

Plakat, Tonhalle – Beethoven, 1955  
Erscheinungsland: Schweiz  
Gestaltung: Josef Müller Brockmann  
Auftrag: Tonhalle-Gesellschaft, Zürich, CH  
Material/Technik: Offset  
127.5 x 90 cm  
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK



With his work for the Zurich Tonhalle from 1950 to 1972, Josef Müller-Brockmann (1914–1996) created totally novel visual accents for the concert poster. For the performance of Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture, Müller-Brockmann designed a poster in 1955 that, with its balanced use of geometric shapes and precisely positioned typography, is one of the highlights of his work.

Josef Müller-Brockmann's concert posters for the Zurich Tonhalle at first met with fierce criticism on the part of the broader public. His choice to translate classical music into a harmonious rhythm of geometric elements was at the time still too unusual. There are countless preparatory studies for the Beethoven poster, which was developed over a period of about two months. They compellingly demonstrate how Müller-Brockmann struggled to come up with the final composition. The first sketches still show closed circles that are distributed over the entire picture surface. Müller-Brockmann then broke these up into arcs. Starting from the innermost arc, they repeat toward the edge of the picture, doubling in width, each arc in a ratio of 1:2 from the previous one. The purely

informative text is all lowercase in accordance with the rules of the New Typography. The left edge of the main text block forms a vertical axis that is continued by one of the lower and one of the upper arcs. The Beethoven poster captivates with its sophisticated balance of mathematical logic and visual experimentation. At the same time, it shows to what extent Müller-Brockmann engaged with the music that was being performed, searching for an adequate visualization of the listening experience. The conflicted hero Coriolan, oscillating between temperamental outbursts and straightforward actions, is expressed in Beethoven's overture as well as in Müller-Brockmann's poster. (Bettina Richter)

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/tonhalle-beethoven/>