

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1963)

Heft: 1427

Artikel: Music News from Lucerne

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-688833>

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Assembly. Matters of local importance are decided, such as the purchase of land, erection of school buildings (Fislisbach, Aargau, voted as much as 3.6 million francs for one), and the rate of taxes. At Sursee the people voted against a publicly owned slaughter house. At Zurzach over 300 citizens demanded an extraordinary Assembly. After a 3½-hour debate the secret poll resulted in a new planning scheme which would prevent the erection of a cement factory to which a majority of citizens are opposed.

A small Commune like Rueggisberg (Berne) has big tasks, too. The Assembly had to vote on the plans for the second and third stages of the new water installation, which includes 20,145 metres of pipes and two reservoirs. They accepted a budget for this of 1.78 million francs — a large sum for a small Commune.

Sometimes the Commune Assembly cannot function because of the necessary numbers not being present. The Canton of Aargau has a high quorum of 50% and in recent months several Commune Assemblies had to be disbanded; at Wettingen even twice last summer and again twice recently. On one occasion 1,930 men had to be sent home as the numbers were 58 short. The Cantonal authorities are concerned about this and are now working out new proposals regarding the quorum. Possibly an "Inhabitants' Council" (Einwohnerrat), a kind of Commune Parliament, may be proposed as in the town of Lucerne. Kriens (Lucerne), which has 16,000 inhabitants, accepted such a Council of 24 in November, and Emmen (Lucerne) decided in January to introduce it (40 members).

In Zug, the last Commune Assembly took place on 21st December. It was introduced in 1874 and now at the beginning of 1963 it is replaced by an "Inhabitants' Council" of 40 members. This does not mean that the rights of the citizen are curtailed — he will always have the power to start an Initiative and to make use of the Referendum to object, in the Commune as well as Canton and the Confederation.

(Based mainly on news received from Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

SWISS CULTURAL LIFE IN MARCH 1963

Basle: — The Berlin Philharmonic Octet visits Kreuzlingen on the 19th and Zurich on the 22nd of March. The Bamberg Piano Quartet will be playing in Zurich on 8th March. The Boyd Neel Orchestra, London, is giving concerts at Basle, Berne, Frauenfeld and Geneva on the last days of March. In Berne, at the Stadttheater, the ensemble of the Comédie Française will be performing on 20th March; in Le Locle, soloists of the Ballet of the Paris Opera. As from 24th March Schaffhausen presents young Swiss artists, the prize-winners in the Federal Art Award Competition. Chur is showing works by the Grisons artist Leonhard Meisser from 3rd to 31st March, and the Museum Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen, works by the Lucerne artist Max von Moos until 17th March. Internationally known names will be an attraction in Berne (Maurice Utrillo) until 17th March, and in Zurich (Max Ernst) as from 23rd March. The East-Swiss artists are exhibiting collectively from 31st March to 21st April in St. Gall, where painter Jean Baier also has an exhibition lasting until 7th April. At Langenthal works by Bruno Hesse will be on view from 2nd to 17th March. French works of art are on display during the "French Weeks" in Zurich and Geneva.

MUSIC NEWS FROM LUCERNE

The 1963 International Music Festival in Lucerne

The preliminary programme for the 1963 Lucerne International Music Festival has now been published. This year the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first Festival will be celebrated by a full month of concerts (14th August to 14th September), including nine symphony concerts, four choral concerts, the traditional Mozart Serenade under the Lion Monument, two Lieder recitals, two organ concerts, one piano recital and one chamber music recital for wind instruments. One of the two chamber music concerts given by the Festival Strings will once again be devoted to contemporary music, and will include four first performances of works by Alexander Goehr, Franz Tischhauser, Marcel Mihalovici and Bohuslav Martinu. A Beethoven cycle of seven recitals will include all the piano trios, violin sonatas, and sonatas and variations for 'cello and piano. The Silver Jubilee will be marked by a Festival Concert at which Rafael Kubelik will conduct the Swiss Festival Orchestra, and it is planned to bring the Festival to a close with a concert and Jubilee Ball at which the Philharmonia Orchestra of England will play Johann Strauss. Another highlight will be the two performances of Verdi's Requiem by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Singverein and first-rank soloists under Herbert von Karajan. The performance of Honegger's "Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher" by the Lucerne Festival Choir and the Swiss Festival Orchestra under Ernest Ansermet also promises to be a landmark of the musical season.

The Festival Strings Lucerne on Tour

The Festival Strings Lucerne last year performed at the festivals of Bordeaux, Menton, the Engadine, Schwetzingen, Ghent and many other towns as well as that of Lucerne. In addition, they made several concert tours through almost every country in Europe. Soloists included Zino Francescatti, Arthur Grumiaux, Henryk Szering, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Margrit Weber, Andres Segovia, Nicanor Zabaleta, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Peter Lukas Graf, and many others. In particular, special opportunities were also given to the younger members of the ensemble to play solo. Programmes covered the works of Baroque and contemporary composers of Switzerland and other countries. Mention might also be made in this context of last year's Musica Nova concert at the Lucerne Festival, where first performances were given of highly interesting works by Hermann Haller, Albert Moeschinger, Wladimir Vogel and Joonas Kokkenen. In the six years that have passed since its foundation the Festival Strings Lucerne has achieved world fame. As we go to press it is touring the U.S.A. as ambassadors for Switzerland and her musical life.

(Official Tourist Office, Lucerne.)

HEINRICH SCHUETZ FESTIVAL

For the first time the international Heinrich Schütz festival is being held in Zurich. It will take place during the week after Easter, 17th to 21st April. The great work of the founder of German Evangelical sacred music was discovered by the younger generation between the two world wars, and the first Heinrich Schütz Festival was held in 1930. It was subsequently repeated fourteen times in Germany, Sweden, Holland and Switzerland. Schütz's Early Baroque music (1585 — 1672) ranks between Palestrina and J. S. Bach.

[S.N.T.O.]