

**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:** - (1969)  
**Heft:** 1570

**Artikel:** Swiss women ahead!  
**Autor:** M.E.  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-693846>

### **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:** 13.08.2025

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

## SWISS WOMEN AHEAD!

1968, the year of Human Rights is over; but still Switzerland's women are fighting to obtain the same political rights and duties now reserved to the "strong" sex, a position which their sisters beyond the borders have been taken for granted for a long time. One must admit, however, that there is still little interest in politics, particularly among the older generation. Our educational system is not at least to blame for this state of matters: even nowadays, it happens frequently that girls are excluded from political instruction and sent instead to lessons in domestic science, cookery and needlework which are certainly useful, at their proper time. A change must take over here; old prejudices that consider politics as a man's business, have to be abolished. For it is no longer true that the female intelligentsia in Switzerland are perfectly happy with the *status quo*. The number of women working for their living increases continuously and it seems ludicrous that they must formally ask their husband's permission before taking a job. For centuries, the husband has been the head of the family. The new conception of marriage sees a partnership between two equal members, and the old saying is still true, namely *'zu Hause muss beginnen, was leuchten soll im Vaterland'*.

Women trusted men for a long time and hoped by waiting patiently, the obvious injustice would be changed. Their confidence was not satisfied, only decisive actions could possibly point out how urgent matters had become. And they felt the time had come when the Federal Council was going to sign the Convention of Human Rights. A new chain of movements was started to fight for equal positions of women everywhere. This ranged from 'equal pay for equal work' and 'recognition of the housewife as member of a professional category of its own' to 'equal education and access to political office and careers'.

1st February, 1969, was a day of stating the actual standpoint. Ten years ago, Swiss citizens rejected by vote electoral and voting rights for women with 66.9%. But a first step was made: the Canton of Vaud introduced civil rights in cantonal and communal affairs, and shortly afterwards Geneva and Neuchâtel followed. Baselstadt was the pioneer in German-speaking Switzerland, Grisons and Berne tried a new way by gradually introducing civil rights in Communes which has proved successful. There were still several rejections: Zurich, Lucerne and Ticino contained a large No-majority while other Cantons have not even thought of offering a vote.

This year's celebration was disturbed by disagreement between radical left-wing organisations of women-students who plead for a complete change of structure throughout the society and

the traditional women's associations. It led to the decision that the latter would boycott the planned march on Berne on 1st March. This demonstration, designed to show disapproval of Parliament's near-certain decision to sign the Council of Europe's Human Rights Declaration, was jinxed from the start. The crowd of about 500 activist women, about 300 men and some children who assembled before the *Bundeshaus* was a mere reflection of what it could have been. On the morning, 41 top women's organisations met with representatives of the Federal Government in the Berne Casino. The presidents of five leading associations quietly explained the hypocrisy of signing a Declaration with the condition that women are not given equal political rights. Then most of them went home. What took place in the afternoon's demonstration, was Switzerland's New Left, waving the red flag, the anarchist black flag, trying to confuse the goals of the average middle-class students with socially acceptable political ideas with their economic and sexual credo. They do not represent the feelings of the majority, and with their take-over of the march, they managed to leave a sour taste in the mouth of many active Swiss women. Many are hoping that the march's failure will spur associations and leaders into efficient organisation and realisation of the impact of publicity and not set back Swiss women's achievement of equality.

Long discussions afterwards, both in public, Press and Parliament led to the achievement that Federal President L. von Moos announced that a new project for the introduction of women's civil rights will be submitted to the two Chambers before the end of the year.

M.E.

## LUCERNE INVITES YOU . . .

### International Festival of Music

The General Programme of the Lucerne International Festival of Music having just come out, tickets may now be ordered for any of the concerts and theatrical performances (to be given between 13th August and 7th September). At the ten Symphony Concerts, the Swiss Festival Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic and the West German Radio Orchestra Cologne may be heard under the following conductors (enumerated in chronological order): István Kertesz, Antal Dorati, Charles Dutoit, Eugen Jochum, Václav Neumann, George Szell, Herbert von Karajan and William Steinberg. The soloists taking part in Symphony Concerts and in other types of concerts are Géza Anda, Rudolf Firkusny, Bruno-L. Gelber, Mieczysław Horszowski, Walter Klien, Nikita Magaloff, Zsuzsanna Sirokay, Erik Werba (piano), Zino Francescatti, Arthur Grumiaux, Wolfgang Schneiderhan, Josef Suk (violin), Jacqueline du Pré, Pierre Fournier (cello), Klaus

Thunemann (basso-continuo), Edith Picht-Axenfeld (harpsichord), Gerd Zacher (organ), Ursula Burkhard, Aurèle Nicolet, Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute), Heinz Holliger (oboe), Hans-Rudolf Stalder (clarinet), Elisabeth Speiser, Maria Stader, Olga Szönyi, Jennifer Vyvyan, Mary Wells (soprano), Adfreda Hodgson, Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano), Herta Topper (alto), James Bowman (counter-tenor), Ernst Häfliger, Peter Pears (tenor), Andras Farago, Kurt Widmer (baritone), Walter Berry (bass-baritone), Owen Brannigan (Bass), Two serenades (at the Lion Monument) will be given by the Zurich Collegium Musicum, conducted by Paul Sacher. Under the motto "The Festival Presents Young Artists" a concert will be given at this years Festival to introduce the Hungarian pianist Sergiu Luca (accompanied at the piano by Robert Guralnik). The Musica Nova concert to be given by the Lucerne Festival Strings will include world first performances of works by H. U. Lehmann and M. Ohana and Swiss first performances of compositions by A. Jolivet and J. Cage.

At the Lucerne Municipal Theatre Alpenquai Tennessee William's play "A Streetcar Named Desire" will be performed. It will be directed by Kraft-Alexander; the stage designs are by Domi Hahn, and costumes will be designed by Bie Giok Tan. The cast includes Sibylle Dochtermann, Dinah Hinz, and Traugott Buhre. — As a counterpart to "A Streetcar Named Desire", though not actually as part of the Festival, "Magic Afternoon" by Wolfgang Bauer will be performed at the Lucerne "Kleintheater". It will be directed by Peter Lüdi.

This summer the Lucerne Art Gallery will show works by Niki de Saint-Phalle; the exhibition will concentrate on the artist's more recent creations, the so-called Nanas.

At the Conservatoire, the traditional master Courses on piano (Mieczysław Horszowski), violin (Wolfgang Schneiderhan), cello and chamber music (Enrico Mainardi) and for singers (Franziska Martienssen and Paul Lohmann) will take place.

### Concours Clara Haskil 1969

Prior to the Festival of Music, i.e. between 30th July and 9th August, the Concours Clara Haskil will be held again. Highly promising candidates have sent in their names, but six of them at most will be asked by the jury to take the final examination, which will be held in the form of public concerts (7th, 8th and 9th August) and will comprise a half-hour recital and a concerto by each candidate. Concerts will be accompanied by an orchestra consisting of members of the Swiss Festival Orchestra to be conducted by Charles Dutoit. Programmes can, of course, be published only shortly before the actual concerts, but tickets are available (Concluded on page 11)