

**Château de Prangins.** MUSÉE NATIONAL SUISSE. SCHWEIZERISCHES NATIONALMUSEUM. MUSEO NAZIONALE SVIZZERO. MUSEUM NAZIONALE SVIZZERO.

# TOURS DU MONDE

De Jules Verne

aux premiers globetrotters



06.04. - 26.10.2025

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## Temporary exhibition

### Round-the-world Travel. From Jules Verne to the First Globetrotters

The exhibition is devoted to the first global circumnavigations undertaken by tourists for pleasure. They first became possible in 1869, after the opening of the San Francisco–Yokohama route and America’s transcontinental railroad, but their popularity soared following the publication in 1872 of Jules Verne’s legendary novel *Around the World in 80 Days*.

Conceived in collaboration with a team from the University of Geneva as part of a Swiss National Science Foundation project entitled *Faire le monde* (Making the World), the exhibition follows in the footsteps of the thousands of tourists, the majority of them Western, who travelled around the globe between 1869 and 1914. Among them were a number of Swiss citizens, including Emilio Balli, Alfred Bertrand, Lina Bögli and Heinrich Schiffmann. The exhibition sets out to understand their motivations, explore the routes they covered, and showcase the objects and souvenirs they brought back with them. It also examines the material conditions that made such journeys possible. The presentation additionally highlights fictional and virtual round-the-world trips, which became an important motif in popular culture thanks in particular to Jules Verne’s famous novel. Finally, *From Jules Verne to the first globetrotters* reveals how global travel became a central motif in Western culture and hegemony at the end of the 19th century.

The exhibition presents some 300 objects, including many artefacts brought back by the globetrotters, and is divided into eight sections.

#### First stage

#### The craze for round-the-world travel

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, globes, globetrotters and global travel were ever-present in popular culture. Accounts of – real or fictional – journeys around the world proliferated, while globes were depicted on everything from monuments and advertising posters to book covers and engravings. For those without the time or the money to undertake such adventures themselves, countless virtual substitutes were available: panoramas, dioramas, goose games, magic lanterns and cinemas, but also museums, exhibitions and amusement parks. The craze manifested and propagated a new geographical imaginary: for the first time, the globe was not an abstract entity but something that people could literally travel round. This was a key stage in globalisation and the emergence of modernity.

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## Second stage

### Around the world, colonisation and imperialism

This exhibition relates to tourist practices and imaginaries representative of the ideologies and power structures existing at the turn of the 20th century. Round-the-world travel took place in a context of colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism. Some of the documents on display in the exhibition are problematic in view of the stereotypes associated with them or the violence to which they attest. To shed light on these issues, the project team invited the historian Fabio Rossinelli, a specialist in the role played by Switzerland in the colonial imperialism of the period, to look at a selection of objects

## Third stage

### Around the world by stereoscope

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were many ways for people to travel virtually; they included stereoscopic photographs, which gave the illusion of three-dimensionality and thus enabled viewers to immerse themselves in the landscape depicted, and experience the sensation of actually being there. People could savour the joys of travel in their own homes with the aid of a stereoscope, or in theatres by means of anaglyph images using two colours. Publishers offered sets of photographs devoted to destinations such as Italy, Egypt and China. *The Around the World* series published by the Underwood company in the US from 1897 meant that those who had neither the time nor the money to actually travel round the world could pretend to do so as armchair tourists from the comfort of their living rooms-

## Fourth stage

### Around the world with a pocket watch

As the title of Jules Verne's novel makes clear, his round-the-world tour was as much about time as space. It established a new relationship to time by introducing the theme of time zones and the International Date Line. The journey's duration was a measure of the globe's dimensions. The time available and the speed of transport dictated the itinerary and the stops along the way. The aim was to complete the trip within a given number of days, weeks or months, and not linger in places that were picturesque or exotic. In 1872, Jules Verne set a record that many since have sought to beat. In his novel, he mentioned watches 25 times. Along with the steam engine, they made round-the-world travel possible.

## Fifth stage

### Around the World in Eighty Days

A classic of popular culture, *Around the World in Eighty Days* was an instant hit when it was published in 1872. Translated into multiple languages, it was enthusiastically received by readers, from those making the journey from the comfort of their armchair to those actually following in the footsteps of Phileas Fogg. Benefiting from the publicity given to it by journalists such as Nellie Bly and Gaston Stiegler, who made their own attempts to beat the 80-day record, the novel gave rise to a plethora of associated products, in France and abroad: children's games, advertising vignettes, plates, wallpapers and more. Around the

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World introduced the middle class to the exotic and brought the world into families' day-to-day lives.

## Sixth stage

### Meet the globetrotters

The term “globetrotter” was first used in Japan in around 1870 to refer to the first international tourists, many of whom were travelling round the world. Almost all of them were Western, the vast majority men; globetrotters from Japan and India were few and far between. Drawn from the most privileged classes, they travelled for pleasure and education. For them, a round-the-world tour was a chance to experience first hand the size and roundness of the planet, the exoticness of the Orient and the modernity of America; but also to confirm the supposed superiority of Western civilisation, even though some celebrated the unity of humanity. As is typical of tourists, they acquired objects and photographs to assemble collections. Many of these travellers – including some women – published accounts of their journeys.

This chapter focuses on the following globetrotters: Emilio Balli (CH), Alfred Bertrand (CH), Heinrich Schiffmann (CH), Lina Bögli (CH), Emile Chabrand (F) and Michi Nomura (JPN). One module is reserved for the subordinates, i.e. the tens of thousands of people who work for travel agencies, passenger ship and railway companies, hotels and restaurants or at tourist attractions. Most of them are in the low-paid and little-respected jobs of boys, waiters, porters, launderers, tour guides, drivers, and so on.

## Seventh stage

### Round-the-world travel: material conditions and stopovers

Circling the globe as a tourist first became possible in the 1860s, thanks to the development of new infrastructure. Transatlantic steamship lines, transcontinental railways and undersea telegraphy allowed people, goods and information to travel rapidly around the world. Tour operators set up agencies in every destination. Grand hotels and banking networks were put in place to cater to globetrotters.

The classic itinerary ran via New York, San Francisco, Yokohama, Hong Kong, Singapore, Calcutta, Bombay, Aden, Cairo, Naples and Gibraltar, or vice versa. Side trips were also made within Europe, the Holy Land, India and China. Oceania was visited rarely, Africa only in very exceptional cases.

### Chronology of the round-the-world trip

- 1855: Opening of the railway line across the Isthmus of Panama
- 1866: The first functioning transatlantic telegraph cable is laid
- 1867: Opening of the San Francisco - Yokohama merchant ship line
- 1869: Opening of the Suez Canal
- 1869: Connecting of the East and West Railways in the USA
- 1870: Opening of the Calcutta-Bombay railway line in India
- 1871: The Mont-Cenis tunnel is opened

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- 1872: The British tour operator *Cook* sells the first package holiday around the world
- 1902: Opening of the Trans-Siberian railway line
- 1909: The American tour operator *Clark* sells the first cruise around the world
- 1914: Opening of the Panama Canal

## Eighth stage

### What about round-the-world travel today?

The motivations for round-the-world travel and the experience drawn from it are located within an ideological framework.

Until the First World War, the more cosmopolitan globetrotters dreamt of a world without borders; for others, travelling the globe was an opportunity to confirm the alleged hierarchy of civilisations and the supposed superiority of the West. The backpackers who set off around the planet from the 1970s onwards had other ideas in mind: for them, travel was often about an existential quest and a search for personal fulfilment.

And what of today? Is fear of climate change and overtourism consigning the idea of round-the-world travel to the past? For those still keen to circle the globe, what are the conditions for doing so and what hopes do they carry?

This room invites you to reflect on the meaning of “globetrotting”, both yesterday and today.

## Conception

Exhibition commissioners:

Prof. Jean-François Staszak, UNIGE

Helen Bieri Thomson, Director Château de Prangins – Swiss National Museum

Co-commissioners of the exhibition:

Dr. Raphaël Pieroni, HEAD — Genève

Barbara Bühlmann, Château de Prangins - Swiss National Museum

Marie-Hélène Pellet, Château de Prangins - Swiss National Museum

Matthieu Péry, Château de Prangins - Swiss National Museum

This exhibition was created as part of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) research project *Faire le Monde - Premiers globetrotters et tours du monde touristiques (1869-1914)*. The transdisciplinary programme, which is based at the Department of Geography at the University of Geneva and led by Professor Jean-François Staszak, will run for four years, from 2023 to 2027, and will bring together around 15 researchers from Switzerland, Europe, the USA and Japan to investigate the history of the first tourist circumnavigations of the globe.

All project members have contributed to the conception of the exhibition in one way or another.

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## Members of the research project

- Beal Julien (UNIGE/Université Rouen, FRA)
- Bernasconi Gianenrico (UNINE)
- Couttolenc Pereira Eugénie (UNIGE)
- Dittmann Alina (Université Nysa, Pologne)
- Favi Sonia (University Turin, ITA)
- Favre William (UNINE)
- Fornale Elisa (WTI)
- Gannier Odile (Université Côte d'Azur, FRA)
- Gauthier Lionel (Musée du Léman)
- Hashimoto Yorimitsu (Osaka University, Japan)
- Montaubin Marie-Françoise (Université Jules Verne, Amiens, FRA)
- Murai Noriko (Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan)
- Pieroni Raphaël (UNIGE/HEAD — Genève)
- Rossinelli Fabio (UNIGE)
- Saysanavongphet Laura (UNIGE)
- Schwartz Vanessa (University of Southern California, USA)
- Sohier Estelle (UNIGE)
- Staszak Jean-François (UNIGE)
- Sweet Rosemary H. (University of Leicester, UK)
- Vaj Daniela (UNIL)

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## Catalogue

The exhibition has given rise to the publication of a catalogue: *La Manie des tours du monde*. This collective work, illustrated with 256 images, tells the story of how, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the West developed a passion for this form of tourism. At the crossroads of cultural geography, travel history and visual studies, the book takes a critical look at how the world became a tourist attraction and examines the imaginary world of globetrotters.

La manie des tours du monde, published by Liénart éditions, 248 pages, 256 images, full-colour paperback.

Price CHF 49.-

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