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PEOPLE



Swiss record-breaking balloonist **Bertrand Piccard** has been appointed goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and spokesman for the UN's "Face to Face" campaign in Switzerland. The central message of the campaign is "Women's rights and human rights".

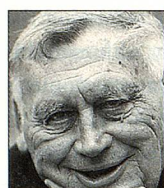
Appenzell conductor **Johannes Fuchs** has died aged 96. Renowned as a Bruckner specialist and a promoter of contemporary sacred music and Swiss oratorios, he had conducted the Zurich chamber music choir for 65 years since taking up the post in 1929.

Peter Zuber is dead. The Bernese doctor and refugee helper died at the age of 60 after a long illness. For 20 years he and his wife Heidi worked for refugees and unsuccessful asylum seekers and sheltered them illegally in their home in Ostermundigen, losing as many legal battles as they won prizes for their efforts.

Italian architect and designer **Ettore Sottsass**, known for his sensual lamps, brightly-coloured furniture, and trendy typewriters for Olivetti, has won the Design Prize Switzerland.

Schaffhausen author and former high-school teacher **Markus Werner** has been awarded the Herman Hesse prize, worth DM 20 000, for his novel "Der ägyptische Heinrich".

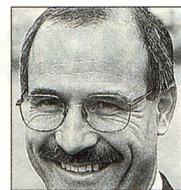
Solothurn author **Peter Bichsel** has been awarded the prestigious Swiss Gottfried Keller prize worth CHF 25 000.



The founder of the World Alpine Skiing Cup, journalist and manager **Serge Lang**, has passed away at the age of 79.

Dominic Geisseler (38) is to take over from Urs P. Knapp at the helm of the "Coop-Zeitung". With a circulation of 1.27 million, the "Coop-Zeitung" has the largest readership in Switzerland.

46-year-old District Secretary **Christoph Juen** has been appointed Director of the Swiss Hotelier Association. His mission is to revamp the image and structures of the troubled association.

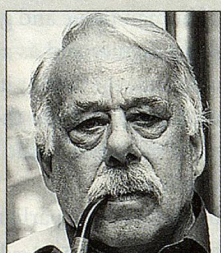
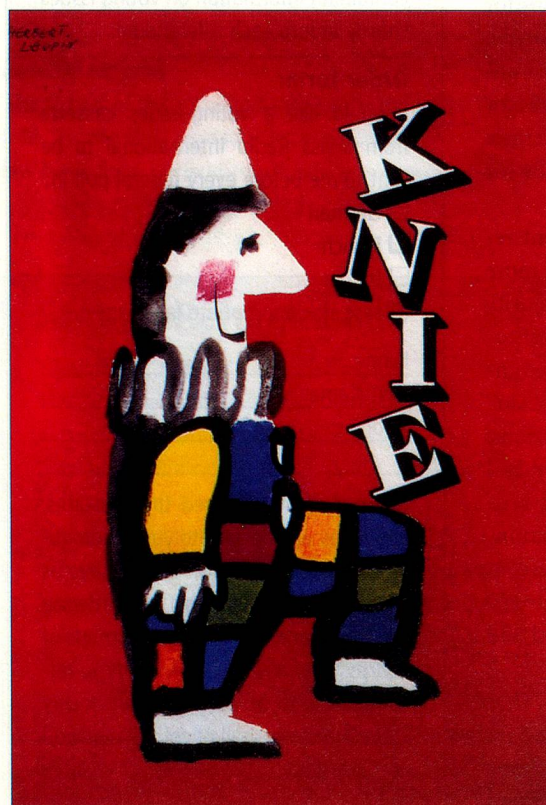


40-year-old Bernese lawyer **Lorenzo Rudolf**, currently in charge of Art, the international art fair in Basle, has been appointed director of the Frankfurt Book Fair. He will be succeeded at Art in Basle by **Samuel Keller**.

Alfred Hässig, former director of the Central Laboratory of the Swiss Red Cross, has died at the age of 78. The doctor and scientist was regarded as a pioneer in the field of blood transfusion. His last years were overshadowed by the affair of the HIV-infected donor blood in Switzerland.

Ueli Haldimann, former member of the "SonntagsZeitung" and of TV DRS, has been appointed editor-in-chief of the free Zurich newspaper "Metro".

After less than two years the editor-in-chief of the "Tages-Anzeiger", **Esther Girsberger**, has moved to the Communications Department of global concern Novartis. The plucky journalist and lawyer was under pressure after commenting in her paper on the tabloid leanings of other TA Media papers.



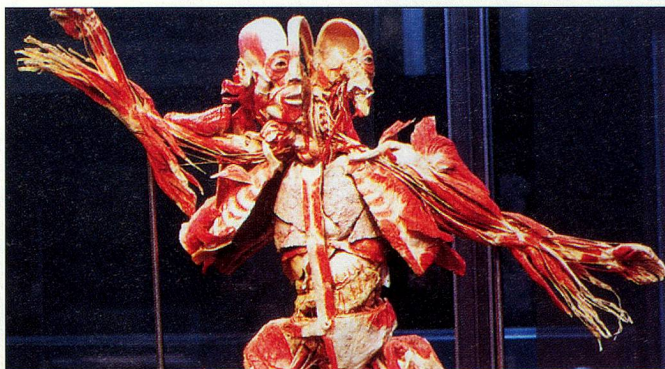
Award-winning Basle poster artist and painter **Herbert Leupin** has died at the age of 83. He created 1000 posters, among the best-known of which was his circus clown balancing the letters K-N-I-E on its knee. He also created the lilac Milka cow for Suchard and the brightly-plumed parrot for Pepita.

Elected to the State Council

AG: Thomas Pfisterer (FDP)
BL: Hans Fünfschilling (FDP)
LU: Helen Leumann (FDP)
NE: Michèle Berger (FDP), Jean Studer (SP)
SG: Eugen David (CVP)
TG: Hermann Bürgi (SVP)
TI: Filippo Lombardi (CVP), Dick Marty (FDP)
VD: Michel Béguelin (SP)
VS: Rolf Escher (CVP), Simon Epiney (CVP)


Anatomy Art – fascination beneath the surface

An exhibition in the Messe Basle, comprising over 200 “plastinations” i.e. human bodies and body parts preserved using special plastics, caused a furore.



THE EXHIBITION, entitled “Anatomy Art – fascination beneath the surface”, featured surface reliefs as well as the individual human cells in microscopic detail. Visitors were permitted to touch the dry, odourless

plastinations. The inventor of the plastination technique is Heidelberg professor of anatomy Gunther von Hagens. Prior to Basle, his exhibition had been viewed by

four million visitors world-wide. The aim of this fascinating show was to instil a respect for life and an increased awareness of health. 

SNIPPETS

SHOCK IN PRATTELN: Rail equipment manufacturer Adtranz Switzerland, a subsidiary of Daimler-Chrysler, is to close down, with a loss of 475 jobs in Pratteln and 235 in Oerlikon. Coming on the heels of the sale of ceramics manufacturer Laufen and the bankruptcy of Alu Münchenstein and Bertrams Muttentz, this is the fourth blow to the economy of the Basle Country region within ten weeks.

ILLNESS OR INJURY: On average, every employee takes seven days off sick per year. The cost to the Swiss economy is CHF 12 billion.

BERNE'S MOUNTAIN COMES ALIVE AGAIN: Inaugurated 100 years ago and now completely revamped, the Jugendstil Hotel Gurten-Kulm, whose only residents in recent years have been mice and rats, has been given a CHF 33 million facelift by Migros, partly in the original style and partly in a more modern style. The restaurant can now accommodate 800 guests, and the rack railway up the Gurten has also been fully modernised.

NEW RAILWAY STATION SHOPS: First many of Switzerland's railway stations were shunted to the sidelines, but now new life is

being injected in them by “avec” shops: Migros, Valora and the Swiss Federal Railways report major successes with their pilot shops in Schüpfen and Brugg, combining ticket counter, kiosk, bar and general goods store. Another 37 “avec” shops are in the pipeline.

STABLE ECONOMY: Economic experts are forecasting a growth rate of 2.1% for the coming year and as much as 2.6% for 2001. Exports have begun to pick up, and already there are fears of the job market drying up. In 1999 economic performance was still at recession levels.

DIFFERENT DEGREES OF WEALTH: The Federal Council has re-assessed the financial wealth of the cantons. The richest cantons are ZG, BS, ZH, GE, NW, BL, followed by SH, AG, SZ, VD, TH, SO, SG, GL, TI, GB, LU, UR, BE in the middle, and AI, AA, NE, FR, OW, JU, VS at the lower end.

AIRPORT LAW APPROVED: The vote to privatise Zurich-Kloten airport was approved by a majority of 61.2%.

DISTRIBUTED FUNDS: Swiss wealth is becoming increasingly concentrated. Every thirtieth taxpayer (3%) boasts a fortune of at least CHF 1 million. 3.9 million Swiss have a net personal wealth of CHF 750 billion, equivalent to CHF 190,000 per capita.

At the same time three out of ten Swiss (30%) declare zero property.

END OF PAPER: After 79 years the “Sport” newspaper has thrown in the towel. The Jean-Frey publishing company, part of the Basle Media Group, has shut off funds due to a declining circulation and regular deficits. Altogether, 41 employees will lose their jobs.

FASTER TO THE SLOPES: Major celebrations have been held to inaugurate the Vereina Tunnel in Klosters joining the Prättigau with the Lower Engadine.

Texts: Alice Baumann/Photos: Keystone

Point of View

“The Expo is like a laboratory: we never know if and when the chemical reaction that will make the experiment a success will take place – or whether the experiment will fail. I find this all-or-nothing situation highly inspiring.”

Nelly Wenger, Technical Director of Expo.02