

# Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schwyz.

## **Traditional Swiss Costumes on the Catwalk**

22 may – 17 october 2010

Special exhibition at the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz

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## **Traditional Swiss Costume Exhibition in Schwyz**

**In an exciting new special exhibition the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz presents a selection of historical 19<sup>th</sup> century traditional costumes. These folk costumes were originally accessioned by the Swiss National Museum for its collection on the occasion of its opening in 1898 and upon initiative of the Zurich ethnologist and specialist on folk costumes, Julie Heierli (1859–1938). The Forum of Swiss History Schwyz is now showing selected pieces from the collection against the backdrop of a unique scenography and in a new context.**

With these historically and culturally significant costumes in view, the exhibition addresses the question in what way these traditional costumes hold interest for modern textile designers, and to what extent traditional artisanship and textile techniques serve as a source of reflection and inspiration in their work today. For example, in the exhibition a fashionable pinafore dress is brought together with a 'Coifli' bonnet from Schwyz, a historical type of fancy headgear. 19<sup>th</sup> century traditional costumes are juxtaposed to wooden folk-costume mannequins carved in the Brienzer style which were manufactured specially for the Swiss national exhibition in 1939 – the famous 'Landi'. The comparison reveals how, from the 1920s on, traditional costumes became increasingly standardized and, at the same time, ideologically appropriated, not least due to the influence of Ernst Laur who later also became chairman of the Swiss Folk Costume Association. The portraits from the folk costume cycle created by the Lucerne painter Joseph Reinhart as well as sketches by the Zurich artist Ludwig Vogel give the viewer a good impression of what traditional costumes looked like in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Photographs, photocrom prints and postcards from the Fin de Siècle provide evidence of the growing popularity of traditional costumes as motifs for the picture card series *Costumes Suisses*.

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During the Swiss Traditional Costume Festival 2010 in Schwyz, the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz is going to invite men and women in their folk costumes to the museum – actually to a real photo shoot on the catwalk! In August and September folk costume groups from Schwyz and Appenzell will feature as guests at the museum and host workshops, providing visitors a chance to learn something about the secrets of traditional artisanship.

## **Exhibition publication**

The exhibition is complemented by a booklet which provides useful knowledge on the state of the art in current research on traditional costumes. It contains articles by Thomas Antonietti, ethnographer and curator at the Valais History Museum in Sion and at the Lötschentaler Museum in Kippel; Birgit Langenegger, ethnographer and curator at the Museum Appenzell; Marianne Gächter, museologist and curator; and Sigrid Pallmert, curator at the Swiss National Museum in Zurich.

“Traditional Swiss Costumes on the Catwalk” - The booklet to the special exhibition is available in four languages (G/F/I/E) at the museum shop. Published by Swiss National Museum / ISBN: 978-3-908025-79-5.

## **[www.trachten-laufsteg.ch](http://www.trachten-laufsteg.ch)**

The website provides further information on the exhibition and the supporting programme.

All media releases and a selection of images are available at our website **[www.trachten-laufsteg.ch](http://www.trachten-laufsteg.ch)**. To download access “Press”.

## **For further information, please contact:**

Karin Masa, PR, Forum of Swiss History Schwyz.

T. +41 (0)41 819 60 18 | [karin.masa@snm.admin.ch](mailto:karin.masa@snm.admin.ch)

Pia Schubiger, exhibition curator, Forum of Swiss History Schwyz.

T. +41 (0)41 819 60 15 | [pia.schubiger@snm.admin.ch](mailto:pia.schubiger@snm.admin.ch)