

Press release

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Joggeli, Pitschi, Globi... Popular Swiss Picture Books

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Lisa Wenger's Joggeli, who won't shake down the pears, the kitten Pitschi, the children from the Maggi songbook or the teddy bear who sets off for Tripiti – these characters from Swiss picture books have captivated countless readers over many generations. These classic Swiss picture books are on display in their cultural historical context at the family exhibition in the National Museum.

Switzerland has a long tradition of picture books. Picture books are handed down through the generations, more than any other type of book. One example is Lisa Wenger's *Joggeli*, which appeared more than 100 years ago. The story of the lazy servant, who would rather sit under the shade of the pear tree than gather pears, is an integral part of Swiss cultural heritage.

Swiss picture book creations enjoyed an initial upturn in the period between the two world wars. There were advertising departments, such as those in Maggi and Nestlé, that catered for the need to entertain children during that period of crisis with stickers and collection points. Later on, publicity mascots became characters in books, most famously Globi, a creation emanating from the publicity department of Globus, which became one of Switzerland's most well-known and well-loved picture book heroes. After the Second World War, there was widespread scepticism in German-speaking Switzerland towards picture books coming out of Germany. The local publishing industry benefited once again from this. Thanks to their illustrations, some Swiss artists were also known outside Switzerland, such as Felix Hoffmann, Alois Carigiet and Hans Fischer, known as fis. In the years following the war, Swiss publishers were one step ahead in the international sale of licences: Pitschi, Schellen-Ursli and the fairy tales of Felix Hoffmann enjoyed global success.

The most successful graphic artists numbered only a few women. However, the search for idiosyncratic approaches and new forms of design quickly came upon female artists. *Der Leuchtturm* (The Lighthouse) by Berta Tappolet (1897-1947) and the fairy tales depicted as pictograms by Warja Lavater (1913-2007) are

aesthetically outstanding works, which feature art more as a popular form of visual imagery.

This family exhibition in the National Museum Zurich lets children immerse themselves in picture-book worlds and experience them through play. Visitors of all ages can lose themselves in picture book classics in themed reading areas. Adults can encounter the most successful picture book authors and creators. Background information on how these books came into being direct visitors' attention towards social themes as well as narratives on graphics, education and upbringing. The exhibition is accompanied by a whole range of fringe activities to suit all the family.

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