

Berne, 6 April 2016
Manuela Pfrunder

Introductory remarks by Manuela Pfrunder, designer of the new banknotes

Many thanks, Mr Jordan

Good morning, gentlemen and ladies

We first began to imagine what the new banknotes might look like back in 2005. Since then, we have been on a voyage of discovery into the world of banknote technology and have engaged in an active dialogue with Switzerland's cultural heritage. Technology and culture are the key components of any banknote and the designer's task is to weave these two strands together. Design must also adapt to reflect technological and cultural progress. As Mr Jordan has just explained, during the eleven-year development process, technology has undergone some profound transformations. Moreover, during this time, the cultural focus of the new banknote series was changed. So there was never a dull moment for us in the design studio! Given this long and eventful journey, we are all the more delighted to be able to present the first fruits of our labour today – the 50-franc note. I'd now like to explain the thinking behind our design concept for the new series.

Stories are all about characters, and the six stories on the new banknotes are no exception. The story told on each of the denominations is inspired by one of six key motifs, or 'protagonists'. The 10-franc note tells a story about time; the 20-franc note is all about light; the wind dominates the narrative of the 50-franc note; water is the protagonist of the 100-franc note; the 200-franc note focuses on matter; and the story in the 1000-franc note explores human language.

Directly or indirectly, all the design elements on the banknotes – from the most prominent features to the tiniest details – are linked to the relevant protagonist in some way. Even the finest line structures are designed to articulate an aspect of the protagonist and to tie in with

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the respective story. Time, light, wind, water, matter and language – at first, these may appear passive and insignificant, but on closer inspection, we see they are linked to broader realities that are critical to the world we inhabit: organisation, creativity, experience, humanity, science and communication.

Time and organisation, light and creativity, wind and experiences, water and humanity, matter and science, language and communication – each of these pairings represents an aspect of Switzerland. They are at the heart of the Swiss National Bank's overarching banknote theme: 'The many facets of Switzerland'.

On the 50-franc note, we tell the story of the wind, which is emblematic of the wealth of experiences Switzerland has to offer. The story goes like this: it is not only itself permanently in motion, but it also engenders movement. It equalises differences in atmospheric pressure. It is also the air we breathe. And it is the stuff of which dreams of human flight are made. It is the wind that permeates the 50-franc note – from the key design components right down to minute detailing.

The wind is a pressure-equalising force that connects the most diverse regions of our planet. But wind is also a force that humankind can generate, as is illustrated in the image of the dandelion seeds being blown forth into the air. The many faces of the wind are amplified by Switzerland's diverse landscapes: glaciers create downdraughts, sunny woodlands create updraughts and Alpine regions create valley and mountain air currents. At the same time, the wind has the power to both physically carry us in flight and to lift our spirits, giving us a sense of freedom.

Each denomination is part of a series, and this is reflected in design elements that recur across the entire banknote series – but in forms that are adapted to each of the denomination themes that I have just described. To give you an overall impression, we are presenting the main recurring design elements today. The largest and most prominent of these is the hand, which appears on the front of all denominations. The hand replaces the portrait, its eye-catching form helping to ensure that the front of the note has greater visual weight than the back. Whereas in previous banknote series the human factor was limited to a single distinguished personality from the past, the hand in the new series expands the reference to include all people. What's more, the hand is the original and most intuitive 'tool' imparted to humans by evolution, enabling us to transform our ideas into deeds. The hand is thus always shown doing something, performing an action.

On the back of each note is a depiction of a real location in Switzerland. This location, along with an illustration, is intended to show how and where in Switzerland the theme of a given denomination can be experienced.

Time, light, wind, water, matter and language – these protagonists represent universal themes that are not restricted to Switzerland, but span the globe. Universal themes demand a universal symbol. We have embodied this dimension in a shimmering globe that features on

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the front of all the notes. With each denomination, the globe rotates 60 degrees. Superimposed on the globe is a thematic map displaying the global significance of each protagonist.

To summarise: all the banknotes in the series have four recurring design elements in common – the globe, the hand, a location in Switzerland and an accompanying object. And within a given denomination, these elements are woven into a story by one of the six protagonists – time, light, wind, water, matter and language.

Being tasked with designing a new banknote series is a truly fascinating and unique opportunity. I feel very honoured to have received this commission and I would like to thank the Swiss National Bank for the trust they have placed in me. I would also like to thank the SNB – and other partners – for their pleasant and consistently constructive approach throughout our many years of collaboration.

I am exclusively credited with the design of the new Swiss banknotes. As a result, many members of my team, who have been just as closely involved and who have poured just as much of their heart and soul into this project as I have, remain invisible. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to my colleagues, who have accompanied and supported me for so many years – and especially to Adrian Heuberger, who has worked on the project since it began, some eleven years ago. In doing so, I wish to make clear that, in the context of the new banknotes, the name ‘Manuela Pfrunder’ encompasses my entire team and should not be understood as referring exclusively to me.

Thank you for your attention.

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Manuela Pfrunder – curriculum vitae

Manuela Pfrunder was born in Lucerne in 1979 and grew up in the nearby municipality of Eschenbach.

She studied graphic design at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts and did study visits abroad in Bath (UK) and New York (US). Manuela Pfrunder's dissertation, written at Lucerne University in 2000, won several awards and was published in book form under the title *Neotopia, Atlas of equitable distribution of the world* by Limmat Verlag in 2001. She subsequently held a series of lectures and exhibitions on this topic in various locations around Switzerland, Germany and Austria.

Since 2003, Manuela Pfrunder has been working as an independent graphic designer, specialising in information design and visual communication.

In 2008, she completed a Master of Advanced Studies in Cultural/Gender Studies at Zurich University of the Arts.

The Swiss National Bank (SNB) invited her to participate in a competition to design the new Swiss banknotes in 2005. In the first round, her proposal was ranked second.

In a second round, in which the feasibility of the various submissions was reviewed, the SNB decided, in 2007, to award the definitive design contract for the new Swiss banknotes to Manuela Pfrunder. Under the contract, she and her team are charged with developing design drafts and refining them right up to the production stage.

Manuela Pfrunder currently employs two graphic designers, a secretary and a copywriter/concept developer.

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