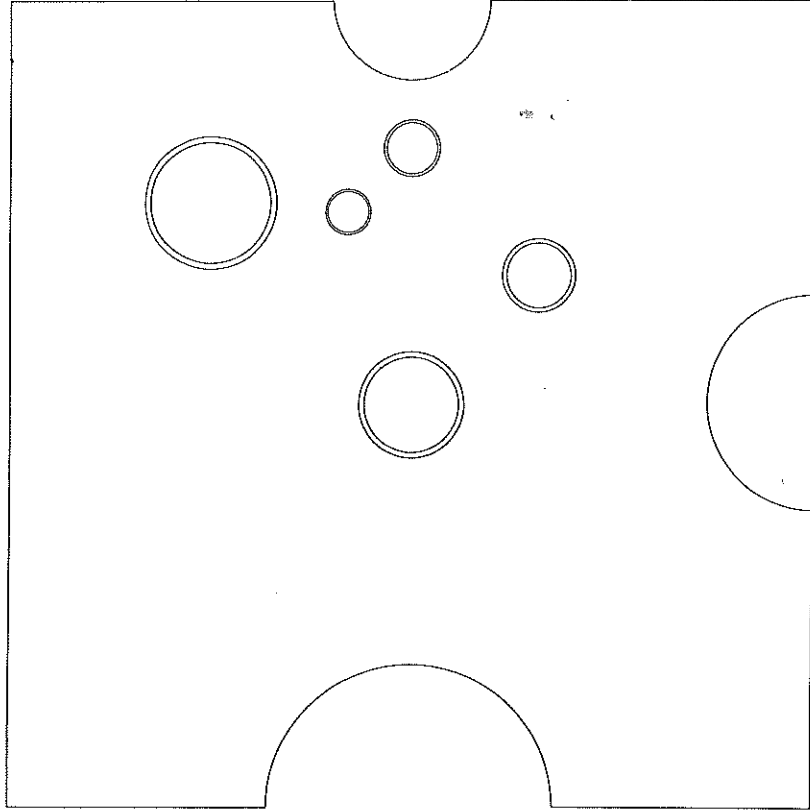


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Gianfranco Verna
Die Kreisflächen sind auf einem Quadrat nach einem bestimmten Proportionsnenner angeordnet. The circles are arranged in a square according to a defined unit of proportion. Les surfaces des disques sont ordonnées sur un carré d'après une proportion donnée.



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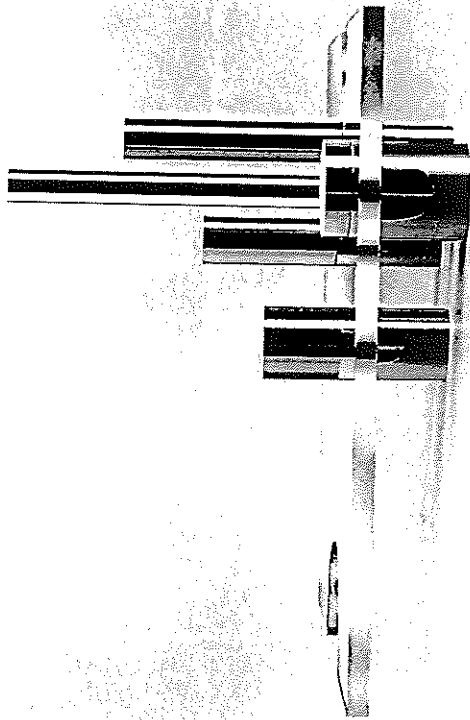


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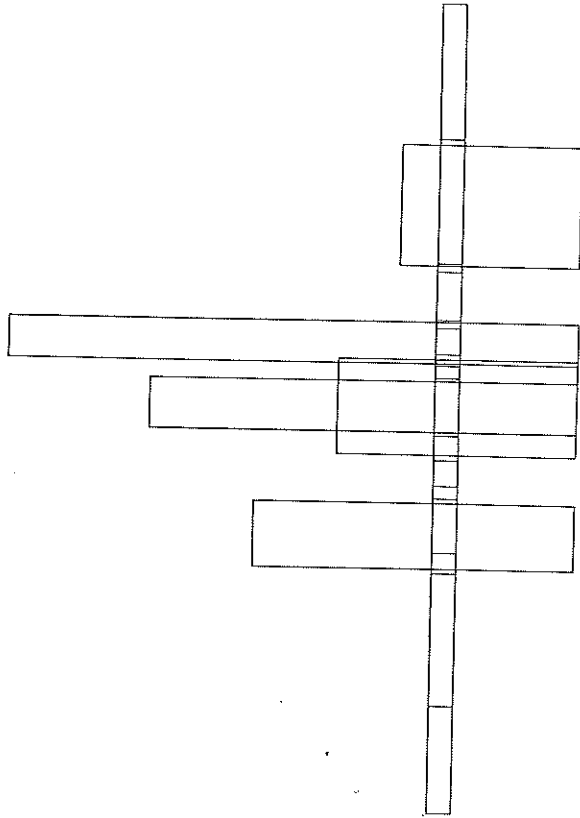
531
Gianfranco Verna
Rechts die Konstruktionszeichnung zur Bestimmung der Kreisflächen-Formate; links die zur optischen Beurteilung nebeneinander aufgereihten Kreisflächen. On the right the construction determining the size and proportions of the circles; on the left the circles arranged next to

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each other for critical consideration. A droite, le dessin de construction qui détermine les formats des surfaces des disques; à gauche, disques alignés pour l'appréciation optique.

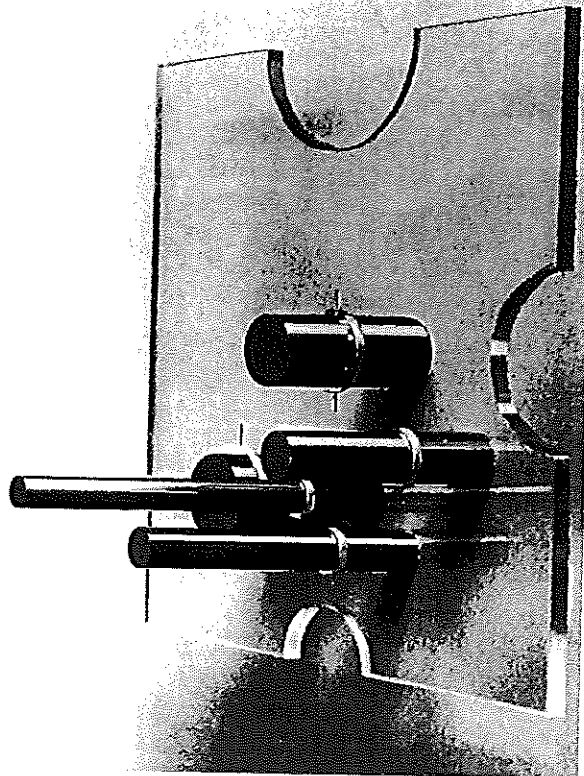


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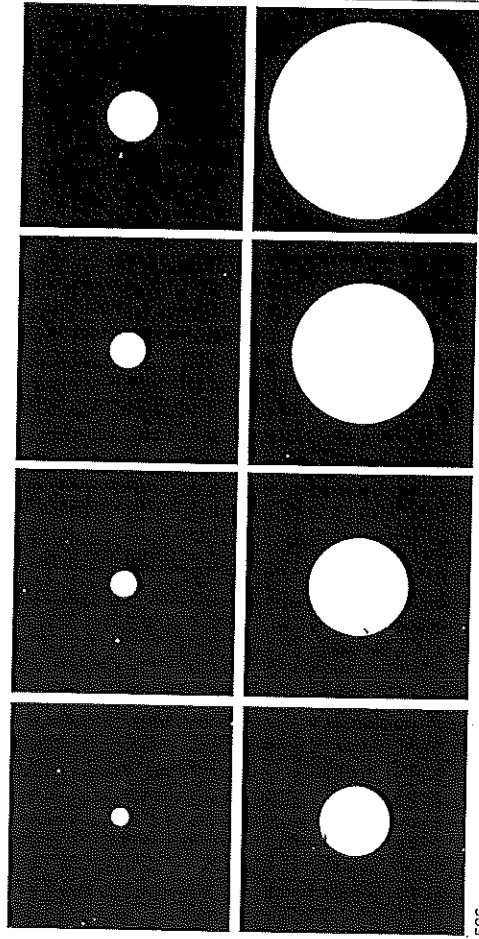
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532, 533
Gianfranco Verna
Grundrisszeichnung und Aufriss, ground plan
and sketch, schéma de base et croquis

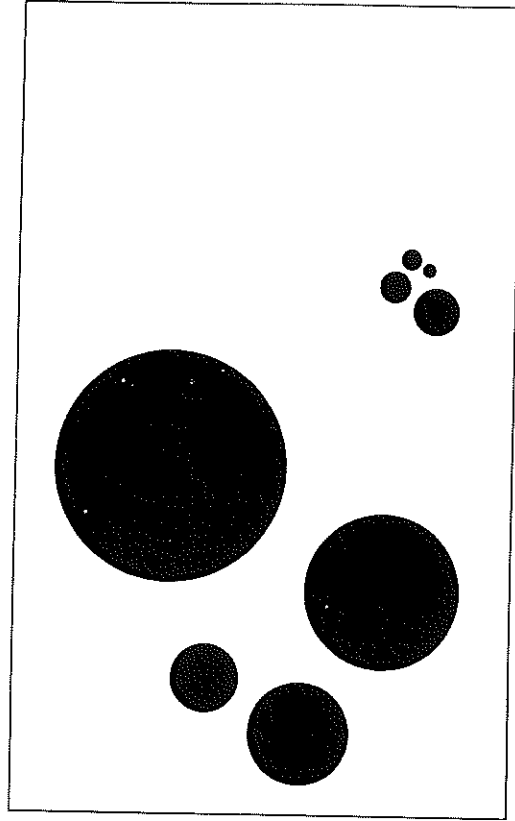
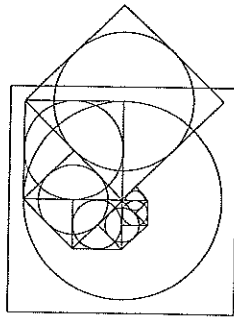


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534, 535
Gianfranco Verna
Modell nach den Konstruktionszeichnungen in
Plexiglas und Metall ausgeführt, model in plexi-
glass and metal carried out from the construc-
tion, modèle exécuté en plexiglas et métal d'a-
près les dessins de construction.



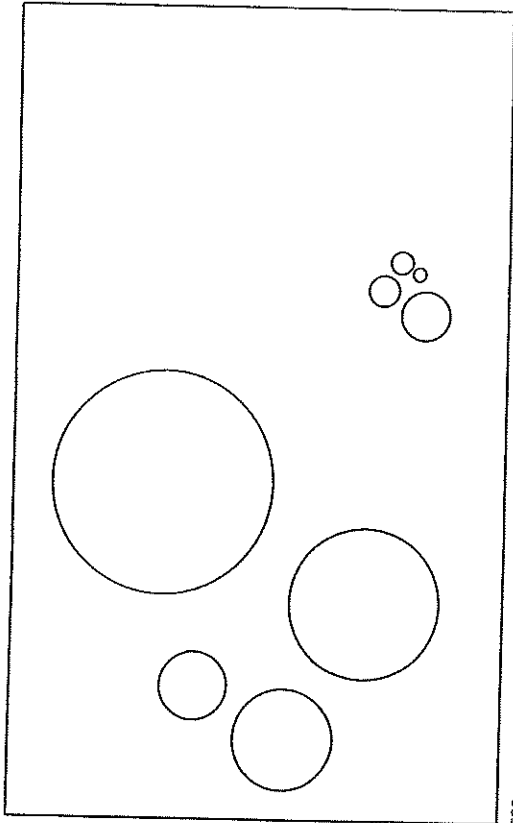
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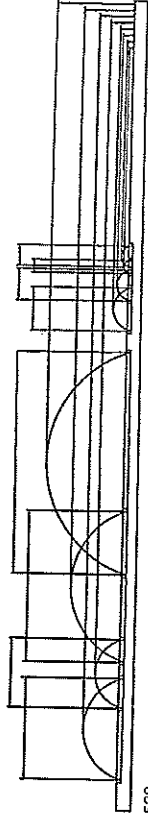
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Christine Kohler
Konstruktionszeichnungen und 8 entsprechen-
de Kreisflächen, construction and 8 correspon-
ding circles, dessin de construction et 8 disques
correspondants

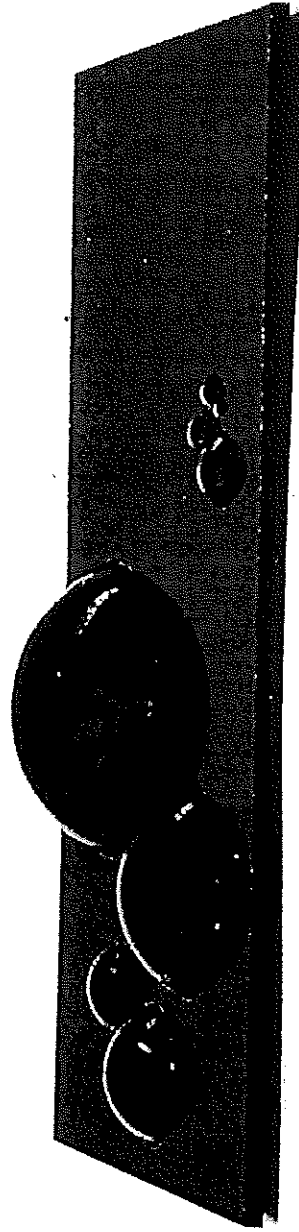
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Christine Kohler
Anordnung der 8 Kreisflächen im Rechteck,
arrangement of the 8 circles in the rectangle,
arrangement des 8 disques dans le rectangle



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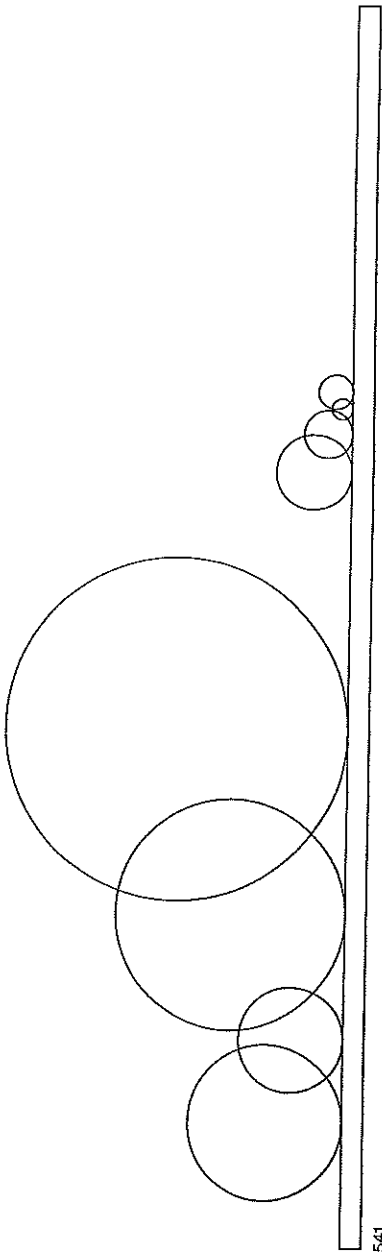
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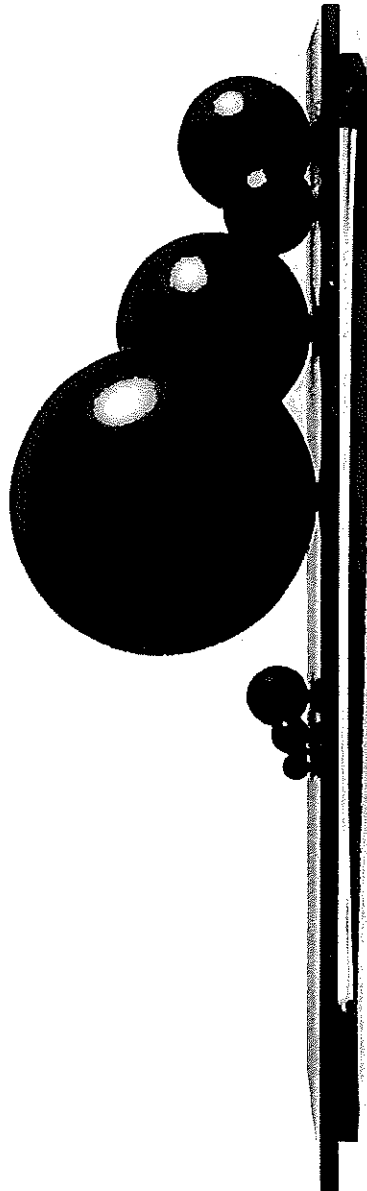
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538, 539
Christine Kohler
Grundrisszeichnung und Aufriss, ground plan
and sketch, schéma de base et croquis

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Christine Kohler
Modell nach diesen Zeichnungen, model made
according to illustrations, modèle exécuté d'a-
près ces dessins



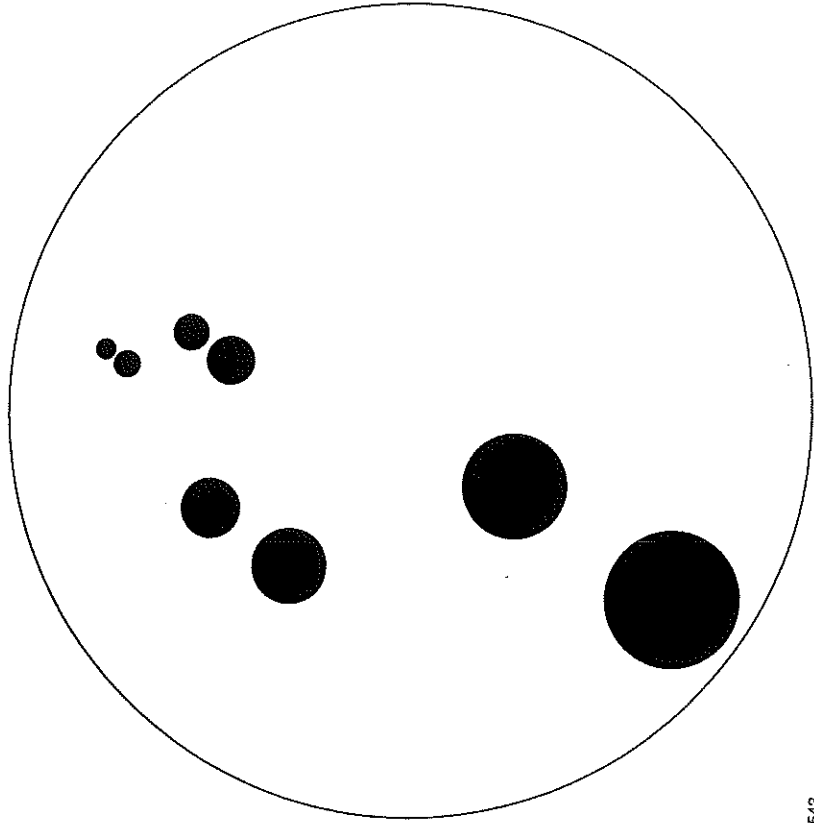
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Christine Kohler
Aufzeichnung zur Herstellung des folgenden Modells, sketch for setting up the following model, croquis pour la construction du modèle suivant

542
Christine Kohler
Modell, model, modèle

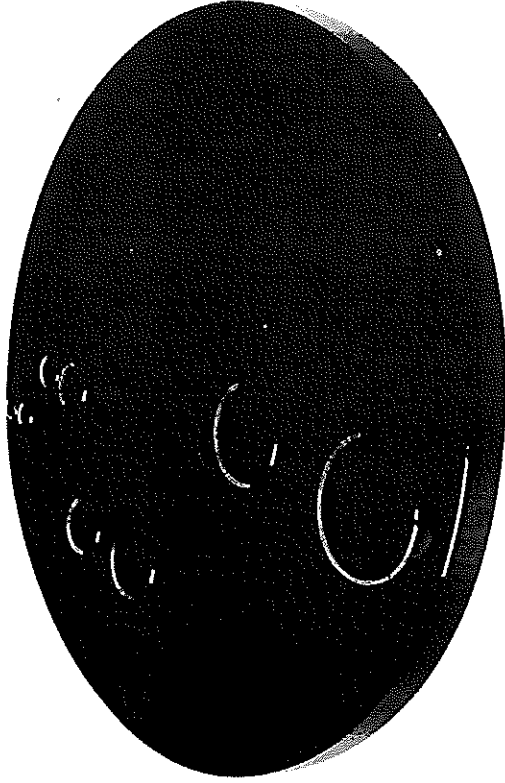


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Alois Márchy
Zeichnung einer nach dem System des Schü-
lers gelundenen Proportion der Kreisflächen
und Anordnung im grossen Kreis der Grundflä-
che. Illustration of the circles arranged on a
large circular ground according to a scale of
proportion evolved by the student. Dessin d'une

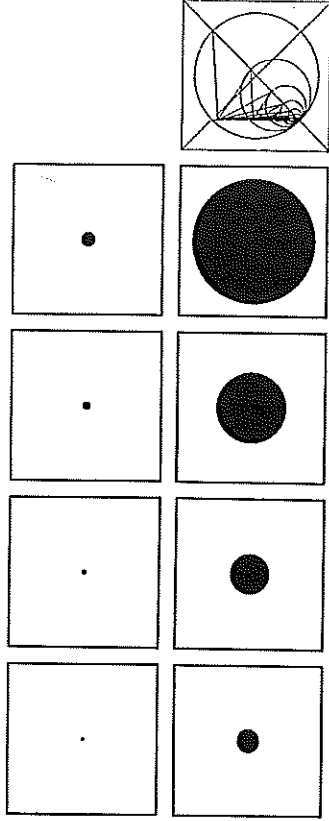
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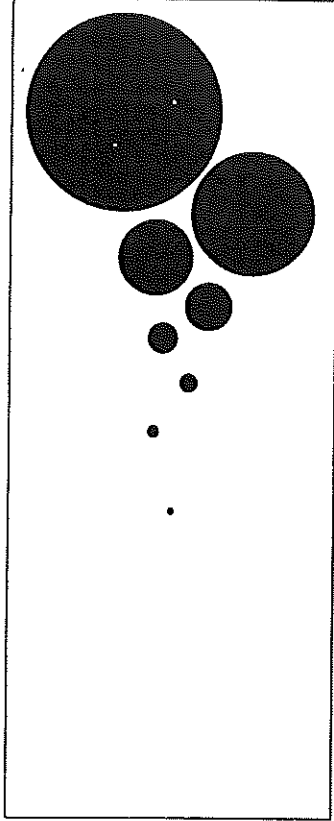
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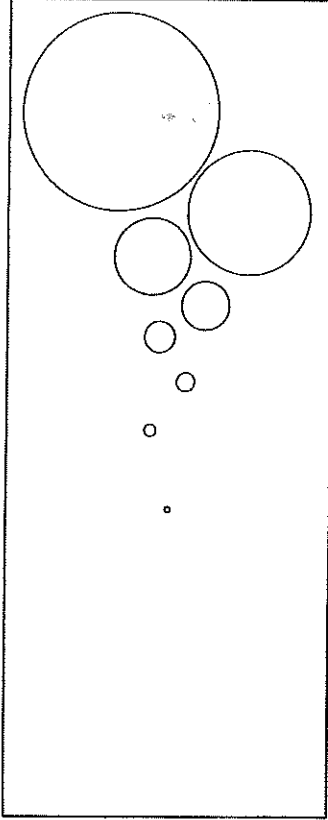
Alois Márchy
Modell nach dieser Zeichnung, modell made ac-
cording to illustration, modèle d'après ce dessin



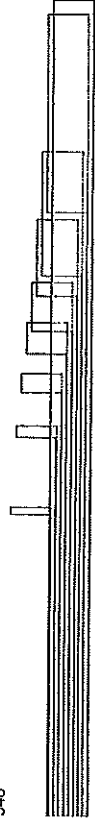
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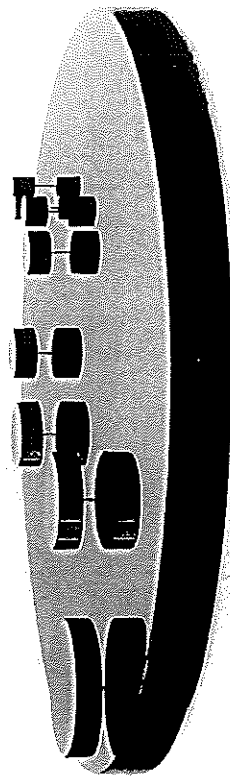
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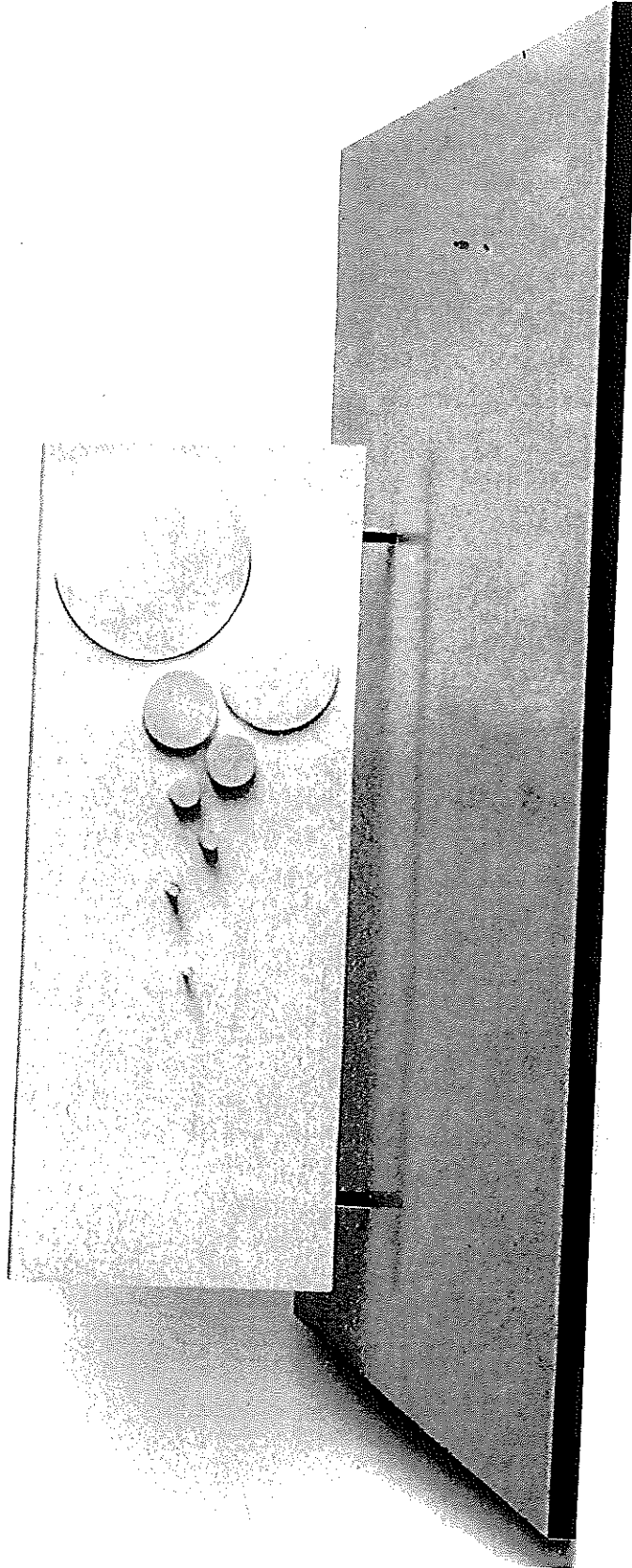


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Alois Mářchy
Modell nach dieser Zeichnung, model made ac-
cording to illustration, modèle d'après ce dessin

546-551
Felix Flamspeck
Dieses Modell ist von Anfang an zur Vertikalauf-
stellung konzipiert worden. Die auf der Vorder-
seite reliefartig vorstossenden Kreisflächen ent-
sprechen den auf der Rückseite in denselben
Proportionen und in der gleichen Position an-
geordneten kreisförmigen Vertiefungen, sodass

sich der Eindruck einer Durchdringung ergibt.
Die Proportionen der Kreisflächen zueinander,
des Kreisflächensystems zur Rechteckfläche,
der Modelldicke und Abhebung von der Fläche
sowie das Verhältnis der vertikalen Wand zur
Grundplatte - sie alle sind nach ganz bestimm-
ten Gesetzen ausgewogen und entsprechen den
konstruktiven und emotional sich ergebenden



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formalen und dreidimensionalen Werten. This model was conceived as a vertical structure from the outset. The circular relieflike projections on the front correspond to the circular depressions on the back, which occupy the same position and are of the same proportions, thus giving the impression of passing right through the wall of the model. The proportions of the cir-

cular areas to each other, and of the combined circles to the rectangular area, of the width of the model and its elevation from the ground area, as well as the relation of the vertical wall to the base, all follow defined, carefully thought out rules, and both constructively and emotionally are expressive of formal three-dimensional values. Ce modèle avait été conçu primitivement

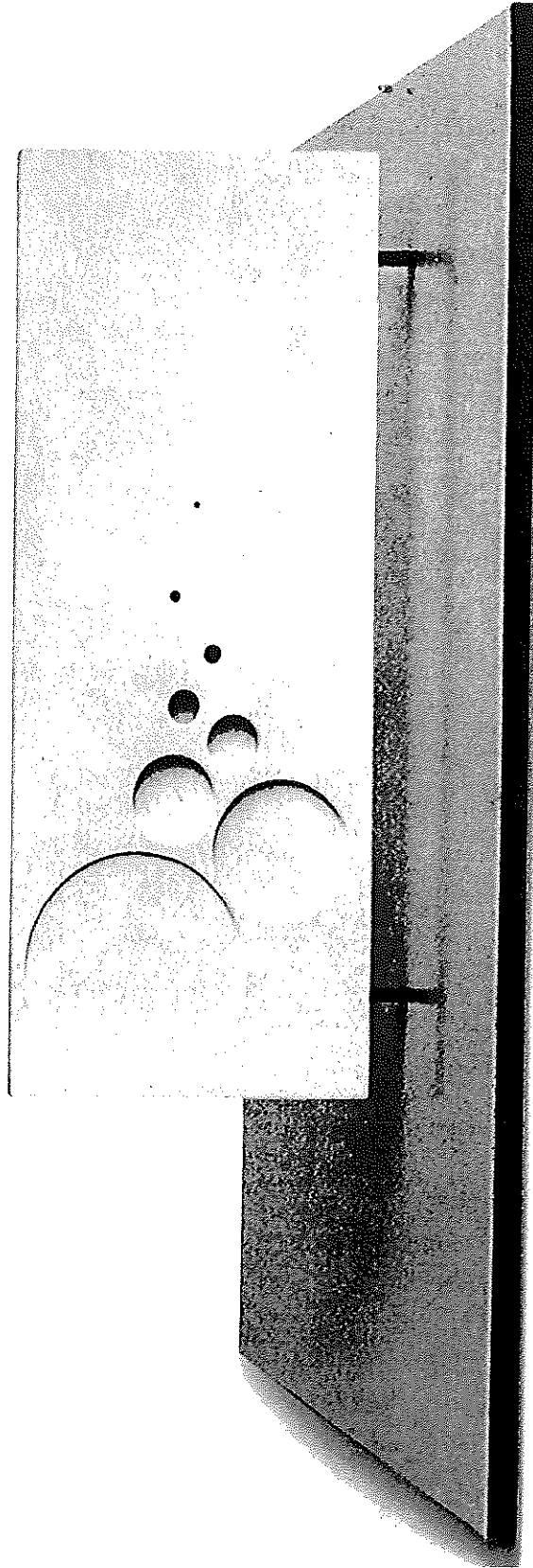
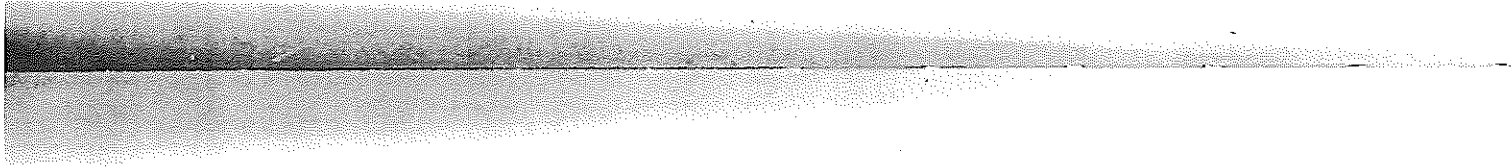
pour être placé à la verticale. Les surfaces en relief sur la partie devant correspondant, sur l'envers, dans les mêmes proportions et dans la même position, à des creux ordonnés en forme de cercle de telle sorte que cela crée une impression de pénétration. Les proportions des superficies les unes par rapport aux autres, du

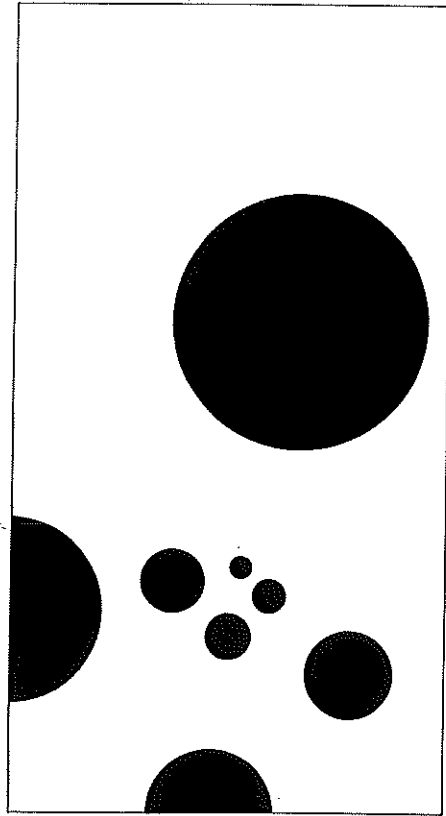
des rectangulaires, de l'épaisseur du modèle contrastant avec la surface, ainsi que le rapport de la paroi verticale avec la plaque du fond, tout est régi par des lois tout à fait équilibrées et correspondant aux valeurs qui s'expriment par la forme et l'espace.

Systematische
Grafikerausbildung

A training system
for the graphic designer

Formation méthodique
des graphistes



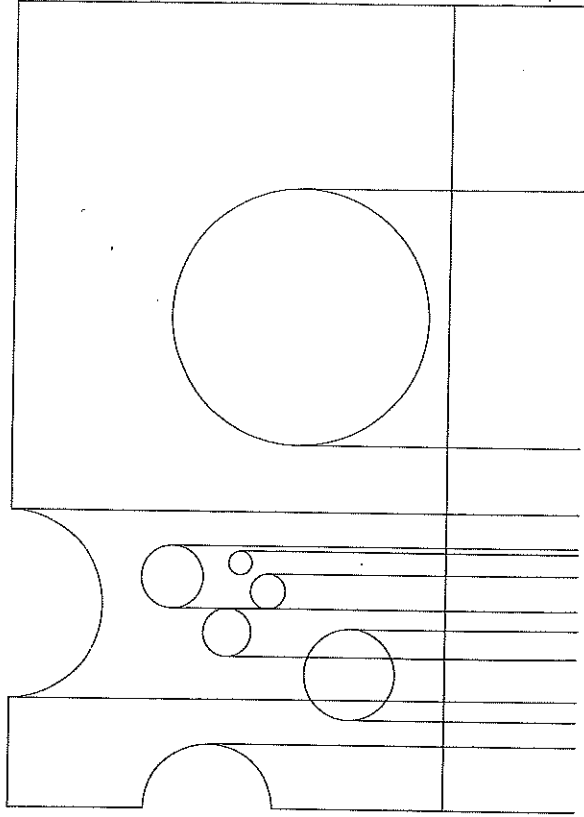


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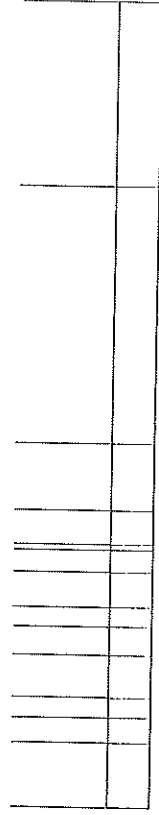
Eduard Müller

Die Kreisflächen sind so in die Rechteckfläche gesetzt, dass sich eine spannungsvolle Beziehung ergibt. The circles are arranged within the rectangle, according to a specific constructive unit, resulting in a taut design. Les disques sont

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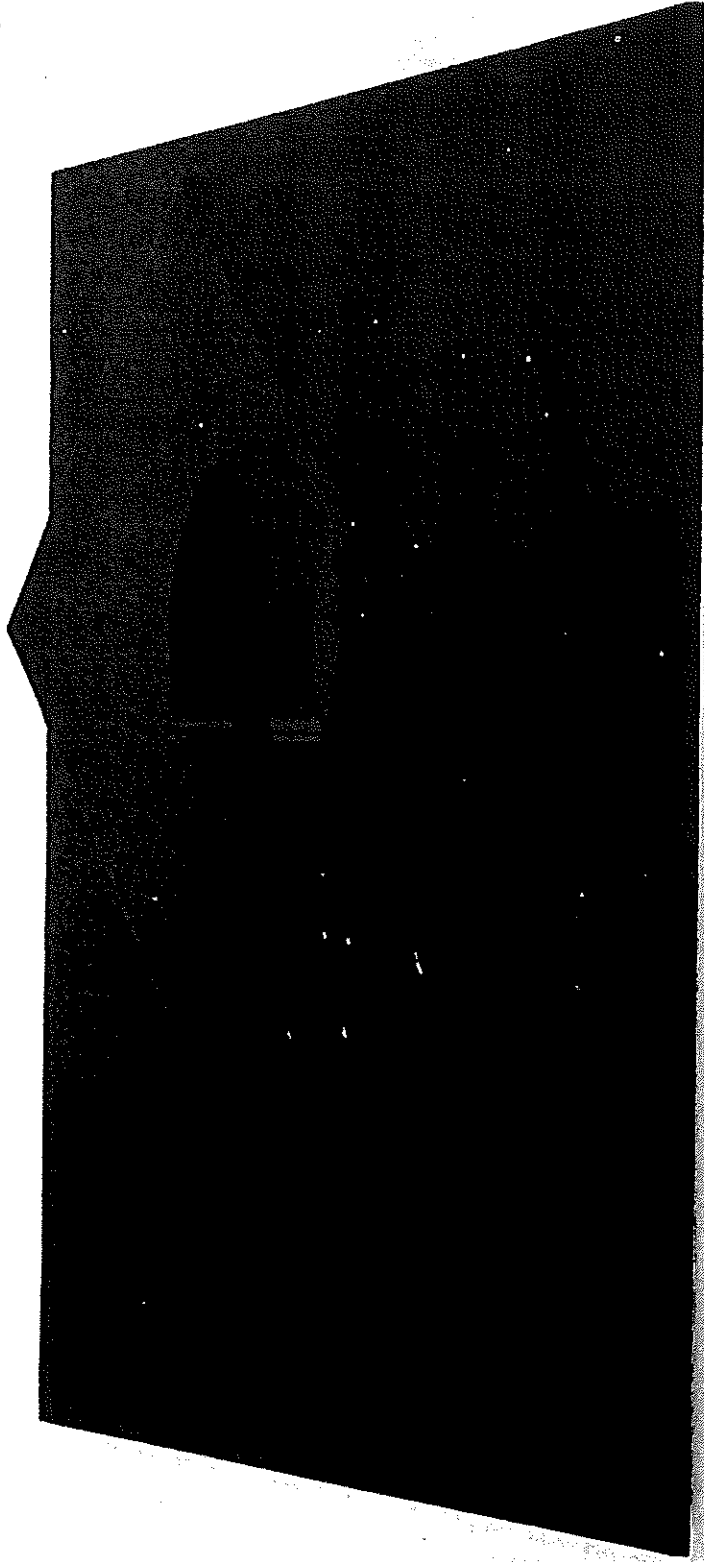


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553, 554

Eduard Müller

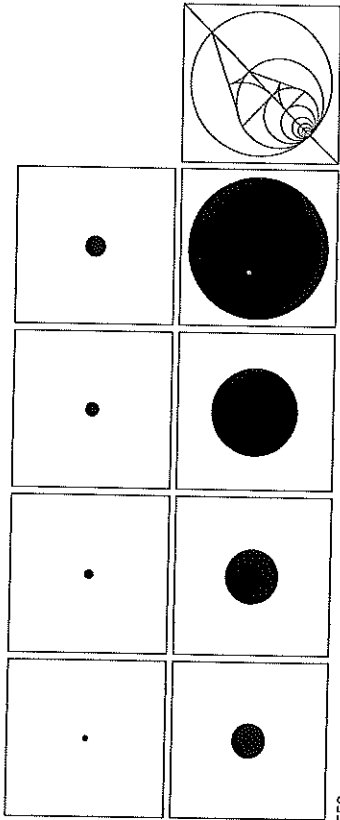
Grundrisszeichnung und Aufriss, ground plan and sketch, schéma de base et croquis



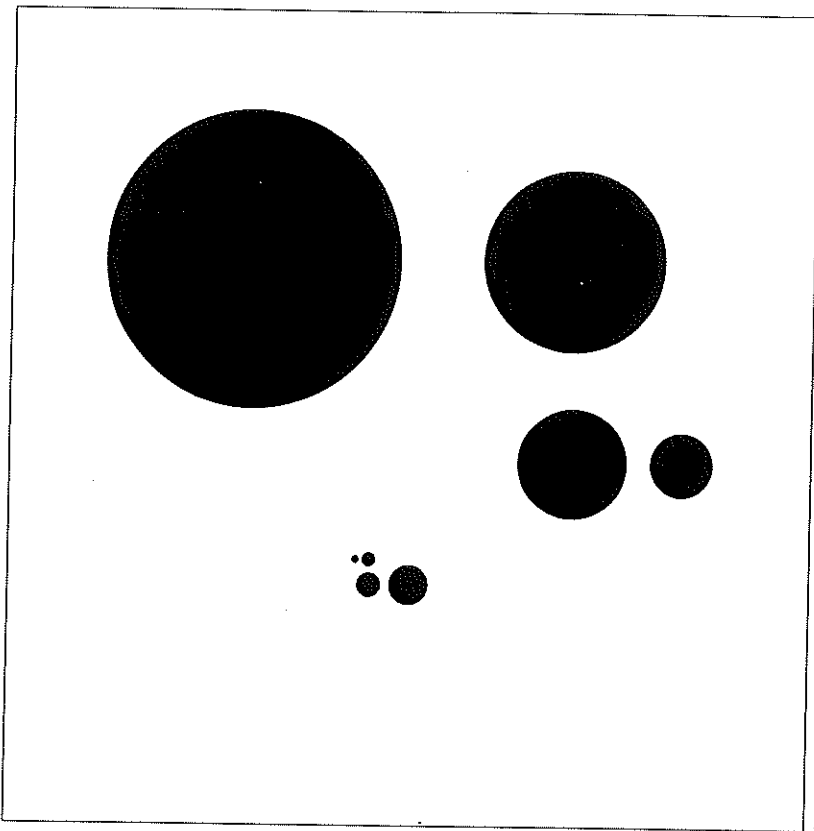
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Eduard Müller
Plastisches Modell, ausgeführt nach den Zeichnungen. Plastic model carried out in accordance with the illustrations. Modèle plastique exécuté d'après les dessins.



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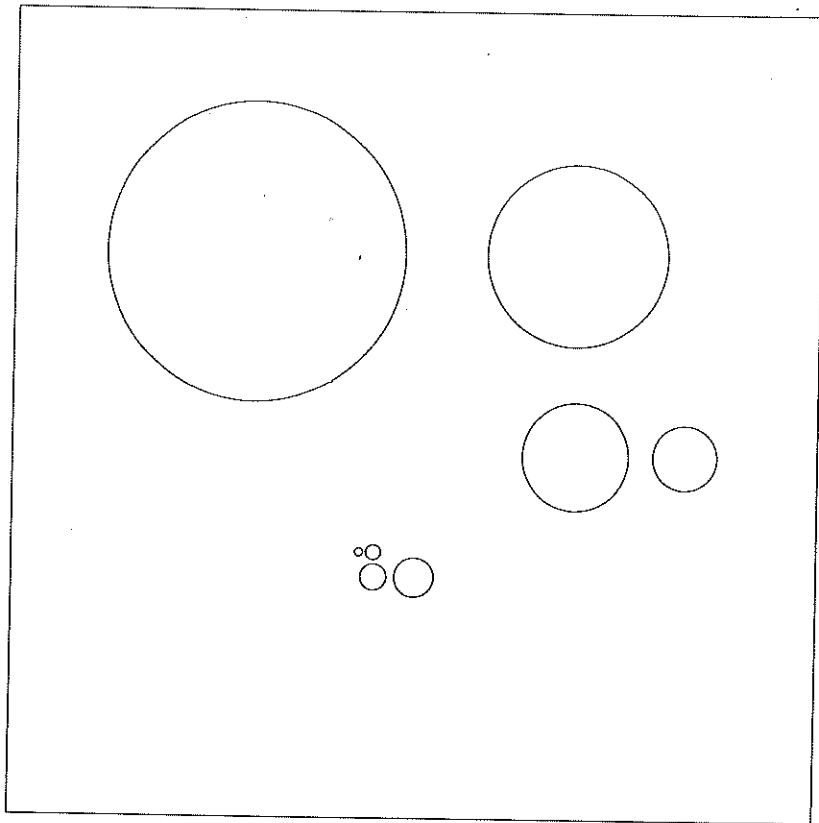
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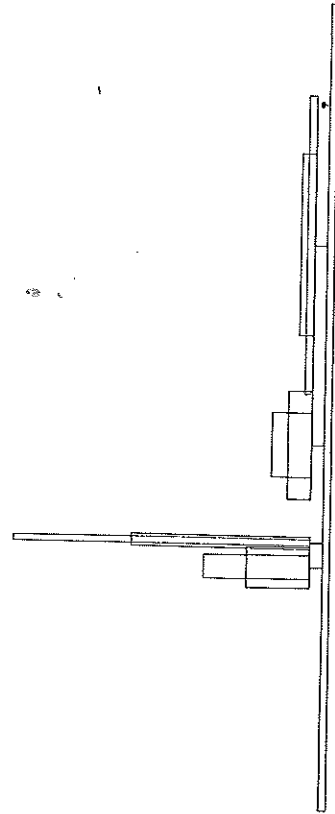
Piroska Kovács

Rechts Konstruktion zur Bestimmung der Kreisflächen, links die nebeneinander aufgereihten Kreisflächen. On the right the construction to determine the circles, on the left the corresponding circles. A droite dessins de construction

pour déterminer les disques, à gauche les disques correspondants.



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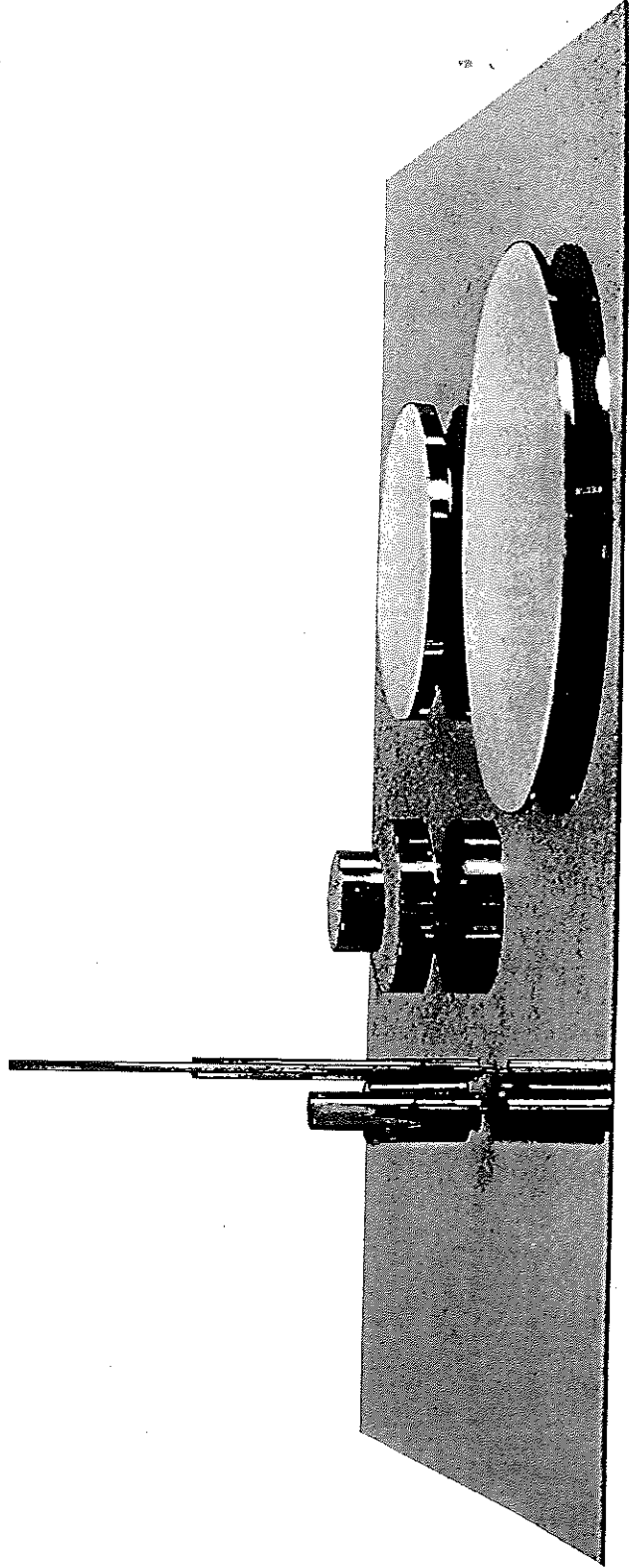
Piroska Kovács

Die Kreisflächen sind in einer bestimmten Proportion angeordnet. The circles are placed in the ground in order of proportion. Les disques sont placés sur le fond dans un ordre proportionnel.

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Piroska Kovács

Grundrisszeichnung und Aufriss, ground plan and sketch, schéma de base et croquis



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Pirooska Kovács
Plastisches Modell, plastic model, modèle
plastique

