

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 18 (1991)  
**Heft:** 4

**Vorwort:** A balance sheet  
**Autor:** Willumat, Heidi

#### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

#### **Conditions d'utilisation**

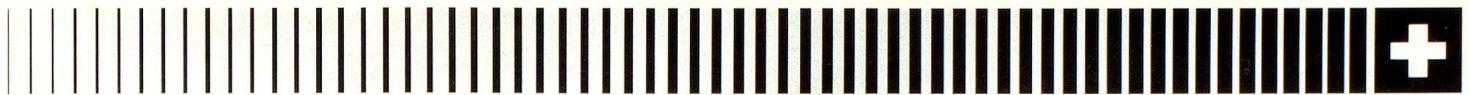
L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

#### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 24.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**



# Impressum

## Editorial

### A Balance Sheet



«*Switzerland is not an experiment which must be broken off*», said Friedrich Dürrenmatt crisply and concisely. This is a remark which applies equally well to the 700-year jubilee which is now drawing to an end and to the future in an all-European context which is becoming ever more clearly discernable.

For Swiss citizens both at home and abroad, 1991 will go down as the year

of a thousand special memories, big and small, from the radiant Botta tent, the grandiose festival performances and the old-fashioned processions throughout the country to the heavy doses of criticism of all that is Swiss, particularly from within the country – both constructive and destructive. 1991 will also be seen as a historic landmark for Switzerland with the disappearance of three of the century's great figures, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Max Frisch and Jean Tinguely – losses for literature and art all over the world which cannot be overestimated. Apart from the global applications of their work, however, each one of them has held a mirror up to the Swiss – each in his own very special way – and has warned them against the dangers of freewheeling into the future without a true purpose. In this way these three remarkable men have made a significant contribution to self-realisation on both the personal and political levels.

The process of questioning and searching directed towards a Swiss identity – if such a thing exists (and even if it does there must be as many definitions of it as there are Swiss) – has been shown in one sphere most particularly, something which has enjoyed very great popularity during the jubilee year: the sphere of folk traditions. With their many symbolic and scenic features these represent to us a reality which is only half-visible, but without which the contemporary world cannot easily be understood and even less easily managed. At a time when there are increasing complaints of lack of purpose and direction the components of folklore give to many a feeling of security and protection. In this yearning for reassurance we Swiss are not greatly different from people of other lands and other cultures.

However, when we really try to filter out what is essential in Swiss customs, we come to a conclusion that is as hackneyed as it is astonishing – that this essential has to do with the idea of Alpine valleys and pastoral virtues as the veritable incarnation of what is Swiss. It is as if Switzerland were really composed entirely of mountains and that the majority of the Swiss have really always lived from them alone. There is a sense in which our folk history – which is in reality not so very old and grew up in the nineteenth century along with our national consciousness – reflects not so much the real past of our country as the mythical values of the Rütli: freedom and the readiness to defend it.

*H. Willumat*  
Heidi Willumat, Editor

## Swiss Revue

Magazine for the Swiss Abroad

18th year of issue

Published quarterly in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish, in about 30 regional editions.

Printing: Berne, Lugano, New York, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires  
Total circulation: 254 900

### Editorial staff:

Dr. Stephan Müller, Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad, Berne

Heidi Willumat, Service for the Swiss Abroad, Department of Foreign Affairs, Berne

Jacques Matthey-Doret, Radio-Télévision Suisse romande, Lausanne

### Translation:

Richard Jan Tickle, John Miles

### Publisher, central editorial offices and advertising administration:

Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad

Alpenstrasse 26

CH-3000 Berne 16

Telephone 031 44 66 25

Telefax 031 44 21 58

Postcheck (Swiss national giro) account: 30-6768-9

### Printing-office:

Buri Druck AG



The Appenzell masked beggars of old have turned into the picturesque mummers of today – Switzerland's best-known New Year's attraction. (Photo: Emilia Magro)

## Contents



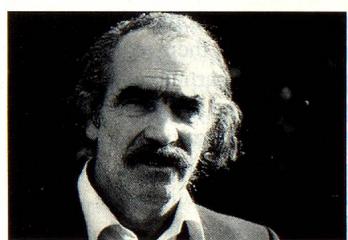
Forum:  
Living Feastday Traditions 4



Politics:  
Election results 8

Green pages:  
Local news

Mosaic 11



Culture:  
Jean Tinguely 12

Political science 14

Switzerland's  
700th anniversary 15

Communications  
from the ASS 16

Official Communications 17