

Press release

The Collection

from 11 October 2019

The fully redesigned permanent exhibition 'The Collection' at the National Museum Zurich showcases more than 7,000 exhibits from the Museum's own holdings. This important display has been housed in a setting that is steeped in history, in the Museum's refurbished West Wing.

The new permanent exhibition 'The Collection' at the National Museum Zurich showcases Swiss craftsmanship and artistry over a period of about 1,000 years. The exhibits range from the Palm Sunday donkey dating from the 11th century to the world-famous globe created in the 16th century by the brilliant scholar Jost Bürgi and an opulent Valentino gown created five years ago using fabrics produced by St. Gallen firm Forster Rohner. Over three floors and around 2,000 square metres, visitors are presented with more than 7,000 exhibits. The exhibition is a cross-section of the collections of the Swiss National Museum; featuring 860,000 items, the Museum's holdings form the country's most extensive collection of cultural history objects.

The fully renovated exhibition spaces are important witnesses to contemporary history. Architect Gustav Gull designed the National Museum in the 19th century in accordance with historicist principles. He introduced styles from bygone eras, matching architecture, interiors and collection exhibits. A central element in the plans for the Museum were the 'Period Rooms', twelve original elegant state rooms from the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque period. These rooms impressively demonstrate Swiss workmanship and artistry, and are part of the country's cultural and historical heritage.

The result is an atmospherically dense exhibition that not only allows visitors to immerse themselves in the past, but also gives a deeper sense of what lies beneath: a feeling for the cultural richness of our country, the societal changes through the ages, and the development of Switzerland's economy.

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