Prof. Michael Krohn | University for Art and Design Zurich | Department of Design

## design from switzerland





## Design - a profession in change

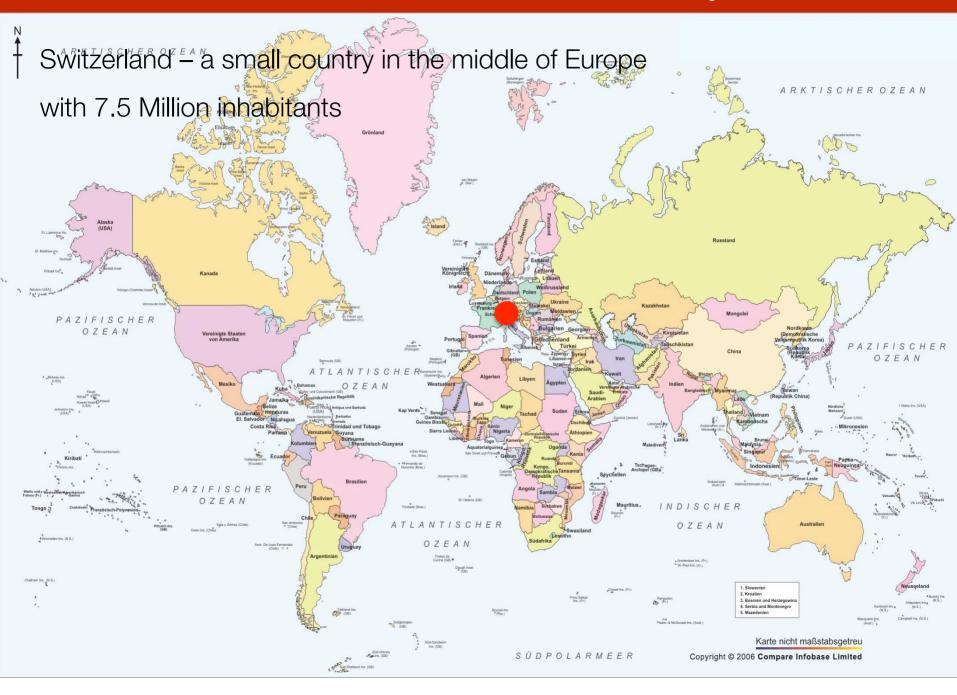
## What can we learn from yesterday?

### And what is the role of the designer in the future?

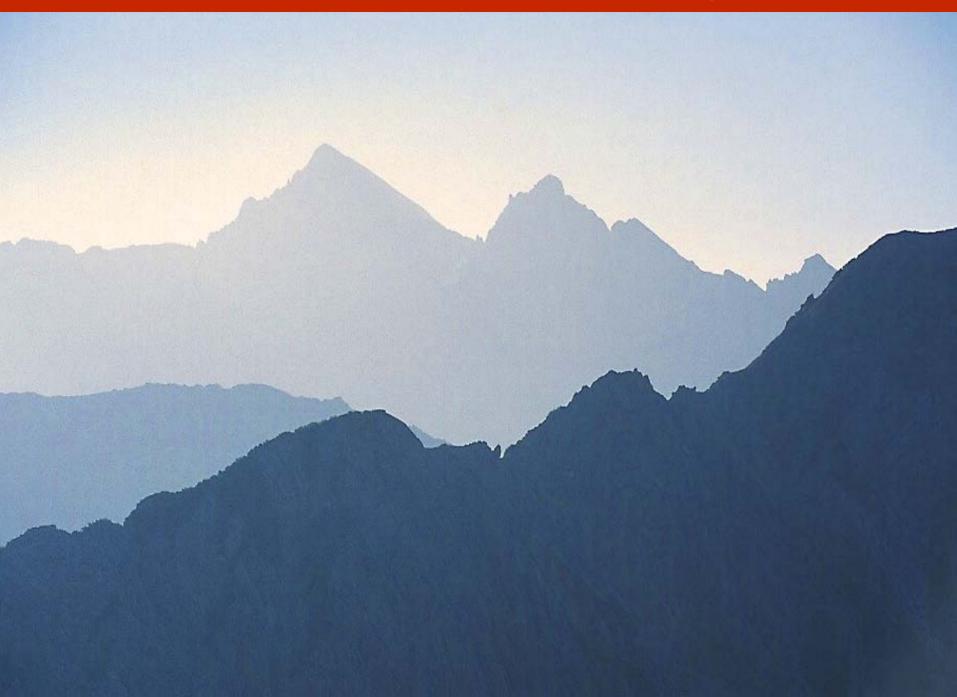


# Part 1 The birth of the unspectacular

**The Designer as an entrepreneur - Innovation and interdisciplinary as sources** Professor Michael Krohn, School for Art and Design Zurich



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Two third of the surface of Switzerland is unaccessible, because of it's topography, not usable for any purposes.





Natural borders like rivers and mountains surrounding the country and impeded the building of traffic ways and trade.







**Feller Lichtschalter 1943** 





Re 4/4 Gotthardlok 1964

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#### Meet the cast:

# ABCD EFGHIJK LMNOP QRSTUV WXYZ

#### Now see the movie:

# Helvetica

#### A documentary film by Gary Hustwit

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Helvetica Typeface 1956





# Swiss Design combines several unique factors

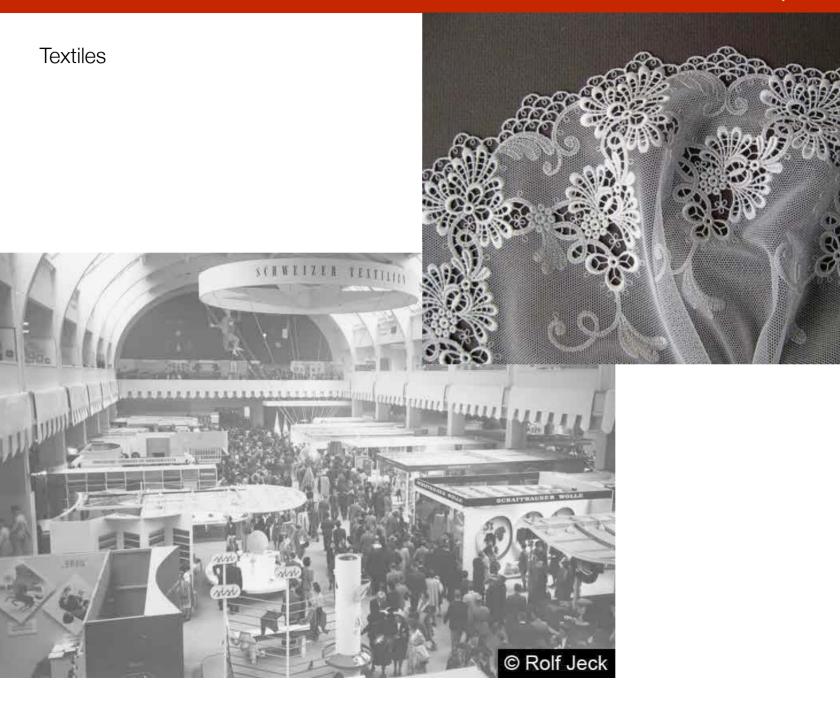
- Inventive and research driven
- Simple and socially responsible
- Functional, anonymious but nevertheless stylish



Watch Making







Small and Beautiful – Design from Switzerland Professor Michael Krohn, Zurich University of the Arts



Heavy Industries

Electricity and Power Plants







# Part 2 The roots



Before mid of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Switzerland was a very poor country







Zürich 1898 – Handwerk und Herstellung



Zürich 1963 - Entwicklung und Produktion

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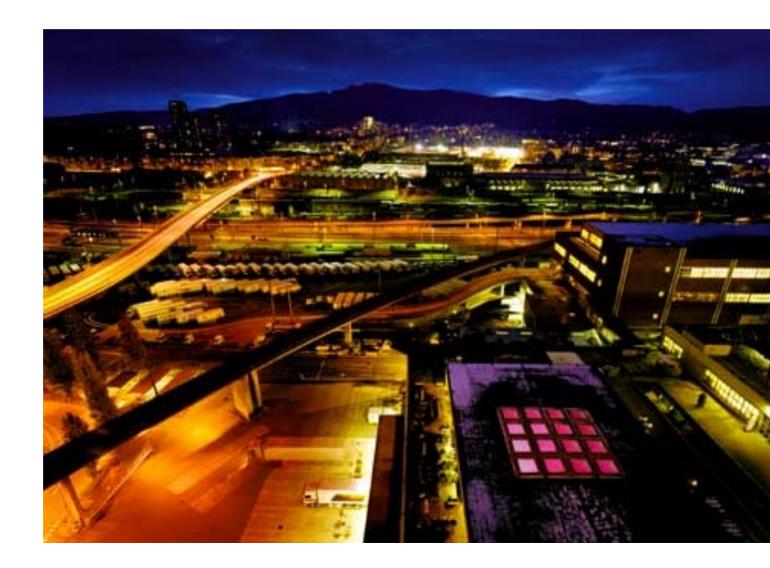


#### Zürich 1994 – Wissen und Information

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## Today

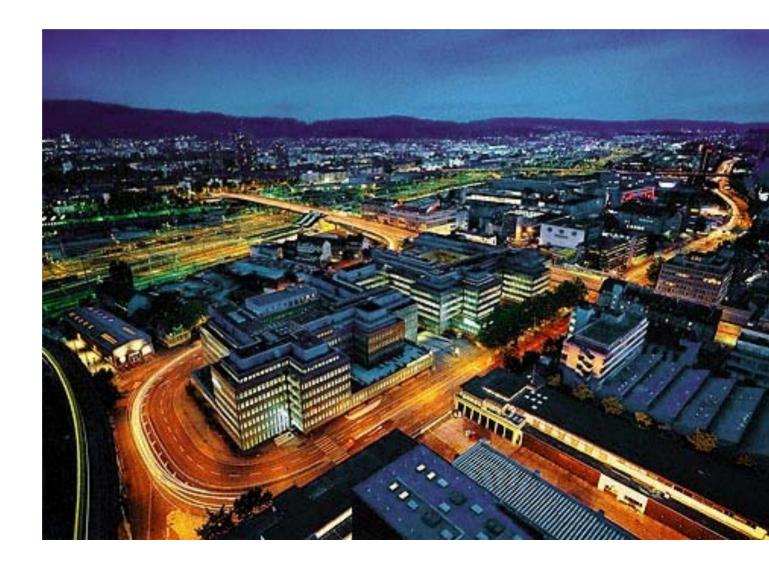
Zürich has changed from a industrialised city to diverse urban metropole.



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## Today

Today, 10% of jobs in greater Zürich depending on design, art or culture.





#### The success of the economy depended on

### Quality and Durability

### Precision

### Innovation





Before mid of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Switzerland was a poor country.

- •Tourism activities began to develop in the mountains
- •Hydropower electricity drives the upcoming Industry
- •Industry was growing out of small home and agriculture business

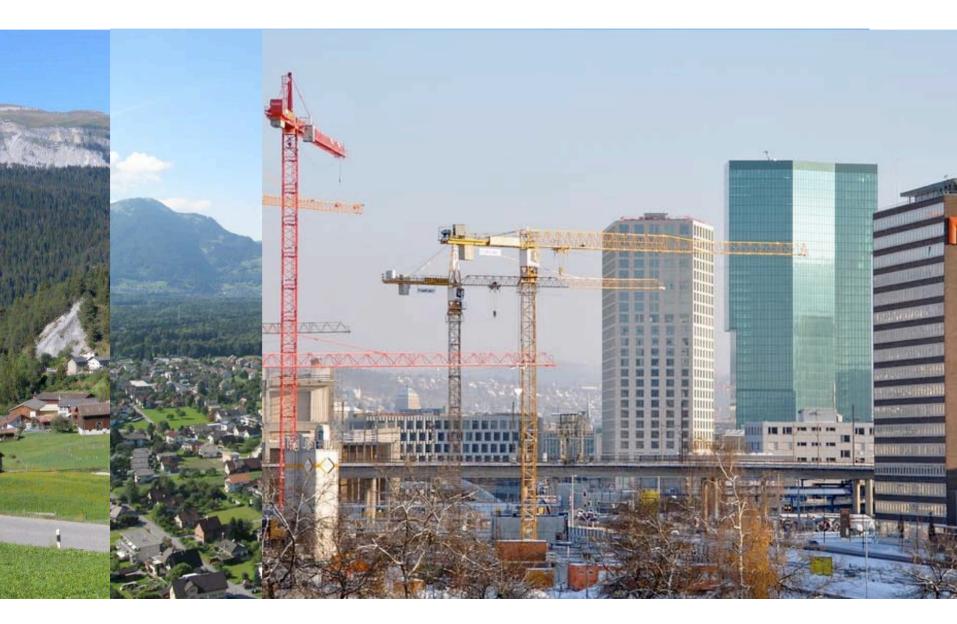




# Part 3 The decline of the cultural tradition– gaining modernity

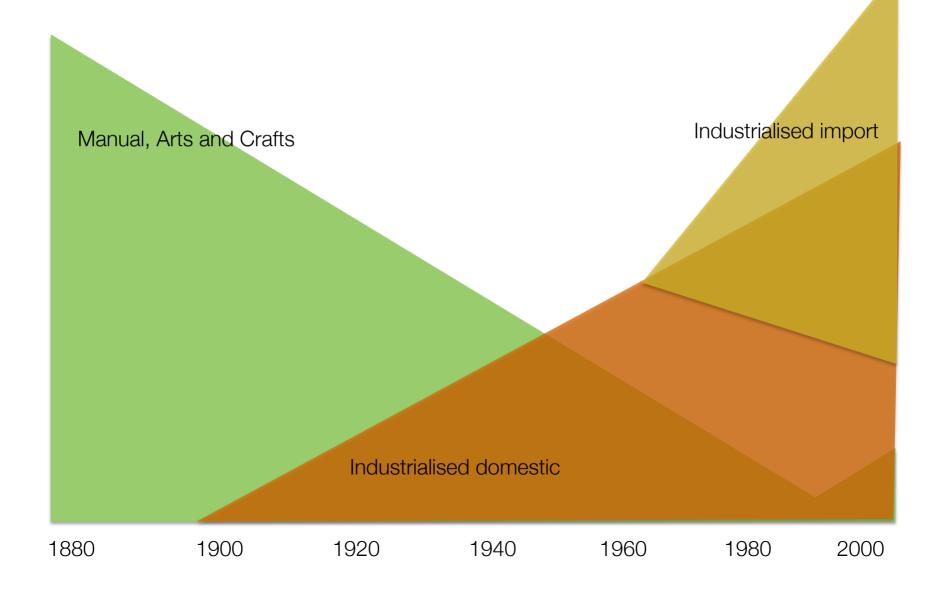


### The dream of the unspoilt landscape





### Traditional manufacturing versus industrialised production

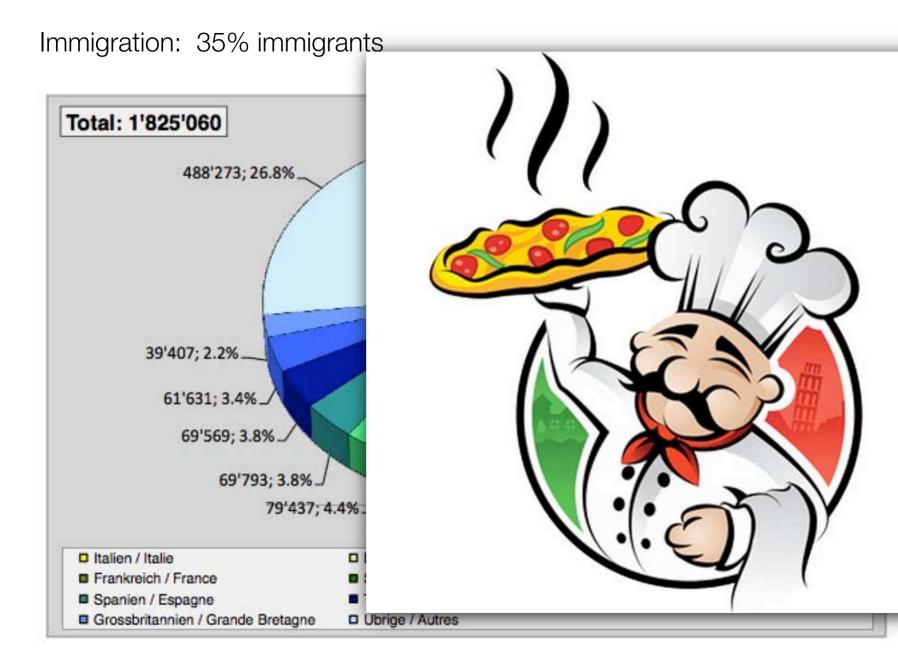


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Traditional manufacturing versus industrialised production after 2<sup>nd</sup> world war









#### The survivors





Zürich | Zürich-Flughafen | Basel | Genève-Aéroport

Weil Schenken Freude macht | The pure pleasure of giving



Reasons for the decline:

-since Switzerland never had an autocratic system – the need of design for representation was never strong

-after the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war, industrialisation, standardisation and efficiency took over

-the population got used to a high standard live style, focusing on consum rather on self production

- -the population moved to the cities
- -old traditions faded away
- -immigrants brought their own, attractive culture
- -imported goods brought often cheaper, but better quality



In short:

The traditional Arts and Crafts techniques vanished slowly throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### But was this a great loss?

Today we can say: no

What followed was an industrialisation on the same level as the Arts and Crafts tradition.



# Part 4 The turning point: from Arts and Crafts to Swiss Design







#### Train Station Watch, Hans Hilfiker, 1955

Swatch, 1984







Hermes Baby Typewriter 1940







Potato peeler, Alfred Neweczeral 1947

SIGG Aluminium Bottle







Recta Compass 1972

Omega Speedmaster 1968







NAGRA SNST, Audiotape, 1962





Utz since 1972

Edak since 1969

Small and Beautiful – Design from Switzerland Professor Michael Krohn, Zurich University of the Arts



#### Swiss design





Max Bill Kitchen Clock 1955

Wohnbedarf 1935







Eternit Chair, Willy Guhl, 1958



### Values of Swiss Design

-inventive

-direct

-simple

-unpretentious

-ingenious

-true

-authentic

-intelligent



#### Ikonen des Schweizer Designs - Technik und Lebensstil



# Part 5 The modern swiss design







Swiss Knive, 2009

Künzli Sport Shoes, Redesign 2008





Freitag Bags, since 1994

Mammut Bagpack, 2002





The "Red Arrow" Train, 1938

Stadler Rail 2010





Concept Car SMART 1994

Smart Serial Car 1998







Twike, Electro Supported Vehicle 1990

Thömus Stromer, Electrobike 2008







#### ZeroTracer, Electro Bike 2005

Mindset, Electroar 2008







Tilting shoe tray, Hanspeter Weidmann, 1984

USM Haller Office Furniture System1962







Lifto Working Lamp, Benjamin Thut, Belux 1987

REVOX Tape Machine, 1977







Ventura Watch, Hannes Wettstein, 2004

LAMY pico, ballpoint, Franco Clivio, 2009







Sideboard, Kurt Erni, Time by Wellis 1998

ZED chair, Hannes Wettstein, 2004

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#### Swiss design





Atelier Pfister Kollektion 2010

Updown, Reto Schöpfer, 1996







Mammut Mountaineering Helmet 2010

Radys Multilayer functional Wear 2011







Von Rickenbach Solid Wood 2010

Glas Hergiswil



# Part 4 Graphics, Textiles and Low Energy Technologies

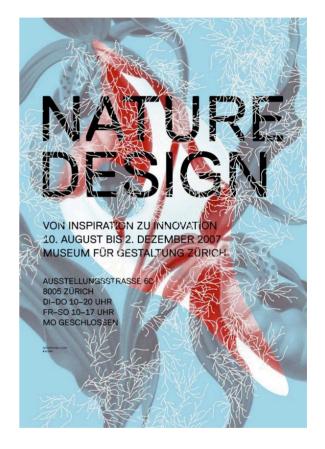


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Typefaces of Norm, 2004







Cinemafrica Poster, Ralph Schraivogel, 1993

Nature Design Poster, Norm 2007





Wolven Silk Scarfes, Corline Flüeler, 2006

Schöller Textiles for functional Wear





PAC Car II, experinmental low fuel consumption car

BMC Race Machine Carbon Bike





"Self" Container, Energy independent living cell



## Swiss Design – the success factors

• Swiss design was always close to the industry, production and manufacturing.

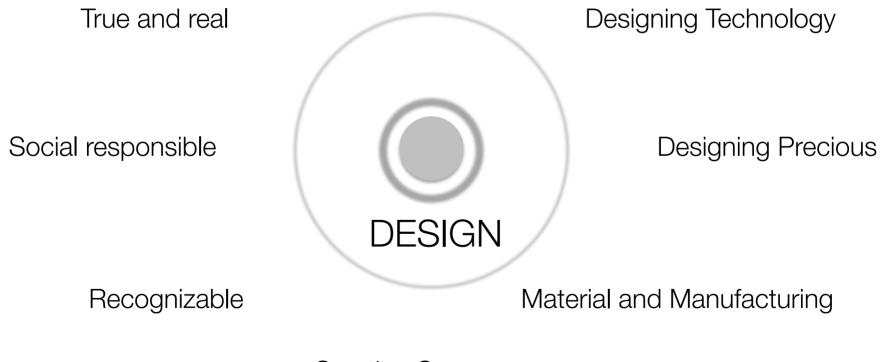
• The Design is rational, reliable, well developed and emotional appealing. It is close to the users needs and adds quality to the life.

• Swiss Design is inventive; it merges knowledge from science, behaviour and the society.



## Swiss Design – the success factors

Sustainability



Creating Sense



## Thank you for your attention Prof. Michael Krohn