

Press release

Stereomania. Switzerland in 3D

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In the 19th century, stereoscopic images were wildly popular viewing in parlours across the globe. The three-dimensional depiction of photographs won legions of fans, and was also instrumental in driving the nascent tourism industry.

‘Stereomania. Switzerland in 3D’ takes visitors on a journey back to 1900. The exhibition focuses primarily on stereoscopic photographs of Switzerland from 1860 to 1910.

With a new type of picture card and a viewer, known as a stereoscope, people could enter a whole new world of three-dimensional images. This technical innovation captivated the public and was inexpensive to produce. International publishing houses distributed the stereoscopic cards worldwide, quickly making them a global mass medium. Tourist subjects were especially popular. The stereoscopic images sparked wanderlust in the parlours and living rooms of the middle classes, and people began obsessively collecting the cards. Switzerland as a tourist destination greatly benefited from the stereoscope craze. The wide circulation of images of spectacular mountain peaks and idyllic lakeland scenes aided the country’s steady rise to becoming a top tourist destination.

The exhibition shows for the first time scores of stereoscopic images that were added to the collection of the Swiss National Museum in early 2020. Alongside the images are traveller accounts and reports. There is also information on the stereoscope industry and stereoscopic technology. The exhibition is supported by the Stiftung Familie Fehlmann (Fehlmann Family Foundation).

If you have any questions, please contact:

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