

Landesmuseum Zürich.

The Swiss Army knife

A tool that's become an icon

9 July – 24 October 2010

Temporary exhibition at the National Museum Zurich

Press release July 2010

The Swiss Army knife at the National Museum Zurich

Following the great success of the temporary exhibition at the Forum of Swiss History in Schwyz and at the Château de Prangins, there is now an opportunity to see «The Swiss Army knife: A tool that's become an icon» at the National Museum Zurich. The red pocket knife bearing the Swiss cross, known around the world as the Swiss Army Knife, once an irreplaceable tool, has become an icon of the leisure society on the move. The exhibition displays the great variety of historic folding knives and takes a closer look at the origin and development of the knife factory set up by Karl Elsener in Ibach near Schwyz.

The exhibition is devoted to the cultural and historical origins of the folding knife. In addition to early Neolithic and Bronze Age knives, visitors can also see a large number of early versions of the contemporary folding knife: Roman and late Gothic folding knives, bayonets, Swiss daggers, peasant knives, drude's knives, pen knives, flint strikers, Spanish «Navajas», gardeners' knives or knives as tools.

A closer look at the folding knife gives a broad insight into Swiss cultural history. Visitors find out what a drude's knife is, what wagoner's cutlery was used for, who once used a penknife or owned a «Coltello d'Amore».

Another central theme of the exhibition is the opening by Karl Elsener of the knife factory (renamed Victorinox) in Ibach-Schwyz. The exhibition traces the company's history and highlights innovative aspects of knife production. Finally, it shows how companies have used the positive image of the red pocket knife in advertising to enhance their own reputation, and the role the knife has played in art and design.

Landesmuseum Zürich.

The temporary exhibition «The Swiss Army knife. A tool that's become an icon» came into being in collaboration with the now deceased lender and collector Horst A. Brunner, and with Victorinox as partner and lender.

Army knife workshop. Put together your very own pocket knife!

Every Tue, Thu and Sat 10 am – 1 pm and 2 pm – 5 pm

The workbench will be staffed by employees of Victorinox.

CHF 20.00 per knife | Places limited | Booking at the till or by calling 044 218 66 66

Public guided tours (in german)

Thu 22.7.2010 | 6 pm with Jürg Burlet, curator.

From the flint to the pocket knife.

Thu 9.9.2010 | 6 pm with H. P. Klötzli, Cutler Klötzli.

From the hand-forged pocket knife to today's high-tech folding knife.

Tracing the history of a 164-year-old family enterprise.

Thu 07.10.2010 | 6 pm with Jürg Burlet, curator.

From the flint to the pocket knife.

Guided tours on request for private groups and schools.

Information and booking

Mo – Fr 9 am – 12.30 pm

T. +41 (0)44 218 65 04 | fuehrungen@snm.admin.ch

Publications about the exhibition

«The Swiss Army knife. A tool that's become an icon». Illustrated exhibition catalogue in German, French, Italian, English. CHF 10.00

The publication is available in the museum shop or can be ordered from buchbestellung@snm.admin.ch.

www.sackmesser kult.ch

You can find more information about the exhibition and the supporting programme on the Website.

Landesmuseum Zürich.

All media texts and a selection of photographs are available to download from the homepage at www.sackmesser.kult.ch under «Presse»

For any further questions, please contact:

Eliane Burckhardt, PR officer, Landesmuseum Zürich

T. +41 (0)44 218 65 49 | eliane.burckhardt@snm.admin.ch