

FETISH

Mister Rubber: "I want to encourage others to wear rubber outfits in public"

Zoé Boll - Switzerland at the weekend
28.4.2018 at 16:00

Michael Gehring won the Mister Rubber Switzerland election in 2017, then in February 2018 he won the European title. With his job he wants to make himself strong for rubber lovers and show that you can confidently stand up for his preferences.

Michael Gehring has always been interested in rubber clothes: boots, gloves and rain jackets made of plastic fascinated him. He could never accept, let alone understand, his inclination. Today, the 49-year-old knows that his strict Catholic education had a significant impact on his body perception and the rejection of his preferences. Influenced by his parents, he wanted to be a priest for a long time, his own sexuality moved so completely into the background. After giving up his ambitions to become a clergyman, at the age of 19 he began his first relationship with a woman. Gehring remembers: "The whole thing just did not fit. I realized that I had to get out of it. But I still did not know what was wrong with me."

When he was 23, he made his first date with a man and realized that he was gay. With the discovery of his homosexuality, the preference for fetishes came to fruition. Gehring had his first tangible experience with rubber in the guise of a Swiss Army sleeping bag: "Touching something strange and exciting happened to me at the same time. I can not really describe that. "One thing led to the other, and Gehring" mummified himself with the sleeping bag for the first time," he says. After this key experience everything went on fast. Soon he bought a complete suit, gas masks, rubber gloves and rubber boots. He enjoys being

locked up in his clothes the most. "I feel safe and hugged. In multi-layered packaging, it is like a cocoon.

For three years Gehring lived out his gay life and his preference for rubber in the hidden. His coming-out finally led him to move away from his home town of Aesch. In addition, he has lost a large part of his former circle of friends. The relationship with his mother also suffered from his inclinations. For more than ten years, there was no contact between them. Gehring had broken off contact with his father long before he came out. "My father was violent, which naturally shaped me a lot," says Gehring. With BDSM - popularly known as Sadomaso or bondage games - he found a way to process the experience. Looking back, Gehring regrets his game of hide-and-seek: "If I had another chance today, I would not believe it all for myself. I never want to hide again.

Fetish scene in Switzerland

How many homosexual fetish lovers live in Switzerland can hardly be substantiated by concrete figures. Reto Müller, co-president of Leathermen of Switzerland, explains: "There is no exact definition of who is considered a fetish lover. Everyone probably makes their own assessment. "But he observes that the fetish communities - after the boom of online dating over the last decades has led to a strong individualization - organize more throughout Europe. So last year the club Swiss Gear Heads was born. Together with the Swiss Rubbermen group, the Club Leathermen of Switzerland and the group Gay Fetish Suisse Romande, this is one of the largest fetish communities in Switzerland. There are also many small groups.

All of these communities are for the friendship and cooperation of like-minded people. They want to be accepted as part of society. Especially for leather fetishists wearing fetish gear in public is no problem. Müller: "I have not experienced any distancing, but rather curiosity when we are traveling in a group." The rubber clothing, as Gehring wears it, attracts even more attention. The rubber lover is aware of this and knows: "With many a person, I also dislike with my clothes. I also do not like everything that I encounter in everyday life.

Mr. Rubber

Last year, Gehring made a major decision in his life: he participated in the Mister Rubber Switzerland election. "It was not just a step on the stage, for me it was much more," says the 49-year-old. In 2001, he had a car accident that fundamentally changed his life. Gehring suffered a severe whiplash, became mentally ill and cannot work since then. Likewise, he left the amateur theatre, which he practiced with great joy until then, behind him.

To regain self-confidence, friends encouraged him to attend the Mister Rubber election. On election day he had to perform a performance in which he wore several layers of rubber on top of each other. Gehring was able to convince the audience and the international jury with his show contribution and finally won the election. The title is an honorary post representing the Swiss rubber community.

With the national victory he qualified for the final of the Mister Rubber Europe election in February 2018 and also took this title. The two offices mean a lot to him: "I want to encourage others to stand by, confidently wear rubber outfits in public and feel comfortable."

Since winning these titles Gehring uses the days on which nothing official is planned, to allow his skin to recover.

Nevertheless, he knows that he can wear the fetish clothes in his adopted home Breitenbach public without any problems: "In the community I was always accepted. I have never experienced anything bad here.

He shares his three-room apartment with his Bernese mountain dog Odin, he does not have a permanent partner. Anyway, his mister existence takes full advantage of him. But he knows, he must not exaggerate: "As soon as my pain comes, it is an indicator that I have to slow down." With his involvement in the rubber scene, Gehring wants to pave the way for future generations: "I wish for the future that fetish clothes can be worn as a matter of course and thus the purely sexual connotation disappears. "

<https://www.basellandschaftlichezeitung.ch/basel/baselbiet/mister-rubber-ich-moechte-anderen-mut-machen-gummi-outfits-in-der-oeffentlichkeit-zu-tragen-132488945>

Thank you Bill for translation 😊