



- 1 Bügeleisen (blau), 1904, Entwurf: Samuel Blumer (zugeschrieben), Produktion: Therna AG Schwanden, CH, Donation: Arthur Rüegg. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK.
- 2 Doppelseite aus Katalog, Therna-Bügeleisenmodelle für Haushalt und Gewerbe, 1927. Abbildung: Arthur Rüegg.

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In 1930, half of all household electrical appliances in Switzerland came from Schwanden. Samuel Blumer (1881–1959) developed for the Schwanden-based Therna AG an iconic electric iron that by 1914 was already being sold in large quantities in both Switzerland and abroad. The basic elegant shape remained unchanged for decades.

In 1904, the young inventor Samuel Blumer (1881–1959), a self-taught electrical engineer, opened a modest factory “for electric heating and cooking appliances” in Schwanden. The first chafing dishes and irons sold well, such that the small enterprise was able to move into a new building in 1907 as a joint stock company. The name “Therna” was coined by the local pastor. Blumer came up with two groundbreaking inventions: the tape-wound heating element of the electric iron and the grooved cooking plate filled with hardened chamotte powder. Both of these functional innovations brought a major boost to Therna—and to the entire household appliances industry. It is to Blumer’s credit that the electric iron found its way to the wider public as the first commonly used electrical appliance. In 1914, there were only 1,600 electric stoves in use

in Switzerland—but 85,000 electric irons! Therna dominated the Swiss market and also exported goods to France, Italy, Denmark, and Norway. Soon, specialized appliances were being developed, such as the egg-shaped iron for laundries, the shoe iron, and the hatmaker’s iron. In 1911, a chrome and nickel alloy came into use for the heating resistors, but it was not until 1931 that Therna came out with its first iron with adjustable controls. For a long time, the development in irons was visible in the design of the handle only— from elaborate wooden clamp to lathed rod and then onward to today’s ergonomic plastic handle— while the elegant form of the highly polished nickel-plated and, in some cases, color-enameled iron body remained a constant. (Arthur Rüegg)

Bügeleisen, um 1927
Herstellung: Maxim AG, Aarau, CH
Material/Technik: Gusseisen, emailliert; Holz (Griff); Porzellan (Stecker)
14 x 9,5 x 19 cm
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

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