

Acting, or the struggle to survive

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today. It is a wrist-compass, specially designed for submarine exploration and direction finding; it is the perfect answer to the needs of divers who require a luminous, resistant and completely reliable compass. Easy to use, even when wearing gloves, it is available with or without a depth gauge. Its power of resistance also makes it an ideal instrument for all sportsmen who need to determine their position and get their bearings, and especially for parachutists. Elegant in spite of its sturdy plastic case, it is equipped with a dial, hands and a bearing arrow with a high degree of luminosity. (SODT).

Acting, or the Struggle to Survive

The 1973-74 Theatre Season in French-speaking Switzerland is over the theatre-going public of Geneva and Lausanne will have to wait until Autumn for the preparation of a new repertoire. Switzerland has a flourishing theatrical life. Everything may be done on a small scale, but there are a sufficient number of theatres in the main cities to satisfy any demanding public. When the possibilities of the season are exhausted, it is easy for a Genevese to drive to Lausanne for an evening, or for a Zurcher to go to Basle.

In French-speaking Switzerland alone, there are 156 professional and unionised actors. According to an article in the *Journal de Geneve's* Literary Supplement, only thirty-six of these professionals earn more than 30,000 francs a year. Some make as little as 300 francs a year out of acting. Earnings depend to a great extent on individual theatres and the public they cater for. Thus the Theatre de Carouge et l'Atelier in Geneva offer their casts from 1,500 to 2,000 francs a month during the season. At the Comedie, salaries attain 2,000 to 2,500 francs, but at the experimental Theatre Mobile, all actors require a second job even during the season. The professional actors and directors of the Theatre Populaire Romand (TRP) net 1,150 francs a month, a sum which attests to their devotion to the theatre. The TRP was founded in Canton Neuchatel and in the Jura some fifteen years ago. It has become one of the driving forces towards opening the theatre for the rural and working classes. It stages highly regular and successful performances in schools and industrial cities like la Chaux de Fonds.

Despite their very small area, with a public half the size of London's, Swiss theatres often display productions of West End standards. Although the French-speaking part of the country falls under the shadow of France, while German-speaking Switzerland has its own identity, neither part of the country is in a cultural vacuum. There is perhaps less competition and fewer stars of the stage, but the importance given to theatre by the authorities of Basle and Zurich, in particular, tend to uphold very high standards even though there is a perpetual conflict between conservatism and avant-garde experimentation and revolutionary.