

Media release, November 12, 2023

Prix Suisse 2023: Ski racer Marco Odermatt honored and keynote interview with President Bill Clinton

- **Marco Odermatt receives the Prix Suisse 2023 for his outstanding performance as a top athlete and ski racer. It was awarded by Federal Councillor and Sports Minister Viola Amherd.**
- **The high-profile keynote interview with Bill Clinton, the 42nd President of the United States of America, focused on global challenges.**
- **Verity Studios with Prof. Dr. Raffaello d'Andrea showed in an impressive show with 64 drones, why Switzerland is an international leader in the development of drone technology and autonomous systems .**
- **Prof. Dr. Thomas Zurbuchen reported on his experiences as a former NASA research director.**
- **The two-time Eurovision winner Loreen from Sweden appeared as a surprise musical guest and enchanted the audience with her music.**
- **The Prix Suisse is an annual award presented by the non-profit organization Initiative Switzerland to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Switzerland.**

Bern, November 12, 2023 - The award ceremony took place on Saturday, November 11, with around 400 invited guests from the worlds of business, science, politics and sport in the Kursaal Bern. The Prix Suisse 2023 was awarded to exceptional sportsman Marco Odermatt for his outstanding achievements as a top athlete and ski racer.

"At just 25 years old, Marco Odermatt is already an Olympic champion, double world champion and two-time overall World Cup winner. He is a role model for current and future generations in Switzerland. His astonishing career and impressive successes represent a Switzerland that consistently achieves top performances worldwide, whether in business, science, culture or sport. We are therefore delighted to honor Marco Odermatt with this year's Prix Suisse," explains Stefan Linder, Head of Initiative Switzerland. The non-profit organization Initiative Switzerland has been awarding the Prix Suisse annually since 2021 to a person who has made outstanding contributions to Switzerland. "For me, the Prix Suisse is more than just a personal award. It is also recognition for Switzerland as a sporting nation, whose framework conditions enable and promote talent development and top performance," says award winner Marco Odermatt.

Interview with President Bill Clinton

The 42nd President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, led the United States to the longest economic boom in American history during his time in office and created more than 22 million jobs. After leaving the White House, he established the Clinton Foundation in order to continue to support causes close to his heart. President Bill Clinton addressed the current global challenges during a keynote interview with Urs Gredig at the award ceremony. "It is a great honor for us to have won Bill Clinton for this year's Prix Suisse event. His exclusive presence in Bern testifies to the esteem in which he holds Switzerland as an innovative country at the heart of Europe," says Stefan Linder.

Presentation by Prof. Dr. Thomas Zurbuchen

Prof. Dr. Thomas H. Zurbuchen studied physics and mathematics at the University of Bern. After completing his doctorate, he moved to the USA in 1996, where he became Professor of Space Research and Space Technology at the University of Michigan. The Swiss-American astrophysicist was Research Director of the US space agency NASA from 2016 to 2022.

As part of the award ceremony, he shared his experiences as the head of over one hundred space missions with the guests in a gripping speech and informed them about his next goals and where he sees future opportunities and chances for Switzerland as a knowledge and technology location.

Projects Initiative Switzerland

As part of the gala evening in Bern, various projects were also presented that are supported by the Swiss Initiative and are representative of Switzerland's innovative strength. When selecting the projects, the focus is on forward-looking ideas, innovations, new technologies and consistent, good implementation in reality.

Drone show, music and culinary delights at the gala dinner

Prof. Dr. Raffaello D'Andrea is a renowned scientist and innovator in the field of robotics and autonomous systems. He has an impressive academic background and works at ETH Zurich, where he teaches as Professor of Dynamical Systems and Control Theory. He is also co-founder of Verity Studios. The innovative Swiss company develops drone technology for live performances and events, among other things. The spectacular show at the gala evening with 64 drones showed possible applications for the entertainment industry and also why Switzerland is an international leader in the development of drone technology and autonomous systems.

The musical surprise guest was two-time Eurovision winner Loreen from Sweden. Her music has taken her into the top 10 of the charts in over 20 countries and earned her numerous prizes and awards, including the MTV Europe Music Award and the World Music Award.

The gala dinner was created by the Swiss national culinary team - the reigning world champions and two-time gold medal winners of the Culinary World Cup. World champion patissier Rolf Mürner and the cheese specialists from Jumi provided the grand finale to the gala dinner.

About Initiative Switzerland

As a private promotion agency, Initiative Switzerland supports innovative ideas and projects in all parts of the country and language regions of Switzerland with a specific focus on competitiveness and prosperity in Switzerland. Through its activities and projects, it would like to help Switzerland secure its leading global position and innovative strength over the long term. Initiative Switzerland is financed by F.G. Pfister Holding AG and the dividends generated by the holding company. The annual «Prix Suisse» honours a prominent person who has made outstanding contributions to Switzerland and demonstrated courage, creativity and innovation.

Initiative Switzerland is headed by Stefan Linder, co-founder, long-standing CEO and delegate of the Swiss Economic Forum.

www.initiative-schweiz.org

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www.initiative-schweiz.org/medien

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