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Late Bloomers for Everyone Young at Heart

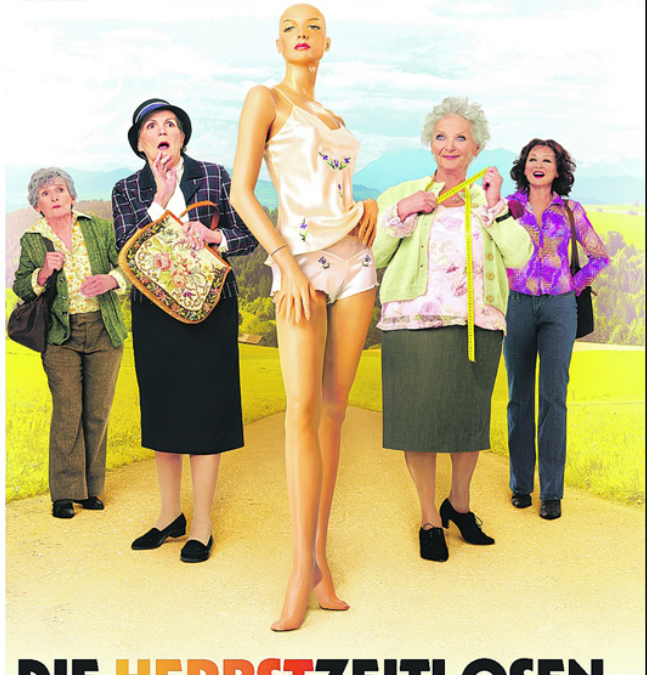
By *Sophie Braccini*

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Ah . . . the charm of the Swiss Alps, the quiet little villages, the pretty old ladies in traditional costume, always neat and proper. We hold on to the image of green peaceful Switzerland, but something is brewing in the Alps, and in Bettina Oberli's movie the proper old ladies want to get free of social rigidities and start a new life, no matter what people say. The fresh and charming movie will take you on a delightful trip, full of optimism and tenderness. It's never too late to bloom!

Martha, in her 80s, lives in Trub, the Emmental village where she was born (German speaking Switzerland). Since her husband died, she has lost her joie de vivre. Even her best friends, Lisi, Hanni and Frieda, are at a loss to cheer her up. But one day, as she visits a fabric store in the nearby town, Martha understands that she longs to resume her ancient practice as a seamstress, a profession she once mastered.

With the help of her three friends, she decides to transform her late husband's grocery store into the lingerie shop she's always dreamed of, in spite of her son's opposition. He would like to use the space himself.

Soon Martha's new found freedom spreads to her friends, but the village's church leaders and politicians don't agree with the emancipation of the older generation. What is an old lady doing starting a business, and something so frivolous to boot? Village puritans soon set out to destroying

Image provided

Martha's dream.

The charming Swiss comedy mixes humor and melancholia. The cast is perfect. Martha is played by Stephanie Glaser, who's in her 80s. Her touching interpretation won her a Leading Role nomination at the Swiss film festival. Her friends are just as believable as well as the male characters, who are all taken aback by Martha's late blooming.

The film was one of the biggest commercial successes in the history of the Swiss movie industry, and has been entered as a contender in this year's Academy Awards Best Foreign Language Film category.

Late Bloomers will play in Orinda for one week starting on August 24, as part of the International Film Showcase that brings foreign films not yet released in the Bay Area to Lamorinda. For more information and tickets visit lamorindatheatres.com.

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com[back](#)

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