

**Alfred Rasser** (1907 - 1977) was the first, and for many years the only political cabaret performer in Switzerland, a “cabaret genius and jester of compelling vehemence” (Werner Wollenberger). After joining Zurich’s Pickle (Cornichon) in 1935, he founded and led the Cactus (Kaktus) in Basel (1943-1953) and then toured Switzerland with a number of oneman programs until the mid-sixties. From 1967 to 1975, he was a parliamentarian in the Swiss Federal Assembly. This left-wing actor’s lifelong theme was Switzerland’s self-image as a model neutral democracy, and in the role of Lämppli, Basel’s incarnation of the soldier Švejk, he exposed and satirically attacked its shortcomings.

*Alfred Rasser*

“As a magnificently improvising court jester of the sovereign, of the free people, he is always willing to wear the fool’s cap as a symbol of prosecutorial dignity and to attack the stubborn foolishness high-placed hypocrites with the vital foolishness of the mocker parodist. Even in the most foolish farce, he manages to unmask human weaknesses and to express what is typical in words and gestures.” (Walter Lesch)

