

## HELVETICA 2003

### The coin

The central part of the obverse shows a line of boys with large bells «ringing out the winter». There is a sgraffito flower decoration on the top part of the outer ring, and the word «CHALANDAMARZ» appears on the bottom.

A large number «5» in the centre of the core part of the reverse, with the small raised letters «FR.» behind it, indicates the value. Around this, the designation «CONFOEDERATIO HELVETICA 2003» is shown in circular form. The outer ring is adorned with entwined sgraffito ornaments.



## Characteristics

### Subject of the coin

«Chalandamarz»

### Artist

Gian Vonzun, Pratval

### Technical data

Alloy: outer ring in cupro-nickel, core in Nordic-gold®

Weight: 15 g

Diameter: 33 mm

### Legal face value

5 Swiss francs

### Date of issue

15<sup>th</sup> January 2003

### Mintage

Standard coinage, uncirculated:

max. 120 000 coins

Proof coin in presentation case:

max. 13 500 coins

### Coined and issued by *swissmint*

Official Mint of the Swiss  
Confederation

CH-3003 Bern

Tel. +41 (0)31 322 60 68 (Marketing)

Fax +41 (0)31 322 60 07

[www.swissmint.ch](http://www.swissmint.ch)



**Chalandamarz**



Official Swiss  
commemorative  
coins



## HELVETICA commemorative coins A special side of Switzerland

Switzerland's commemorative coins are designed by leading native artists. Elegant, valuable, and timeless, they epitomise solid Swiss cultural heritage. As tasteful collectors' pieces at attractive prices, they are highly popular.

The commemorative coins have a legal face value and are minted in limited series. The net profits from sales are used by the Confederation to promote cultural projects in Switzerland.

## Chalandamarz

On 1<sup>st</sup> March, the «Chalandamarz» festival to dispel the spirits of winter takes place in the Engadine and in a few other valleys of the Canton of Graubünden. The sequence of festivities and the composition of the procession varies from village to village. The oldest schoolboys lead the procession as herdsman. They are followed by the «calves», the schoolchildren – originally only boys – who carry bells and nowadays are

often dressed in blue shirts with scarves. The size of the bells determines the position in the procession; those with the largest cow bells walk up front, and those with the small goat bells are at the end. Obviously, it is every child's dream to be at the head of the procession, or at least as far forward as possible. While it is the role of the «calves» to drive the winter away with their deafening bell ringing, the Alpine herdsman leads the procession and starts sing-

ing a song at each of the fountains. In Ardez, girls who are decorated with colourful paper flowers walk at the end of the procession and collect money and sweets. Most of the time, the money is used to pay for school outings; the sweets are passed around and quickly disappear into the mouths of the children. The children's ball, to which everybody is invited, takes place on the same day or on the next weekend, depending on the village.

## The artist

The artist Gian Vonzun was born in Ardez in the Lower Engadine on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1942. He attended the local primary and secondary school and often had the opportunity to take part at the «Chalandamarz». As a 16-year-old, he entered the Cantonal teacher training school in Chur, where he obtained his diploma in 1963. After working as a primary school teacher for two years at the general school in Davos-Laret, he moved to

Basel in 1965 to be trained as an art teacher at the School of Design. From 1969 to 2000, Gian Vonzun taught as an art teacher in various high schools in the Basel region and in Graubünden. In between, he always found time to devote himself to his own work and to have this exhibited. In 2002, Gian Vonzun opened his own art school, the «Academia d'art» in Sur En/Ardez. Here, he focuses on his own work and also passes on his wide knowledge by means of courses.

# C h a l a n d a m a r z

