

Art and Culture



Art and culture play a key role in Zurich, for the city already showed itself to be avant-garde as early as the Middle Ages – as a major center for silk production and the silk trade in the 13th century, as the birthplace of the Dada art movement at the beginning of the 20th century and later of Constructivism, or as the home city by birth or choice of many important artists and intellectuals. Max Bill, Johanna Spyri, Lenin, James Joyce, Thomas Mann, Albert Einstein and many more all left their mark on Zurich. Nowadays, countless museums and cultural institutions invite visitors on fascinating tours of discovery, while art in public places and numerous festivals testify to Zurich's multifaceted cultural offerings. zuerich.com/culture

Multifaceted Museums in Zurich

Asia, Africa and Oceania

The path leading up to the Museum Rietberg passes through an idyllic park with a spectacular view of the city and mountains. The museum comprises three villas dating from the 19th century. It was here that Wagner drew his inspiration for his operatic masterpiece, "Tristan and Isolde". The museum has remained a haven of creativity to this day and now houses an important collection of non-European art. Here, African masks can be admired just as much as sculptures from India or paintings from Japan. rietberg.ch

North America

In the other direction, towards the west, our journey takes us to Nonam, the North America Native Museum. Here, the main focus is placed on the art and cultural diversity of Native Americans and Inuit, which can be explored in an interactive way. Besides the existing collection, the museum regularly hosts various temporary exhibitions. nonam.ch

Codes and Algorithms

Every day, we experience – consciously or subconsciously – the world of data, codes and algorithms. They are omnipresent without us noticing them. But are they art? The Museum of Digital Art – currently the only one of its kind in Europe – devotes itself to art forms that are based on codes, and at the intersection of science and creativity provides insights into the supposedly familiar digital world. muda.co

Science and Technology

Immerse yourself in the amazing world of science. Experience the wonders of nature. Or investigate tricks of the mind. The Technorama in Winterthur makes all this possible, with hundreds of interactive exhibits explaining science, art and technology to children and families in an easily comprehensible way. Here, in the only science center in Switzerland, visitors are actively encouraged to touch, try, play and be amazed. technorama.ch

The World of Soccer

Gooooaa! No other sport inspires so many people around the world as soccer. And it is exactly this fascination that the FIFA World Football Museum sets out to examine in closer detail. With more than 1,000 exhibits, visitors are taken on a journey of discovery through the history of international soccer and learn how a simple ball has taken the world by storm. fifamuseum.com

Swiss History

The *grande dame* of Zurich's museums: The National Museum Zurich, which is part of the Swiss National Museum, is the most frequently visited museum of cultural history in Switzerland. In the freshly renovated and extended building, Swiss and world history come together in a series of fascinating permanent and temporary exhibitions – a visit becomes an excursion between the past and the present. landesmuseum.ch

Money, the Economy, and Switzerland as a Financial Center

The Swiss Finance Museum is the latest addition to Zurich's museum community. It gives visitors an insight into the world of finance and stock exchange trading. The multimedia exhibition illustrates the origins of the Swiss economic system and expounds on its significance in an impressive way. In addition, the museum houses the world's most important collection of historical securities. finanzmuseum.ch

The Fine Arts

Kunsthaus

Zurich is a mecca for art enthusiasts. A visit to Zurich's Kunsthaus is an absolute highlight for people with an affinity for art – and a delight even for those who are not quite so passionate about paintings and sculptures. Among other things, the Kunsthaus is home to the most important and comprehensive collection of works by the Graubünden artist, Alberto

Giacometti, to be exhibited in a museum, as well as the largest Munch collection outside of Norway. Also on show are key works by Expressionist artists, and an extensive Dada archive, which can be visited by prior request. kunsthaus.ch

Constructivism

Max Bill, Richard Paul Lohse, Camille Graeser and Verena Loewensberg: Works by representatives of the Zurich Concretists can be viewed at the Haus Konstruktiv. Encompassing some 900 works dating from the 20th and 21st centuries, the collection has continually grown since it was founded in 1986, and today encompasses both historical and contemporary art. hauskonstruktiv.ch

The Private Collection

Oskar Reinhart, born in 1885 into an old family of Winterthur merchants, was one of the most important art collectors in Switzerland. The Oskar Reinhart Collection “Am Römerholz” is not just a typical example of private collections from the first half of the 20th century, which were compiled in a similar way in Germany and the USA, but also shows masterpieces from the Classical Antiquity right through to the early 20th century. While the focus is on 19th-century French paintings, the spectrum covered by the collection is quite impressive. museumoskarreinhart.ch

Swiss Contemporary Art

Art lovers wishing to immerse themselves in Swiss contemporary art can best do this at the Kunst(Zeug)Haus – for very few collections show as many exhibits of this genre as this museum, with some 5,000 works of art. With a keen sense for up-and-coming Swiss artists, Peter and Elisabeth Bosshard began to collect high-quality works back in 1970. As a result, in addition to fascinating temporary exhibitions, the Kunst(Zeug)haus can constantly draw on works from its own rich portfolio. kunstzeughaus.ch

Weird and Wonderful Sculptures

The Bruno Weber Park covers an area of around 15,000 sq.meters (18,000 sq.yards). Artist and sculptor Bruno Weber, who died in 2011, has created a fascinating fantasy world of mythical creatures, exotic beauties and enchanting beings overlooking the municipalities of Spreitenbach and Dietikon, to the west of Zurich, making it the largest sculpture park featuring a single artist in Switzerland. The Bruno Weber Park is open during the summer months on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. brunoweberpark.ch

Art in Public Spaces

In the city of Zurich, over 1,300 works of art can be admired in public spaces – thanks to the efforts of the working group, KiöR (Kunst im öffentlichen Raum). This body makes recommendations relating to existing works and ensures that in future, too, Zurich will remain a place where art goes hand-in-hand with everyday life. Below are just a few of the most spectacular works that can be seen in open spaces.

Guardian Angel by Niki de Saint-Phalle

In Zurich, art and culture can also be experienced outside in the open air, such as during a daily walk through the city. The art works in public spaces are like steadfast dashes of color in our everyday lives. This is quite literally the case with the enormous angel by Niki de Saint-Phalle, which hovers suspended from the ceiling of the imposing concourse of Zurich Main Train Station and greets travelers as they pass through. Haupthalle, Hauptbahnhof Zürich, 8001 Zürich

Pavilion Sculpture by Max Bill

The walk-in Pavilion Sculpture by Winterthur-born artist Max Bill is situated on the corner of Bahnhofstrasse/Pelikanstrasse. Fashioned in elegant granite, it invites passers-by to stop and indulge in a quiet moment amidst the hustle and bustle of the Bahnhofstrasse. Pelikanstrasse/Bahnhofstrasse 47, 8001 Zürich

Word Installations by Lawrence Weiner

The word installations by the important US conceptual artist, Lawrence Weiner, are definitely not works that belong in sterile showcases. Instead they can be found where the river in the city flows particularly fast – at Bellevue, Limmatplatz

and Helvetiaplatz. Lawrence has inlaid his sentence fragments, “Ball bearings or round stones/made to roll/outside of what there is” in English, Italian or German in the ground, with the aim of encouraging passers-by to stop and reflect. Tram stops [Bellevue](#), [Limmatplatz](#), [Helvetiaplatz](#)

Heureka by Jean Tinguely

Whimsical poetry fashioned from metal, steel and iron: That is “Heureka” by Jean Tinguely. This sculpture, which was created in 1967, was Tinguely’s first public work and stands at the Zürichhorn. Between April and October, the figures are set in motion at 11.00am, 3.00pm and 7.00pm. [Zürichhorn, 8008 Zürich](#)

The Swiss “Export Typeface” Helvetica by Max Miedinger

On a stroll through the streets of Zurich, you can discover one of Switzerland’s most important exports: the “Helvetica” typeface is an icon, design classic and everyday brand all in one, and today is by far one of the most used fonts in the world. It was designed in 1957 by Zurich graphic designer, Max Miedinger, in collaboration with Eduard Hoffmann, who at that time was the manager of the Haas Type Foundry. The Helvetica typeface is not only favored by major brands such as Lufthansa or Nestlé: it is even used in the New York Subway to inform and guide passengers.

For the Eyes and Ears

Tonhalle Zürich

Visitors’ eyes and ears are in for a particular treat in Zurich. One place which arouses all the senses and is laden with superlatives is the Tonhalle Zürich. This magnificent concert hall, with its excellent acoustics, is one of the best in the world. Moreover, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, founded in 1868, is also regarded as one of the world’s finest symphony orchestras. Renovation work at the Tonhalle is scheduled to begin in fall 2017. During this time, the Tonhalle Orchestra will move into temporary quarters at the Maag Music Hall. [tonhalle-orchester.ch](#)

Schauspielhaus

The Schauspielhaus Zürich is not just Switzerland’s largest theater of the spoken word, but is also regarded as one of the most significant German-language theaters. Its two establishments – the tradition-steeped Pfauen in Zürich-Hottingen and the Schiffbau in Zürich-West – put on around 600 performances each year, including some 20 new productions per season. [schauspielhaus.ch](#)

Zurich Opera House

The Zurich Opera House stands proudly and majestically on Sechseläutenplatz, in the heart of Zurich. But the magnificent building is not just internationally renowned because of its impressive exterior; thanks to its outstanding productions it is also among the best opera houses in the world. No fewer than 250 performances per season treat audiences to glamor and acoustic highlights – often starring international names such as Cecilia Bartoli, Klaus Florian Vogt or Nina Stemme. [opernhaus.ch](#)

Zurich Chamber Orchestra

If the internationally celebrated Zurich Chamber Orchestra – which was founded in 1945 by Edmond de Stoutz – were an animal, it would most probably be a chameleon, due to the diversity of its repertoire. Its musical portfolio ranges from baroque, classical and romantic to modern-day. Moreover, the program includes collaborations with musicians from other genres such as jazz, as well as special concerts for children of all ages, including the very young. With Daniel Hope wielding the baton, the tradition-steeped orchestra is now for the first time under the leadership of an instrumentalist rather than a conductor. [zko.ch](#)

Cabaret Voltaire

Just over a century ago, the Cabaret Voltaire was the birthplace of Dadaism. This colorful, chaotic movement of artists and intellectuals reacted to the atrocities of the First World War by using art as their weapon. From their base in Zurich, the Dadaists took the world by storm with their new values. To this day, the wind of Dadaism blows through the rooms of the Cabaret Voltaire, whose program appropriately contains Dadaist elements. [cabaretvoltaire.ch](#)

Guaranteed to Make You Laugh

Casino Theater Winterthur

The Casino Theater Winterthur, founded in 2002, stages armchair theater productions ranging from comedy, cabaret and satire to poetry slam and improvisational theater. They feature not only famous actors and artists, but frequently also up-and-coming young talent. casinotheater.ch

Miller's Studio

At Miller's Studio, one laugh follows the next in quick succession. The theater in Zurich's Seefeld quarter offers a stage for cabaret artists who celebrate the beauty of humor and the spoken word. The program presents both renowned names and promising new artists. millers-studio.ch

Culture in Former Industrial Halls

Löwenbräu Areal

The site where in former times the tradition-steeped Löwenbräu beer was brewed is now home to an exciting mix of old listed buildings and contemporary architecture. But the Löwenbräu Areal is not fascinating because of its architecture alone. For nowadays, it does not serve as a site just for residential buildings and office blocks, but also for a lively international art scene – such as the Kunsthalle Zürich, the Migros Museum of Contemporary Art and numerous art galleries. kunsthallezurich.ch, migrosmuseum.ch

Rote Fabrik

The factory building was constructed in 1892 by the silk company, Henneberg, and purchased in the 1970s by the City of Zurich – originally with the aim of demolishing it in order to widen the adjacent street. However, this plan met with vigorous protest, and in particular left-wing groups campaigned for the factory to be retained and turned into a center for alternative culture. Thus its name – Red Factory – does not just allude to the color of the red brick façade. In the aftermath of the so-called “Opera House Riots” in May 1980, the Zurich authorities finally backed down. Since then, the Rote Fabrik has offered an alternative program in the spheres of movies, music and theater. rotefabrik.ch

Gessnerallee

Theater in a riding hall? That might sound somewhat bizarre, but this really is the case at Gessnerallee, formerly a military building comprising arsenals, riding halls and stables. Nowadays, cultural experiments meet innovative performances at Gessnerallee Zürich, making it one of the most important production and presentation venues for the performing arts in Switzerland and abroad. gessnerallee.ch

Maag Halle

These days, the Maag Halle – where in earlier days huge cogwheels were produced – stages major events and concerts that attract people from all over Switzerland. While some of the facilities are rented out, the venue is predominantly used for own productions by Maag Music & Arts AG – such as the Swiss blockbuster musical, “Ewige Liebe”. The in-house Bistro k2, whose decor exudes pre-industrial charm, provides a wide selection of culinary delights. bymaag.ch

Cue the Movie!

Zurich's Movie Theaters

Zurich has a high concentration of movie theaters, which celebrate the fascination for the moving image with both blockbusters and cinematic treasures. The nostalgic interior of the Alba-Kino emanates glamour, while at the Riffraff or Houdini visitors snuggle down in their seats with a delicious cocktail. A particular highlight is a visit to the smallest movie theater in the City of Zurich – the Kulturstudio, which seats just 24 guests. Manager Felix Wicki, a passionate collector of old film reels, never misses an opportunity to stand on the small stage before each screening and relate some fascinating anecdotes about the movie. arthouse.ch, riffraff.ch, kinohoudini.ch, kulturzueri.ch

Events

Festspiele Zürich

Every two years, Zurich's cultural institutions host the Festspiele Zürich. The varied program, which is compiled by the Opera House, Schauspielhaus, Tonhalle Orchestra and Kunsthaus, is also a homage to the colorful and multifaceted cultural offerings in the city of Zurich. festspiele-zuerich.ch

Zürich Openair

Listen to music while you feel the light summer breeze caressing your face. The Zürich Openair is the perfect way to spend a warm summer's day and over a period of four days presents top stars from the national and international music scene. zurichopenair.ch

Theaterspektakel

Each summer, a spectacular theater festival is held on the Landiwiese meadow, directly next to Lake Zurich – and that for 18 days. Founded in 1980 as an annual international meeting of independent theater groups, the Theater Spektakel has evolved into one of the most important European festivals for the contemporary performing arts. Nowadays, between 35 and 40 individuals and groups from all over the world travel to Zurich to perform on the specially erected stages, providing audiences with an open-air experience of a very special kind. theaterspektakel.ch

ZFF

Held for the first time in 2005, the Zurich Film Festival has already firmly established itself on the national and international festival calendar. Here film enthusiasts come together with directors and movie-makers from all corners of the globe in order to celebrate the medium of film over a period of several days. Among the movies screened are cinematic gems from different countries, as well as major works by famous film-makers. zff.com

Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur

The motto here is "short and sweet": the Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur celebrates the very best of short films. The short film festival is not just the most important of its kind in Switzerland, but is also held in high regard throughout all of Europe. kurzfilmtage.ch

Contact

International Media Team

Zürich Tourism, Stampfenbachstrasse 52, CH-8006 Zürich, Switzerland
Tel +41 44 215 40 96, media@zuerich.com
zuerich.com/media

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