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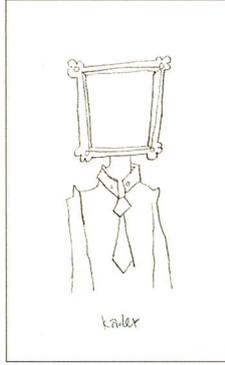
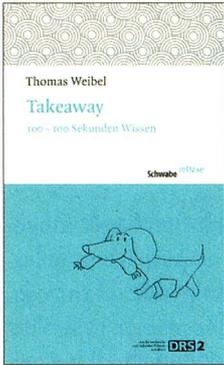
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Little gems



“100 seconds of knowledge”

A technical term, an abbreviation, a musical genre or a buzzword – it is familiar but you know little about it. We are often amazed by explanations of such things; they provide moments of insight. “100 Sekunden Wissen” (100 seconds of knowledge) from Swiss radio station DRS2 helps listeners to discover such revelations. It has been going for years, every morning from Monday to Friday at 7 a.m. And now “100 Sekunden Wissen” is also available in book form. The small book entitled “Takeaway” contains 100 selected “100-second” programmes. It begins with the term “Akronym” (acronym) and ends with “Zirkus” (circus). Terms like author, copy & paste, free-of-charge, http://, obolus and seventh heaven are also explained on just under a page each. There are so many surprises you cannot help but find yourself suddenly smiling when reading or listening. Here is some original material on the term “executive”: *“All animals are equal” declare the pigs in George Orwell’s satirical novel Animal Farm. So too are people in the eyes of the law and of the flu. But all equality ends when it comes to income and influence. Then they emerge on the scene: the executives, the class of leaders (...)*”

Thomas Weibel: “Takeaway” 100 x 100 Sekunden Wissen; Verlag Schwabe, Basel 2012; 120 pages; price approx. CHF 19.50 / EUR 17. Articles online: <http://drs2blog.ch/100sekunden/>

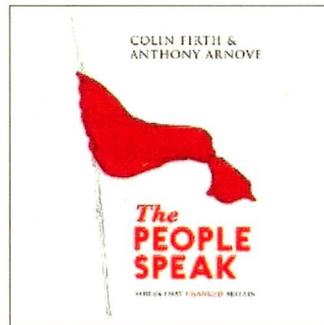
Words on freedom

Colin Firth is in a class of his own on the big screen with his performances in films like “The English Patient” and “The King’s Speech”. But Firth is not just an actor, he is also an activist who carefully observes developments in the world. In this role, together with the English author Anthony Arnone, he has now published the book “The People Speak”. The subtitle “Voices that changed Britain” is very revealing – the collected articles all focus on just one subject, freedom. The book contains historical texts, such as the lamentation by Benedictine monk Orderic Vitalis about suppression by the Normans and Bertrand Russell’s letter of 12 August 1914 setting out the arguments against Britain’s involvement in the First World War. Also included are the rousing speech by Emmeline Pankhurst in support of the suffragettes in 1913 and Oscar Wilde’s wonderful explanation in 1895 of the line of poetry “the love that dare not speak its name”. There are also remarkable speeches by people who have received little attention for centuries because history is usually told as the story of winners. The book’s collection of voices belonging to rebels, non-conformists, visionaries and ordinary critics takes on particular significance in light of the current street protests and mood of revolution against the authority of the political class and business leaders. To complement the book, readings are taking place in the UK with stars like Sir Ben Kingsley, Sir Ian McKellen, Kelly Macdonald, Joss Stone, Arundhati Roy and Mark Steel.

(BE)

Colin Firth & Anthony Arnone: “The People Speak, Voices that changed Britain”; published by Canon-gate Books Ltd, Edinburgh; EUR 14.95.

<http://www.history.co.uk/the-people-speak.html> <https://www.facebook.com/ThePeopleSpeakOut>



A melting pot where jazz meets rock

Instrumental power trio Ouizzz fuse jazz and rock in a blend reminiscent of big Scandinavian names such as the Esbörn Svensson Trio. The Lausanne musicians’ third album “Hello, Goodbye” sees them enchant the audience with both the powerful rhythms of an edgy bass and piano parts that are lively at times and melancholic at others.

Founded a decade ago, Ouizzz comprises Michael Gabriele (composer and pianist), Pierre Kuthan (bassist with metal ten-



dencies) and Marc-Olivier Savoy (drummer and fan of extreme styles). The album includes some stand-out numbers. The opener, “Hello”, kicks off on an enquiring and existential note, driven by a new wave bass riff. “Metal Bolero” is clearly the high-point of the album, with a diffuse theme that clings to the spirit guided by a bassline that

veers straight towards the obscure. The groovy feel of “Pecorino Addiction” seems to have been composed with moving ahead and overcoming obstacles in mind, even if it does refer to a white wine or an Italian cheese. Ouizzz? Wintry jazz that seduces us into happy dreams.

(AW)

www.ouizzz.com

Bulletins

Designers awarded prize

Franco Clivio, Gilles Gavillet, David Rust and Karl Gerstner have been awarded the 2012 "Grand Prix Design", which was given by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture. The Swiss Confederation has been running an annual competition to promote Swiss design since 1918. This year, the winners received 40,000 francs each.

Further education popular

In the past year, four out of five people living in Switzerland have completed a further education course. There is virtually no difference in the further education trends between men and women. There are, however, significant differences as regards the level of education. Just 32% of people who have only graduated from compulsory schooling attended a further education course, compared with 80% of college graduates.

Fewer tourists

Switzerland has evidently become too expensive as a holiday destination for guests from abroad, particularly from the rest of Europe. In August, the FSO reported a 9.5% decline (in comparison with the previous year) in the number of overnight stays enjoyed by European guests in the country. Germany was the country to record the largest drop at 12%. The number of tourists from Asia, however, increased (+30%), but the largest rise in the number of foreign guests was recorded by visitors from the Gulf States at 258%. Statistics also revealed that tourists increasingly visited cities at the expense of some of the more traditional tourist regions.

The working poor

In 2010, 120,000 people lived in poverty in Switzerland despite having a job. This equates to 3.5% of gainfully employed people. Single parents are some of the most affected – the latest poverty statistics from the FSO show that 20% of single parents are living in poverty. The study also ascertained the number of people at risk of poverty in comparison with other countries. By comparison with all other European countries, Switzerland was slightly below the average in this respect. Compared with its immediate neighbours, however, Switzerland performed poorly. The risk of poverty was only higher in Italy; in Germany, France and Austria, the risk is significantly lower.

No generational conflict

There is no conflict between the generations in Switzerland, as concluded in the 2012 Social Report published by the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences (FORS). The relationships between the different generations play a particularly important role within families. In contrast, there are few cross-generational acquaintances outside the family. It is quite remarkable that it is not the elderly in Switzerland who often feel as though they are treated unfairly and disrespectfully, but the young instead. This is particularly the case in the work environment, according to around half of those who took part in the survey. The study also reveals that the cliché of the apolitical youth has absolutely no bearing on the truth. The youth of today are turning out for the national elections in greater numbers than young people did 20 or 40 years ago.

Quotes

"I want everything to be out in the open." Federal Councillor Johann Schneider-Ammann quotes this sentence every now and then, e.g., in connection with the free movement of people, as well as in reference to commodity-trading companies

"The world is in disarray, as politics and the economy act without ethical principles." Heiner Geissler, former German Federal Minister for Youth, Family and Health, and General Secretary of the Christian Democratic Union

"It is certain that nothing is certain, and not even that is." Joachim Ringelnatz, German author and cabaret artist (1883–1934)

"It is of course ridiculous to write such nonsense." Peter Ramsauer, German Minister of Transport, commenting on a report by the Swiss Federal Council regarding the treaty on aircraft noise

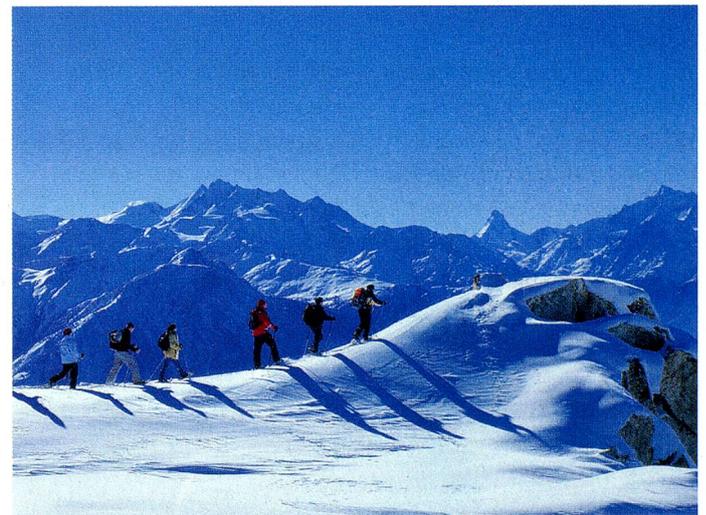
"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail." Mark Twain, American author (1835–1910)

"We have to act if we do not want to be marginalised." Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard on the situation in Switzerland

"Everything comes in time to him who knows how to wait." Leo Tolstoy, Russian author (1828–1910)

"He does not preach what he practises till he has practised what he preaches." Confucius, Chinese philosopher (551–479 B.C.)

"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing." Socrates, Greek philosopher (470–399 B.C.)



Over the past few years, snowshoeing has developed into a popular sport. There are scarcely any winter sports resorts that do not offer special snowshoeing tours. Everything is offered – from full-moon trips, senior citizen and children's walking tours to tours up high mountains. Thousands of people in Switzerland take advantage every weekend of the opportunity to enjoy the tranquillity and solitude offered by the mountain regions, without being dependent on mountain railways and flattened pistes. Swisstopo, the Federal Geo-Information Centre (previously known as the Federal Office of Topography) has worked together with the Swiss Alpine Club to publish a special map of snowshoeing tours in Prättigau, featuring numerous tips and extensive information on environmentally friendly winter sports, cabins, avalanches and important telephone numbers. www.swisstopo.ch