

Swiss fashion and swiss watches

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Mr. Hans de Watteville, head of the press department of the Exporters' Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry, Zurich, giving his speech of welcome over the microphone ; on either side of him are Mr. R. Proellocks, head of the Watchmaking Pavillon at the Exhibition (left) and Mr. H. Zimmermann of the Swiss Watchmaking Federation, Bienne (right).

SWISS FASHION AND SWISS WATCHES

Even now, it is still not too late to talk about the Brussels Exhibition, particularly when it concerns an important event that took place in the Swiss Pavilion.

On September 22nd, 1958, two of Switzerland's main export industries — clothing and watchmaking — put on a joint display of the quintessence of their production for the international fashion press and a select gathering of guests.

It was an ingenious idea to combine in this way two branches of Swiss industrial production which have many features in common, both being very sensitive to the changing trends of fashion, both depending to a large extent on artistic creation and both producing articles which though basically utilitarian have become objects of good taste and outstanding beauty.

As a result of these affinities, the creators of these two Swiss specialities joined forces to organise one of the most brilliant displays that visitors to the Brussels Fair were privileged to see.

The choice of one's attire depends upon the time of day at which it is to be worn, and the style of one's watch — nowadays a jewel worn as much for adornment as for more utilitarian purposes — must match that of one's dress or suit. Watchmakers and ready-to-wear manufacturers vied with each other in ingenuity in their efforts to make and present perfectly balanced outfits in which the clothes and watches set each other off to perfection.

It is naturally impossible for us to describe here all the creations presented, or even to give an adequate idea with the reproductions shown opposite. Let us simply say that the Swiss ready-to-wear clothing manufacturers were clearly inspired by the Empire line; but they did not forget their traditional role, which is to adapt extreme trends and select the features that will appeal by their quiet elegance and wearability to a wide clientele of discerning women in different countries. As a representative of one of Switzerland's industries summed up so succinctly: « Switzerland, at the crossroads of Europe, is exposed to a variety of influences. She is therefore in a particularly good position to interpret and adapt extreme trends of style into an acceptable fashion. »

The fifty-seven items in the programme represented every type of garment for men, women and children, from sports clothes to evening wear, and Swiss fabrics such as woollens, silks, fine cottons, embroideries and knitwear enjoyed pride of place.

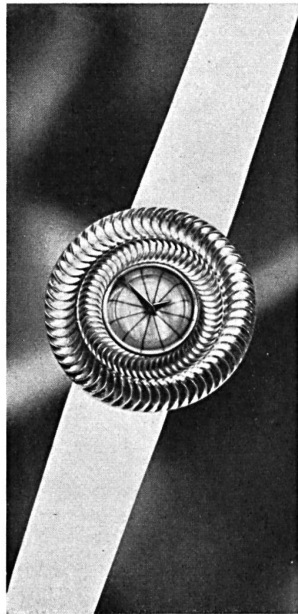
And now let us talk about the watches. Since the appearance on the market of a large number of more or less revolutionary novelties — such as waterproof watches, shockproof mechanisms, self-winding and antimagnetic watches, calendar watches, etc. — Swiss watchmakers, while continuing to perfect their creations and improve the quality and precision of their watches (already of a very high standard), have concentrated their efforts first of all on the generalisation of these new conquests of technical science, their improvement and the widening of their use, and secondly on a continual

Arrival of Mr. Gaston Jaccard, Swiss Ambassador to Belgium (in the centre), accompanied by Dr. A. Bosshardt, head of the Exporters' Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry, Zurich (right), and Mr. J. P. Savary, representing the Swiss watchmaking associations at the Exhibition (left).



Cocktail watch in an original gold case giving illusion of a turning wheel.

Watch mounted in a pendent of stones taken from an Alpine river bed, suspended from a modernist golden triangle.



Jeweled-lever watch partly encircled by pink pearls, gold mesh bracelet.



change of presentation. From the purely utilitarian object that it used to be, the watch has now become an ornament, but a useful one admirably suited to the various circumstances of its use. A watch is no longer expected merely to tell the time, but to tell it gracefully and under all possible conditions, even the most exacting, whether at a ball, in a plane, in the heart of the jungle or at the top of some giant peak in the Andes or the Himalayas.

At this display in the Swiss Pavilion at the Brussels Fair watches were presented with the emphasis on their ultimate use, as for example men's sports watches equipped with a compass, chronograph watches, etc. Special mention should also be made of the jewelled lever watches obviously inspired by the Empire style, in the form of bracelets, rings, pendants and brooches, for wear with evening dresses, to adorn bare arms and low décolletés ; there were also pin-on watches and clips for wear on the lapels and collars of suits. With the exception of the most luxurious watches, studded with diamonds and precious stones and in every way comparable to veritable masterpieces of the jeweller's art, all the new watches presented were automatic.

To sum up, the close correlation existing in the practical field between fashions in clothing and watchmaking deserved being brought to notice and commented on. One could not have wished for a better opportunity or a more successful occasion.

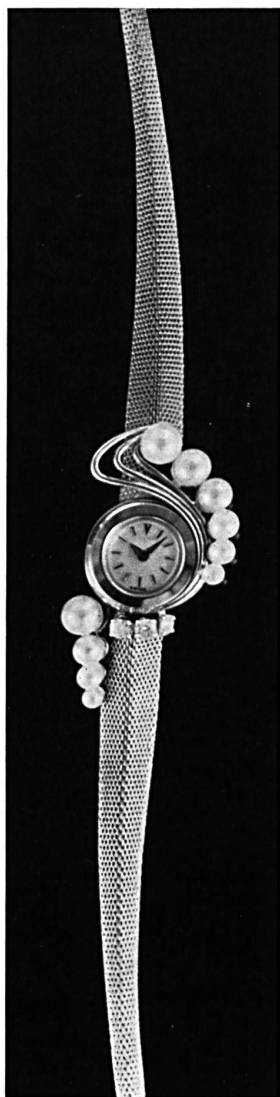
R. C.



During the show.



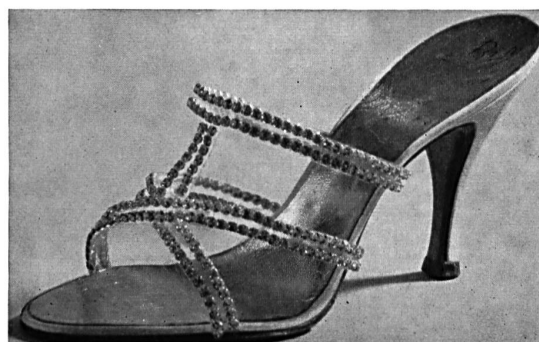
Watch with tiara of pearls and diamonds.



Gold evening watch, decorated with culture pearls.

Evening dress in two-toned violet velvet.

Photo Tenca



Narrow-strapped sandal with a double row of rhinestones.

Photo Kriewall



Evening shoe in Swiss fabric.

Photo Kriewall



Very fashionable dress with gathered skirt in mixed Jacquard fabric, top in plain wool.



Watch richly decorated with pearls and diamonds, worn round the neck attached to a silk ribbon.

Draped dress in pure grey silk.



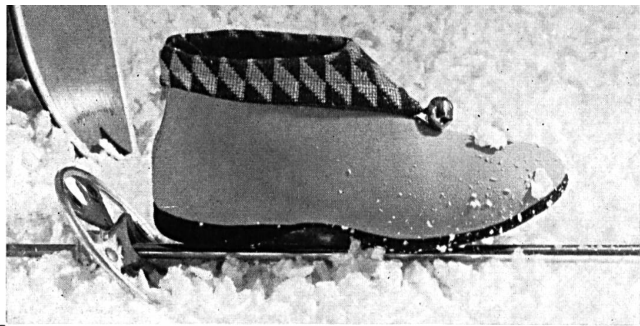
Hand-embroidered
Empire-line dress.

Photos Tenca



Gabardine après-ski boot with fancy top.

Photo Kriewall



A watch without hands ! The hours and minutes are marked on mobile dials visible through the openings made in the case.



Airman's watch with a large number of gadgets useful in flying.

Pullover in heavy mitinised wool tricot with Jacquard design in six colours.

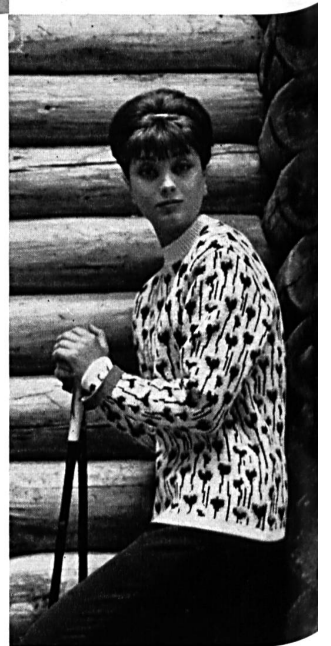


Photo Tenca



Modern houndstooth sports jacket worn with plain trousers in shot worsted.

Photo Grein