Design Benno K. Zehnder, Gelfingen

The painter Benno K. Zehnder was born in Wettingen AG in 1941 where he also grew up. After finishing grammar school in Immensee SZ, he attended Lucerne School of Art. He spent the years between 1964 and 1970 in London, initially attending courses on painting and art history at Goldsmiths College, after which he created exhibitions for the Swiss Centre, the Design Centre, the Royal Academy and the City of Worcester among others. From 1970 to 1973, he was a lecturer and head of the Master of Arts course in Film Animation at the City of Birmingham Polytechnic. After this time, he headed the Department for Visual Communication at the former Bath Academy of Art in Corsham/Wiltshire up to 1982. From 1982 to 1997, he was Director of Lucerne College of Design after which he became a Professor at Lucerne University of Art and Design. In addition to his painting and drawing work, Benno K. Zehnder is heavily involved with colour concepts and mural painting for schools, hospitals and churches among others.

Characteristics

Effigy
«Jungfrau Railway»

Artist
Benno K. Zehnder, Gelfingen

Technical data
Alloy: Silver 0.835
Weight 20 g
Diameter 33 mm

Legal face value
20 Swiss francs

Date of issue
19th January 2012

Mintage
Standard coinage, uncirculated:
max. 50 000 coins
Proof coin in presentation case:
max. 7000 coins

100 years of Jungfrau Railway
Mountain Railway series

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Swissmint

Official commemorative coins

Each year, the Federal Mint Swissmint issues a small number of commemorative coins featuring carefully selected subjects. The coins in bimetal, silver and gold bear an official nominal value and are available in various minting qualities. The net proceeds from the sale of the coins are used to promote cultural projects throughout Switzerland.

Commemorative coin series: Mountain Railways

This year sees the final issue in the five-part mountain railways series in the form of the «100 years of Jungfrau Railway» coin. The series focuses on railway lines whose importance is attributable both to the pioneering spirit of their builders and to their tourist interest. Earlier subjects in the series were the Vitznau-Rigi Railway (2008), Brienz-Rothorn Railway (2009), Bernina Railway (2010) and Pilatus Railway (2011).

100 years of Jungfrau Railway

Each year, more than half a million people visit the Jungfraujoch – Top of Europe from where they admire the breath-taking view over the immense sea of ice of the Alps, the huge Aletsch Glacier, as well as the peaks and ridges of the mountain massifs. This is made possible by the 100-year-old Jungfrau Railway. First envisaged in 1893 by the Zurich industrialist Adolf Guyer-Zeller, it is regarded as the pioneering achievement among mountain railways. The Jungfrau Railway, which was powered by electricity from the outset, came into service all the way from Kleine Scheidegg to the Jungfraujoch in 1912. It conquers the 1400 metre climb in a journey time of around 50 minutes. The mountain station consisting of two rock caves at an altitude of 3454 metres is the highest railway station in Europe.

The most important section of the line is the 7 km long tunnel through the Eiger and Mönch mountain massifs. The Eigerwand and Eismeer intermediate stations are caverns blasted out of the rock providing an exceptional view out from the mountain and down into the valley. The sections to Rotstock, the Eigerwand viewpoint and the Eismeer viewpoint were opened in 1899, 1903 and 1905 respectively.