Swiss Grand Award for Design 2019
11–16 June 2019
Messe Basel, *Hall 3*

Press preview 10 June, 10 am–12 pm
Opening 10 June, 7–10 pm
Award ceremony 11 June, 7–8 pm,
cocktail reception from 8 pm

Federal Office of Culture:
outstanding designers honoured

**Swiss Grand Award for Design 2019
goes to Rosmarie Baltensweiler, Connie Hüsser and Thomi Wolfensberger**

The Federal Office of Culture has selected lamp designer and entrepreneur
Rosmarie Baltensweiler, interior stylist Connie Hüsser, and lithographer Thomi Wolfensberger
as the winners of this year's Swiss Grand Award for Design. The Award is conferred
on the recommendation of the Federal Design Commission. The winners work in very different
fields and reflect the excellence and diversity of Swiss design. The awards will be presented
in Basel on 11 June 2019.

Together with her husband Rico, Rosmarie Baltensweiler made Swiss design history with
the "Type 600" lamp in 1951 and established an internationally successful company that was
a pioneer in sustainable production. The innovative family business still benefits from
Rosmarie Baltensweiler's ground-breaking work today. Connie Hüsser has contributed
substantially to the history of Swiss design, even though her work cannot be assigned to any
conventional design discipline. A visual merchandiser by training, she collects objects
and ideas and recombines them into three-dimensional collages that anticipate future trends.
She also advises companies, brings designers together with producers, designs spaces,
and creates exhibitions. Thomi Wolfensberger is a master in the field of lithography and
a specialised craftsman. He operates in the background, far away from standards, and with
his passion for craftsmanship, technical skills and love of experimentation has enabled
the production of works by artists both in Switzerland and abroad for more than 30 years.

The award winners will receive their honours on 11 June 2019 in the Swiss Design Awards
exhibition. The exhibition, which runs in parallel with Art Basel and Design Miami/Basel,
will also feature works by the award winners. The accompanying publication
on the Swiss Grand Award for Design 2019 will appear in conjunction with the event.

Rosmarie Baltensweiler, b. 1927, Ebikon
# Lamp designer and entrepreneur

The Baltensweiler family company was founded thanks to the dazzling career of the "Type 600" lamp and is still going strong more than 60 years later. Together with her husband Rico, Rosmarie Baltensweiler built an internationally successful small business while simultaneously raising four children. Their chalet in Ebikon, not far from Lucerne, was studio, workshop and living quarters in one. When Rico Baltensweiler died unexpectedly in 1987, the couple's son Gabriel and daughter Karin took over important aspects of the family operations. Starting in 2013, Rosmarie Baltensweiler gradually retired from the business. Now, in 2019, the Baltensweiler company produces and distributes sixteen different lamp models, among them a new edition of the Type 600.

The worldwide political situation in the early 1970s proved to be one of the most important impulses for Rico and Rosmarie Baltensweiler. The global oil crisis spotlighted questions of sustainability and energy efficiency for the small family business. Driven by this approach, the company successfully incorporated LED technology into their products in 2007.

> *"Our designs have always been guided by the desire to simplify. It also depended on technical potential, on what we were actually able to produce."*
>
> Rosmarie Baltensweiler

A pioneer in the design of luminaires, Rosmarie Baltensweiler has created light fixtures that are now design classics. The lamps' design was always influenced by a desire to find the right formal language, and embodies the very best of classic Swiss product design. Over more than six decades, Baltensweiler has become a family operation of international reach renowned for innovative technology and timeless design.
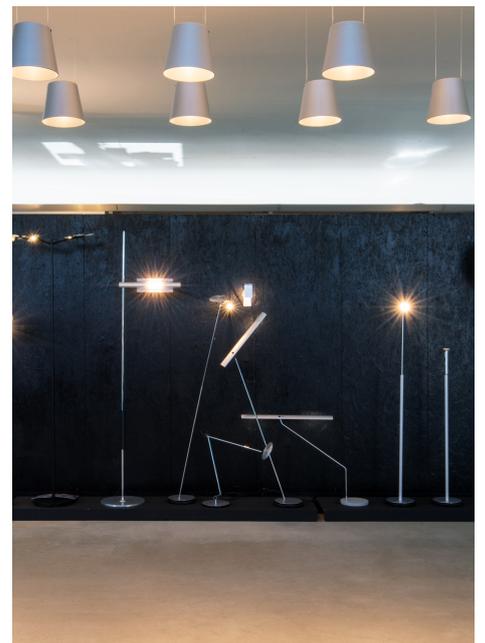
Connie Hüsser, b. 1967, Zurich
Interior stylist

Connie Hüsser is the first interior stylist to receive the Swiss Grand Award for Design.
But she is much more: she also works as a consultant for furniture companies,
designs exhibitions and promotes young designers. With her unerring ability to identify trends,
she anticipates what will later become the zeitgeist.

One of Connie Hüsser's most radical and sustainable occupations is the styling for Vitra's
now legendary catalogues "Select, arrange". Companies are still trying to imitate the unique
atmosphere of their pictures, but without much success. The stands that Connie Hüsser
designs for Vitra are always one of the highlights of the Milan furniture fair. She creates unique
scenarios and strikingly beautiful three-dimensional collages that are nonetheless of great
clarity and cogency.

Connie Hüsser's enduring success is down to her curiosity, love of discovery,
and "good eye". As she herself says: "Noticing accidental things, supposedly insignificant
things, and recognising their strength is probably my greatest talent."
In 2018 Connie Hüsser launched her first exhibition under the label "Object with Love",
with a highly regarded show at the interior design fair in Kortrijk (BE). This June, the second
edition of "Object with Love" can be discovered alongside the Swiss Design Awards
at Design Miami/Basel (*Hall 1 South*).

*"What Connie Hüsser does and is cannot be learned.
She is what she is thanks to her personality, her single-minded
search for exceptional objects and combinations, her presence,
and her discriminating eye."*
Jörg Boner, Chair of the Federal Design Commission.

Thomi Wolfensberger, b. 1964, Zurich
Lithographer

The Wolfensberger lithographic print shop, with printing machines named, for example, Emma Stone or Gertrude Stein, represents a slice of Swiss printing history. Since their founding in 1902, the graphic printers J.E. Wolfensberger AG in Zurich have devoted themselves to combining art with state-of-the-art printing. When Thomi Wolfensberger took over the lithography section of the family business in the late 1980s, the heyday of classical lithography had already come to an end. From the start, he found a means of investing the craft with renewed vibrancy through fruitful collaboration with art and artists. He brilliantly exploits and expands the potential of lithography to implement artistic visions, and time and again he has found new means of solving specific problems.

Enduring and recurring collaborations with artists such as Fischli/Weiss, Samuel Buri, Shirana Shahbazi, Huber/Huber, Zilla Leutenegger, Dominique Lämmli, Michael Günzburger, Dominik Stauch, Adrian Schiess, as well as international figures including John Baldessari, Wade Guyton, Wolfgang Laib, Douglas Gordon, have transformed the lithographic press into a pure artists' print workshop.

> *"We question each other as artist or printer, which is extremely productive, a mutual respect that means focusing on content. We influence each other."*
>
> Michael Günzburger, artist, on Thomi Wolfensberger

The Confederation confers the Swiss Grand Award for Design on Thomi Wolfensberger in recognition of his artisanal expertise, his exceptional knowledge of materials, his mastery of colour, and the innovative development and extension of planographic printing techniques.

Publication

Swiss Grand Award for Design 2019
56 pages (German/French/English)
With extended interviews and texts
by Mirjam Fischer, Corinne Gisel and
Anna Niederhäuser
Design: Krispin Heé, Berlin and Zurich
Photos: Marc Asekhame, Zurich/Paris

Exhibition

Press preview
Monday 10 June, 10 am–12 midday
Messe Basel, *Hall* 3
Opening
together with the Swiss Art Awards
Monday 10 June, 7 pm–10 pm
Hall 3, Messe Basel

Swiss Grand Award for Design and
Swiss Design Awards
presentation ceremony
Tuesday 11 June, 7 pm–8 pm,
cocktail reception from 8 pm
Hall 3, Messe Basel

The Swiss Design Awards 2019 exhibition
is open from 11–16 June,
10 am–7 pm (Sunday until 6 pm).
Admission is free.

Visual materials on the award winners
are available for download on the website:
http://www.bak.admin.ch/sgpd

Online and social media

swissdesignawards.ch
schweizerkulturpreise.ch/design
Instagram: @swissdesignawards/
#swissdesignawards/
#swissdesignawards2019/
#swissgrandawardfordesign
Facebook: @sdaswissdesignawards

Information and contact

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Launched in 2007 and endowed with CHF 40,000 in each case, the Swiss Grand Award for Design highlights the work of well-known designers, experienced design firms and innovative manufacturers that exemplifies the quality and relevance of Swiss design practice nationally and internationally. The Swiss Grand Award for Design promotes and strengthens the design scene and honours the tradition of Swiss design.

Laureates 2007–2018

2018
Cécile Feilchenfeldt (textile designer)
Felco (manufacturer of pruning shears)
Rosmarie Tissi (graphic designer)

2017
David Bielander
(jewellery designer and artist)
Thomas Ott
(comic-book artist and illustrator)
Jean Widmer
(graphic designer and art director)

2016
Claudia Caviezel (textile designer)
Hans Eichenberger (product designer)
Ralph Schraivogel (graphic designer)

2015
Lora Lamm (graphic designer)
Team'77 (Erich Gschwind, André Gürtler,
Christian Mengelt, typographers)

2014
Erich Biehle (textile designer)
Alfredo Häberli (product designer)
Wolfgang Weingart (typographer)

2013
Trix and Robert Haussmann
(product designers)
Armin Hofmann (graphic designer)
Martin Leuthold (textile designer)

2012
Franco Clivio (product designer)
Gavillet & Rust (Gilles Gavillet, David Rust,
graphic designers)
Karl Gerstner (graphic designer)

2011
Jörg Boner (product designer)
NORM (Dimitri Bruni, Manuel Krebs,
graphic designers)
Ernst Scheidegger (photographer)
Walter Steiger (footware designer)

2010
Susi und Ueli Berger (furniture designers)
Jean-Luc Godard (filmmaker)
Sonnhild Kestler (textile designer)
Otto Künzli (jewellery designer)

2009
Robert Frank (photographer)
Christoph Hefti (textile designer)
Ursula Rodel (fashion designer)
Thut Möbel (furniture design)

2008
Holzer Kobler Architekturen (Barbara Holzer,
Tristan Kobler, exhibitions designers)
Albert Kriemler, Akris (fashion designer)
Alain Kupper (graphic designer, musician,
artist, gallerist)
Walter Pfeiffer (photographer)

2007
Ruth Grüninger (fashion designer)
NOSE (communication design, service design)
Bernhard Schobinger (jewellery designer)
Cornel Windlin (graphic designer)

Federal Design Commission 2019

Chair
Jörg Boner
Product designer, Zurich

Members
Laurent Benner
Visual designer, London and Zurich

Claudia Caviezel
Textile design and development at Akris, St. Gallen

Davide Fornari
Professor of Research and Development, ECAL, Renens

Tatyana Franck
Director, Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne

Christoph Hefti
Textile designer, Brussels

Aude Lehmann
Graphic designer, Zurich