

*Oe*

# CULTURE

2009/10

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**AUSTRIAN PIANIST STEFAN STROISSNIG**

**AUSTRIAN CHOIR CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY**

**UNIVERSITY CONTINUES STRAUSS BALL TRADITION**

**THIRD AUSTRIAN SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS CONFERENCE**

**MAJOR ACC DONATION COMPLETES WIRTH ENDOWMENT**

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- Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies: <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/wi/>
- Austrian Trade Commission, Toronto: <http://www.advantageaustria.org/ca>
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- OeCulture On-line*: <http://www.Austrian-Canadian-Council.ca/WebContent/oeculture>

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## Major ACC Donation completes Wirth Endowment at Canadian Center

Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton have benefited above all from the generous financial support of Dr. Alfred Wirth and his late father Dr. Manfred Wirth (1913-2003), and it was for this reason that the Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies was renamed Wirth Institute in October 2003. The

have constrained the financial flexibility of the Institute. On February 6, 2010, at the annual Austrian ball in Edmonton, the President of the ACC, Mr. Roland Pirker, formally donated the ACC's Wirth Endowment, valued at slightly over \$1.25 million, to the University of Alberta, bringing the total Wirth Endowment held by the University of Alberta close to

of Austrian-Canadians in 1998, 2003 and 2005, has supported a wide variety of Austrian cultural and academic activities in Canada and has been a leading fund-raiser for charitable causes. It has encouraged Austrian Studies in Canada by the establishment of an ACC Dissertation Prize, which has been awarded seven times since 1996, and it has given Austrian-Canadians a national profile through its publication since 1998 of the magazine *Oe Culture*, which reports on Austria-related activities across the land.

Above all, however, the ACC was instrumental in the discussions that led to the establishment of the then Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies (and subsequent Wirth Institute) at the University of Alberta in 1998. What began as a modest idea of encouraging some Canadian university to establish a program of Austrian Studies soon grew into the idea of establishing an Austrian Centre similar to the U.S. Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota. It was the ACC, primarily through the Executive Director of its Foundation Program, who encouraged the Austrian government via then Ambassador Walther Lichem to assemble an incentive package that could be offered to a Canadian university in order to establish an Austrian centre.

It was then also through the ACC that the top research universities in Canada that might conceivably establish an Austrian Centre were identified and contacted in 1996 and 1997, and it was through the ACC that their responses were vetted and evaluated. These ACC assessments were then the basis upon which an inter-ministerial committee of the Austrian



Left to right: Dr. Franz Szabo, Director of Wirth Institute, Dr. Carl Amrhein, Provost and V-P Academic, University of Alberta, Colleen Skidmore, Acting Interim Dean of Arts, Roland Pirker, President ACC. Photo: Alexander Schurnig - Rollframe

initial support for what was eventually to become the Wirth Institute at the University of Alberta, however, was made by Dr. Manfred Wirth who entrusted a stock portfolio valued at approximately \$1.3 million to the Austrian Canadian Council (ACC) at the end of December 1999, with instructions to establish an endowment fund and to use the annual revenues generated by the fund to support the activities and programs of the then newly established Austrian Centre.

For the past decade the ACC has been invaluable in assisting the Wirth Institute's activities, particularly in areas where University of Alberta spending policies would otherwise

\$10 million. With the commitment of the Provost of the university, Dr. Carl Amrhein, to apply the Province of Alberta's "Access to the Future Fund" matching program to the Wirth Endowment, the total endowment supporting the Institute will in due course reach approximately \$20 million.

The ACC was founded on February 14, 1995, on the occasion of a state visit by Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, as an umbrella organization of the 18 Austrian clubs and societies across Canada. Led since its inception by its energetic president, the renowned cinematographer, Roland Pirker, the ACC organized periodic nation-wide gatherings

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## University of Alberta continues Strauss Ball tradition in Edmonton

During the 34th annual Johann Strauss Ball – Edmonton’s annual Austrian ball – held on February 14, 2009, the Johann Strauss Foundation, the society that had organized the ball since its inception, made an important announcement. After several months of discussion and negotiation the Foundation had decided to suspend its existing music scholarship program and donate all its financial assets to the University of Alberta. In the 34 years of organizing the ball as a fund-raiser in aid of scholarships for the advanced study of music in Austria, the Foundation had awarded some \$650,000 in scholarships to over 100 students. Now the members of the Foundation decided it was time to pass the baton to the University.

Accordingly, the President of the Johann Strauss Foundation, Mr. Robert Jüthner-Krtschan, and the Treasurer, Mr. Gerhard Zmatlo, formally presented a cheque in the amount of \$225,000 to the University’s Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Dr. Carl Amrhein, and the then Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Dr. Daniel Woolf.



The Johann Strauss Foundation donates its assets to the University of Alberta. From left to right: Gerhard Zmatlo, Treasurer of the JSF, Daniel Woolf, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Robert Jüthner-Krtschan, President of the JSF, Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) of the University of Alberta

The University of Alberta is home to Canada’s only Austrian Centre – the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, which has risen to prominence as one of the leading Austrian Centres in the world since its establishment in 1998. The Johann Strauss Foundation’s

donation was made on the understanding that the University would continue the scholarship program under the administration of its Wirth Institute. Dr. Amrhein, and Dr. Woolf, in turn made the commitment that the Johann Strauss Foundation donation would in due course be matched from the Province of Alberta’s “Access to the Future Fund,” which will eventually bring the total assets of the newly established Johann Strauss Foundation Endowment to some \$500,000. The University’s Faculty of Arts and the Wirth Institute also agreed to give “active support” to continuing the annual ball tradition as an ongoing fundraiser for the endowment fund.

The former Johann Strauss Foundation scholarships thus became the University of Alberta’s “Johann Strauss Foundation Music Awards for Advanced Study of Music in Austria.” This award is now given to students with satisfactory academic standing registered in any undergraduate or post-



Debutantes and cavaliers dance the *Ländler* at the 2009 JSF Ball

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## Gender and modernity in Central Europe: The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its legacy

The volume *Gender and Modernity in Central Europe: The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its Legacy* is a follow-up to the conference with the same title that took place at the University of Ottawa in May 2008 ([www.gam.uottawa.ca](http://www.gam.uottawa.ca) – see *Oe Culture* 2008, pp. 7-8). The publication of this book was made possible thanks to two generous grants, one from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and one from the Wirth Endowment and the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies.

The fourteen chapters in the book are a selection of papers that were presented, in an abridged version, at the above-mentioned international and interdisciplinary conference. The authors are Canadian, Austrian, American, British, German, Hungarian, and Polish scholars and academics working in the fields of literature, history, sociology, psychology, art history and cultural studies. The time span encompassed in this volume is the period between 1867, the so-called *Ausgleich* that brought about the Dual Monarchy, and the present, with an emphasis on the period between 1867 and the aftermath of the First World War. The chapters are grouped into five sections: 1. Constructing Gender in Vienna and Beyond; 2. The Impact of Viennese Modernity in Literature; 3. The Contribution of Jewish Women to Viennese Modernity; 4. Early Psychoanalysis and Its Legacy; and 5. The Historical and Cultural Legacy of Austria-Hungary.

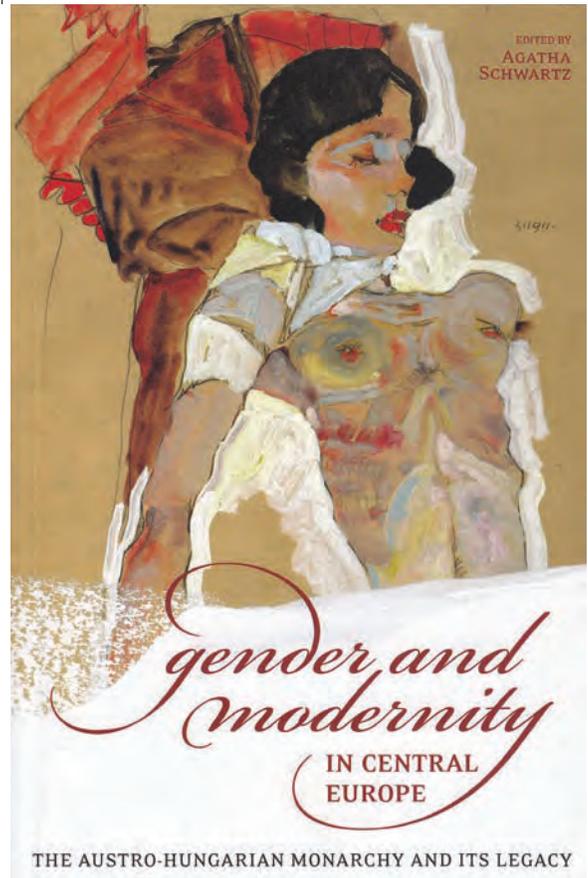
The emphasis of the contributions, as the titles suggest, is on the concepts of gender and modernity in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and how they have impacted the cultural, social and political fabric of 20<sup>th</sup> and

early 21<sup>st</sup> century Central Europe and beyond.

The volume thus offers a panoramic and comparative approach regarding the impact that the debate about gender and modernity has made on the various cultural centres and regions of Austria-Hungary, and how we can trace the influences that various discourses, styles and movements have carried across borders and time. While Vienna gave its lasting contribution to 20<sup>th</sup> century intellectual history through such figures as Sigmund Freud, Gustav Klimt and Robert Musil (as explored in Chapters 2, 5 and 11), other centres of the Monarchy did not fall behind, as suggested

by the development of a Budapest school of psychoanalysis in the works of Freud's disciple Sándor Ferenczi (to whose work Chapters 10 and 11 draw close attention), the novels of Trieste-born Italo Svevo (explored in Chapter 5 in their relationship to Musil's works) and Czech modernist poetry (as analyzed in Chapter 6).

The presence of a strong and organized women's movement in most parts of the Dual Monarchy, accompanied by a hitherto unprecedented rich literary activity of women were major, though still lesser-known, aspects of fin-de-siècle modernity. Gender roles, femininity and masculinity were among the most controversial topics debated at the time and were linked to a more general



discussion relating to a cultural crisis, a discussion in which modernist and anti-modernist arguments and views clashed. These re-definitions of gender roles and women's entry into new domains previously closed to them are the focus of Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 9.

Modernity did not only mean women's emancipation and a proliferation of new ideas and styles in philosophy, literature, and the arts. It was embedded into a general atmosphere of innovation and modernization in urban development as well as scientific and technological discoveries. However, modernization was by no means a process embraced by

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## Dr. Walther Lichem, former Austrian Ambassador to Canada, returns for a visit

In February 2011 Dr. Walther Lichem, who served as the Austrian Ambassador in Canada from 1993 until 2000, returned to Ottawa for a six-day visit with his wife, Prof. Dr. Maria-Teresa Lichem. The Austrian Society Ottawa and the Friends of Austria Ottawa invited the Lichems to be part of the 15th Viennese Opera Ball Ottawa, annually held at the National Gallery.

During his stay as Ambassador Dr. Lichem championed many cultural and bilateral events and was highly respected in both the Canadian and Austrian communities as well as in diplomatic and business circles.

In 1997 Dr. Lichem founded and inspired the Viennese Winter Ball which is staged at the opening weekend of Ottawa's world-famous Winterlude.



Viennese Opera Ball participants. Left to right: John Raschke (Vice-President ACC), Ida Bechstein, Hans Wyslouzil (Vice-President Austrian Society Ottawa), Kathy Schryer, former Austrian Ambassador Dr. Walther Lichem, Prof. Dr. Maria-Teresa Lichem, Roland K. Pirker President ACC and Austrian Society) and Walburga Pirker. Photo: Simon Bell Photography Ottawa



The Austrian Society's "Lichem Nachmitag": Happy reunion with 90 year-old Herma Pundleider. Photo: Roland K. Pirker - Rollframe

On February 6, a day after the Ball, the Austrian Society Ottawa held a special "Lichem Afternoon" at the St. Albertus Church on Parkdale for its members. About ninety guests attended and exchanged fond memories with the Lichems. A video from 1999 was also shown in which Dr. Maria-Teresa Lichem received her Ph.D. degree from Carleton University. At that same convocation ceremony Dr. Walther Lichem was awarded a degree *honoris causa*.



Viennese Opera Ball Ottawa: Breakfast meeting at the Ottawa Sheraton on February 5, 2011. Left to right: Jim Hall, President, Viennese Opera Ball, Dr. Maria-Teresa Lichem and Dr. Walther Lichem. Photo: Roland K. Pirker - Rollframe

Roland K. Pirker

## Canadians attend the 2010 *Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund* Conference in Burgenland

From September 2 to 5, 2010 seventeen Canadians attended the *Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund* (AÖWB) Conference in Austria's easternmost province, the Burgenland. The event took place in its capital, Eisenstadt.

When Central Europe's borders with the communist countries fell in 1989, the Burgenland – bordering on Hungary – played an important part in this historic drama. The barbed wire fence that had separated Austria and Hungary for decades was dismantled, and thousands of East Germans who were waiting on the other side

crossed into Austria. This event created a chain reaction. We know the outcome because surely all of us watched on TV as one government of an Iron Curtain country after the other collapsed. The people of Burgenland must have played a memorable role because stories of generosity and hospitality towards the refugees from the east were proudly related to the conference participants during the city walking tours.

Eisenstadt was also the home of one of Austria's greatest citizens, Joseph Haydn, the world-famous

composer who was a court musician with the wealthy Esterházy family.

About 450 persons from around the world attended the *Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund* meetings. The discussions ranged from citizenship and pension questions to issues related to the repatriation of elderly poor or sick Austrians to their birth place. The organizers had not only prepared lectures and panel discussions but also provided many cultural activities, among them a walk through the city, a folklore evening, a dinner cruise on the *Neusiedler See* and a mass held in



Left (front to back): First column: Heidi-C. Temelie (Friends of Austria Ottawa), Ursula and Peter Hoffmann (Continental Austrian Club Burlington) and Walter Schachenhofer (Past President, Club Austria Edmonton). Second column: Lilian and John Brunner (Burgenländer Club Toronto), Jennifer Stipsits (Continental Austrian Club Burlington). Third column: Edna Reisch (Continental Austrian Club Burlington), Manfred Reisch (President, Continental Austrian Club Burlington), Eva Hergovic (Canadian Austrian Society Toronto) and Josef Stipsits (Continental Austrian Club Burlington). Fourth column: Gisela Risse (Continental Austrian Club Burlington) and Arno Risse (Past President, Continental Austrian Club Burlington). Fifth column: Roland K. Pirker (President, Austrian Canadian Council and Board of Directors, AÖWB), Walburga (Burgie) Pirker (Austrian Society Ottawa), John (Hans) Raschke (Canadian Austrian Society Toronto). Missing from the picture: Dr. Sepp Fröschl (Austrian Society Montreal)



President Gustav Chlestil and John (Hans) Raschke, the Past President of the Canadian Austrian Society Toronto



President Gustav Chlestil and Ursula Hoffmann, a member of the Board of Directors of the Continental Austrian Club Burlington



Pres. Chlestil and Arno Risse, Past Pres., Continental Austrian Club Burlington. Photos: Roland K. Pirker - Rollframe Productions

one of Eisenstadt's oldest churches.

Officials from Austria's Foreign Ministry attended the festivity in the Esterházy castle, honouring the Expatriate Austrian of the Year. This year's recipient of the prestigious AÖWB award was Dr. Gottfried Schatz, a world-renowned biochemist.

The ACC took the opportunity to

nominate three Canadians for recognition by the AÖWB in gratitude for their long support of the Austrian community in Canada.

Under the leadership of President Gustav Chlestil, the organization honoured nine individuals, among them the three Canadians, with certificates and pins. John (Hans) Raschke, the

Past President of the Canadian Austrian Society Toronto, and Arno Risse, Past President of the Continental Austrian Club Burlington, received a gold pin. The silver pin went to Ursula Hoffmann, a member of the board of directors of the Continental Club.

*Roland K. Pirker*

### **Strauss Ball tradition**

*Continued from p. 4*

graduate degree programs in music, not only at the University of Alberta, but at any Alberta post-secondary institution who plan to study music in Austria. The selection is based on musical merit as demonstrated in an audition and interview, and anywhere from one to three awards are given annually. In keeping with the promise to the Strauss Foundation, the University's Faculty of Arts, with the help of volunteers from the Johann Strauss Foundation (which continued to exist as one of two Austrian clubs in Edmonton) also became the principal organizer of the 2010 Ball, held on February 6, 2010 at Edmonton's Chateau Lacombe Crowne Plaza Hotel. The new university dimension of the ball manifested itself in many ways. Dignitaries who had traditionally attended the ball – such as the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, the Mayor of the City of Edmonton, the Commander of the Western Division of the RCMP and honorary consuls from different countries including

Austria – were now also joined by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, the Vice-President (Academic) and the Dean of Arts of the University of Alberta. A University of Alberta student orchestra, the "Academy Strings," provided a significant part of the evening's music, while dinner music was provided by a University of Alberta student string quartet. Indeed, the Ball has become somewhat of a showcase to display the talents of U of Alberta music students.

The winner of the 2010 Johann Strauss Foundation Music Award was the bass-baritone Jacques Arsenault, a Master of Music in Voice Performance student at the University of Alberta, who chose to use his award to attend the summer program of the Franz Schubert Institut in Baden bei Wien. Arsenault and his fellow student, Jodi Penner, also performed selections from Viennese operetta, much to the delight of the assembled guests.

Attendance at the ball increased substantially, thanks in part to the large number of students and other

young people in attendance. The enthusiasm of the younger participants, who included the traditional debutantes and cavaliers from Edmonton dancing the polonaise as well as guest debutantes and cavaliers from Calgary's Hungarian community who danced a choreographed Viennese waltz, can now be shared by all. In keeping with young people's facility with the new social media, both performances were videotaped and immediately appeared on YouTube. The former can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByFewdgUmVM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByFewdgUmVM) and the latter at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSVlqlcNbTA>.

As usual, the Edmonton debutantes and cavaliers also performed a more traditional *Ländler* later in the evening, and as the clock struck midnight, not only was the traditional *Gulaschsuppe mit Salzstangerln* available for those that had worked up an appetite from the dancing, all guests joined in for the lively "Fledermaus" quadrille. The stage was well set for the 36th annual ball in 2011.

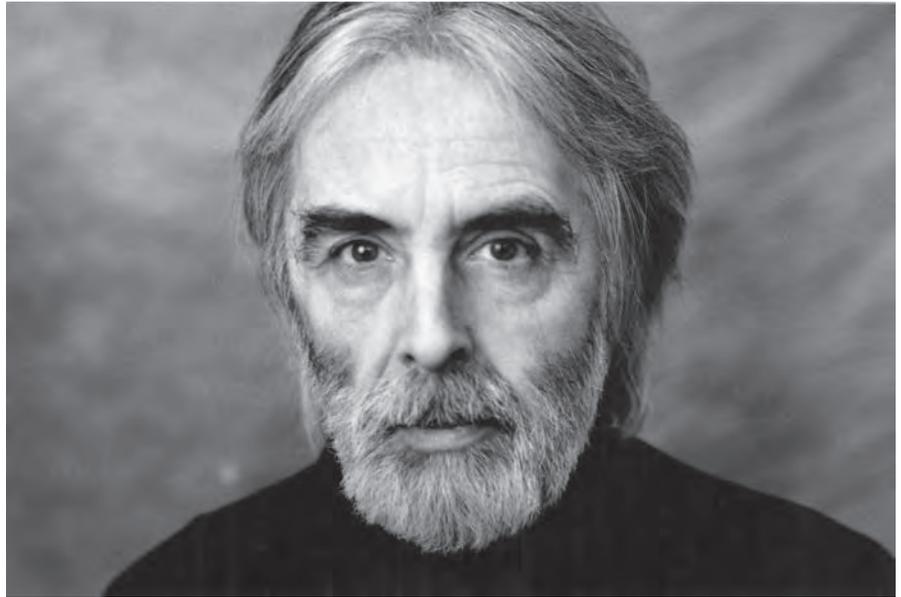
*Franz A.J. Szabo*

## Controversial Austrian filmmaker celebrated in Edmonton

In March 2009 the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, in cooperation with the University of Alberta's Department of English and Film Studies and Edmonton's Metro Cinema, presented a retrospective of Austria's most controversial filmmaker, Michael Haneke. The festival featured ten films by Haneke made between 1989 and 2007: *The Seventh Continent* (1989), *Benny's Video* (1992), *71 Fragments* (1994), *The Castle* (1997), *Funny Games* (1997), *Code Unknown* (2000), *The Piano Teacher* (2001), *Time of the Wolf* (2003), *Caché* (2005), and the U.S. version of *Funny Games* (2007). The film festival was supplemented by a number of panel discussions which sought to come to terms with the meaning of these very difficult films.

Haneke was born in 1942. His first ambition was to be a concert pianist, but he gave that up when his stepfather told him that he would never be good enough. Haneke has commented on that: "I'm grateful to my stepfather for his honesty. There's nothing worse than a moderately talented musician." It's an interesting remark to bear in mind while watching his movie *The Piano Teacher*, where musical talent and almost deranged levels of artistic honesty and dedication are among the forces swirling through what is a typical Haneke emotional holocaust. But in a general way it also reveals, off-handedly, a temperament thirsting for the highest degree of artistic ambition. In any event, Haneke turned instead to film and theatre, working as a critic, a stage director, and then as an editor and director for West German and finally Austrian television. He directed altogether ten features for television in the 1970s and 1980s, tantalizingly unavailable anywhere at the moment.

His first three theatrical features



(*The Seventh Continent*, *Benny's Video* and *71 Fragments in a Chronology of Chance*) appeared between 1979 and 1984, and attracted favourable attention at festivals, though not widespread subsequent distribution. But when *Funny Games* arrived at Cannes in 1987, Haneke's international status took a giant leap – so much so that French production companies hastened to get him working in Paris. His next four films were made there (*Code Unknown*, *The Piano Teacher*, *The Time of the Wolf* and *Caché*) between 2000 and 2005.

It is a measure of his stature that this completely uncompromising filmmaker – a filmmaker who almost gives a new definition to "uncompromising" – was invited to Hollywood to remake a film; the result was *Funny Games U.S.*, a movie that starred Naomi Watts and Tim Roth and sneaked into the margins of mainstream distribution before its audience quite understood what was awaiting it. Recently, Haneke was back in Austria where he completed a period film entitled *Das weisse Band*.

In a *New York Times* piece to accompany the Museum of Modern

Art's complete Haneke retrospective in 2007, John Wray calls him "one of contemporary cinema's most reviled and revered figures." Why reviled? Because Haneke is making war on mainstream movies and mainstream moviegoers. And he is not doing it in a fragmented or super-demanding avant-garde fashion: his films have stories and characters, they feature well-known actors, they are handsome and even coolly beautiful to look at, and they certainly have enough violence and sensation in them to avoid any kind of hair-shirt documentary minimalism or grunge aesthetic. They could certainly be argued to have political content; but in contrast to a lot of art-house movies that call explicit attention to social injustice or the disparities of wealth and power in the world, Haneke's films have, in general, solidly middle-class European central characters and highly recognizable bourgeois social environments. But, having drawn viewers into his world, Haneke proceeds to subject them to a kind of treatment that they don't usually receive, not even in overtly art-

*Continued on p. 22*

## Third Austrian School of Economics conference meets in Vancouver

On October 15 and 16, 2010, the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies of the University of Alberta mounted its third biennial conference on the Austrian School of Economics, this time at the Harbourfront Centre in Vancouver, B.C., in co-operation with Simon Fraser University.

The “Austrian School” is a heterodox school of economic thought that emphasizes the spontaneous organizing power of the price mechanism. Its name derives from its founders and supporters, who were all citizens of the old Austrian Empire: Carl Menger (1840-1921), Friedrich von Wieser (1851-1926), Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk (1851-1914), Ludwig von Mises (1881-1973) and Friedrich Hayek (1899-1992). The term “Austrian” was originally applied contemptuously by German economists but became a badge of pride when the “Austrian” perspective ultimately triumphed over its German rivals.

For the Wirth Institute’s 2010 conference on the subject, scholars from all over North America gathered to discuss “Austrian Views on Experts and Epistemic Monopolies.” Austrian economics has offered compelling reasons why experts, often in the employ of the state apparatus, propose solutions to problems that can best be dealt with by economic agents themselves. It is not always a good idea to hand things over to an expert. Adopting the potentially embarrassing posture of experts on experts, conferees examined when and whether experts can improve outcomes in complex social systems. Conferees considered the expertise of entrepreneurs, forensic scientists and economists themselves.

Considering scholars as experts, keynote speaker Sandra Peart of the University of Richmond imagined a



Left to right: Front row: Diana Wienert Thomas (Utah State University), Alfred G. Wirth, Laurent Dobuzinskis (Simon Fraser University), Franz Szabo (University of Alberta), Sandra Peart (University of Richmond), Emily Skarbek (San Jose State University), Leslie Marsh (The New England Institute for Cognitive Science and Evolutionary Studies). Back row: David Croson (Southern Methodist University), Jeremy Rayner (University of Saskatchewan), Steven Horwitz (St. Lawrence University), Steven Durlauf (University of Wisconsin), Roger Koppl (Fairleigh Dickinson University), Art Diamond (University of Nebraska at Omaha), E. James Cowan (Fairleigh Dickinson University)

world in which germs could sponsor medical research. Germ-influenced science would be “factional science.” But if social agents can sponsor social science, then we should not be surprised if economic science is factional. Imagining that germs could sponsor medical research helps us see the importance of the market for expertise. Monopoly experts may be less reliable than competing experts.

Forensic scientists, central bank economists and development officials are often monopoly experts and their expertise is often married to government power. This hierarchical arrangement of knowledge production and distribution contrasts with the “stigmergic” organization (a word used by Austrian economists to signify the spontaneous emergence of coherent, systematic activity) of market economies. Stigmergic organization lets anthills and markets respond

adaptively to more contingencies than ants or people can individually.

The network structure of the Internet may represent an alternative to markets and hierarchy. While each node in the Web is one among many, there may be a spontaneous and partial hierarchy among nodes that is neither the flat plane of market organization nor the pyramid of a uniform hierarchy. The participating experts on experts agreed on the importance of expertise if, perhaps, little else.

As has been the case with previous conferences in the series, Emerald Books will publish the proceedings of this conference as part of its “Advances in Austrian Economics” series.

The next conference is scheduled to take place in Banff, Alberta, in the fall of 2012.

*Roger Koppl and Franz A.J. Szabo*

## Austria's Schubert Institute concludes new partnership with University of Alberta

In July 2009 the University of Alberta and the Franz-Schubert-Institut in Baden bei Wien, Austria, announced a new partnership dedicated to cultivating artistic excellence in the performance of a great musical genre that is both highly challenging and internationally admired.

The Franz-Schubert-Institut (FSI), the world's leading training center for the German *Lied*, has long offered advanced students of voice and piano one of the world's richest study experiences in this genre. That musical genre – settings of German lyric poetry for voice and piano – thrived in the nineteenth century, when powerful voices with new visions of nature, initiated by the genius of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and carried on by his Romantic successors, were transformed into music through the genius of composers such as Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Hugo Wolf and, above all, Franz Schubert.

Under the leadership of its founder, Dr. Deen Larsen, the FSI annually offers a five-week summer course that immerses students in intensive study of the poetry of the *Lied*, together with extensive coaching in all aspects of performance and a series of master classes given by renowned performers. In 2010, they included singers Elly Ameling, Barbara Bonney, Robert Holl and Wolfgang Holzmair, and pianists Helmut Deutsch, Julius Drake, Rudolf Jansen and Wolfram Rieger.

In this new initiative, the FSI will extend the range and variety of its study opportunities, both in Austria and at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Thanks to a memorandum of agreement signed by Dr. Larsen and the University's Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Dr. Carl Amrhein, the stage is set for select Uni-



Left to right: Erika Adensammer, Mayor of the City of Baden bei Wien, Deen Larsen, Director, Franz Schubert Institute, Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), University of Alberta, Franz Szabo, Director, Wirth Institute, University of Alberta

versity of Alberta students to integrate the FSI's summer course into their academic programs through major support of their study there, and for a new series of programs that will make some of the master courses' riches available to students and teachers in North America.

The formal signing of this agreement took place in Baden on July 19, 2009. A particular highlight of the ceremonies surrounding the signing was the singing of Mozart's famous "Ave Verum Corpus" motet by the students of the FSI at St. Stefan's Parish Church in Baden – which was composed by Mozart at this church – accompanied by the historical organ on which the composer had played.

The agreement, made possible by the support of the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, will enable students to enroll for university credit in a special course created for FSI participants. Overseen by Dr. Larsen, now an Adjunct Professor in the University's Depart-

ment of Music, the course will provide students with academic credit through the University, credit that will also be available for transfer to other institutions. Moreover, financial support will also be available for U of A students, and up to three students each year will receive scholarships provided by the Department of Music, the Wirth Institute and the Provost's Office to help defray the tuition and expenses associated with participation in the program.

The Department of Music will also host a variety of new initiatives in Edmonton with the FSI, which holds great promise that a leading centre for *Lied* study and performance is coming into being in Canada. Dr. Larsen already held a series of lectures and master classes at the University in October 2009 and in February and September 2010, and new programs for performers and teachers from across North America are being developed.

*Deen Larsen and Franz A.J. Szabo*

## The Austrian Society Ottawa celebrates its 45th anniversary

On October 26, 2010 the Austrian Society Ottawa celebrated two big events, the Austrian National Day and the 45th anniversary of their club. About ninety members attended this function at St. Albertus Church on Parkdale Avenue. First the members sang the Austrian national anthem, and then President Roland K. Pirker introduced the evening's guest speak-

er, Prof. Dr. Willi Nassau. He talked about his life as a film maker and photographer in Vienna during the 1950s when he worked on the famous film *The Third Man*. He also happens to be one of the founding members and the first president of the Austrian Society Ottawa.

To everyone's delight, national dishes (*Wiener Schnitzel mit Kartoffel-*

*salat, Sachertorte*) had been prepared by an Austrian chef. This part of the evening was followed by the presentation of the Austrian-Canadian Council awards. Dr. Nassau received the Medal of Merit in Gold and Franz and Wai Höfler accepted the Silver medals. To commemorate the first National Day in 1955 videos were subsequently screened that showed Austria's history from 1914 to the present.

A historical footnote: In 1965, the Austrian Ambassador at the time, Dr. Leitner, travelled across Canada to visit cities where most of the Austrian immigrants had settled and encouraged them to establish Austrian societies and clubs.

Today these clubs still play an important part in the life of many of these people. Now elderly, retired long ago, they come together socially in order to speak their childhood dialect, to listen to music from the old country or to look for information – but most of all, to exchange memories and look for *Gemütlichkeit*.

All these factors play an important part in invigorating their hearts and souls. They feel good and stay healthier by popping fewer pills because they have the next club event to look forward to. For many of these immigrants who are now widowed, whose long-time partners are gone and whose children have moved on, these Austrian clubs have become a vital meeting place that connects the past to the present.

Over the years our club has attracted many other European immigrants who cherished and looked for the same values that Austrians hold dear. Since its inception our Society has drawn its members from more than fourteen different nationalities.



Roland K. Pirker, Dr. Willi Nassau and Ingrid Feil, Treasurer, ACC. Photo: Karl Mayer - Rollframe



Roland K. Pirker, Franz Hoefler, Wai Hoefler, Prof. Dr. Willi Nassau and Ingrid Feil. Photo: Karl Mayer - Rollframe

*Roland K. Pirker*

## Wilhelm Nassau: “Walking in the finite to every side”

Willst Du ins Unendliche schreiten, Geh nur im Endlichen nach allen Seiten” (If to the infinite you want to stride, just walk in the finite to every side). Wilhelm Nassau first read this verse by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in an inscription mounted on the wall of an adult education centre in his native Vienna. That he adopted this phrase as a life motto will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with his CV, which tells the story of a restless spirit who, beginning with a simple camera, explored the finite very thoroughly indeed and found nearly infinite possibilities.

Wilhelm Nassau’s life’s path began on his seventh birthday when he received a Kodak box camera as a gift. With the subsequent encouragement of his high school biology teacher, who requested the budding photographer to capture images of plant life as part of outdoor class work, the seed began to sprout.

So powerful was his attraction to the art of painting with light, not even the turbulence of the Second World War could prevent the teenage Willi Nassau from expanding his knowledge by experimenting with his first movie camera: a 9 mm Cine Nizo. This experience led to self-guided experimentation in both editing and sound recording. Film development services were, unsurprisingly, hard to come by at the time – an obstacle he overcame by building his own darkroom.

With the end of the War, Wilhelm Nassau set out to formalize his already impressive skills and completed a Master’s Diploma in photography at Vienna’s State Academy of Graphic Arts. Post-war Vienna would provide ample opportunities for him, beginning with commissions from the British Occupation Army which sought footage of the rebuilding efforts in Austria.



Willy Nassau in the camera collection at Wilfrid Laurier University

These connections led to work on *The Third Man*, a highly-regarded British feature film adaptation of the Graham Greene novel starring Orson Welles. Director Carol Reed and cinematographer Robert Krasker’s visual motifs, drawing heavily on the high style of German expressionism, were aided by Mr. Nassau’s efforts, which included the scouting and photography of locations. Although much of his work found beauty alongside destruction, post-war Vienna, as Mr. Nassau now recalls, did bear some resemblance to the city portrayed in the film, which delves deeply into its black market underbelly.

“Vienna was not very pretty at that time,” he now says. “There were still many sites of war destruction, people were not dressed in the latest fashion and, yes, a very black market with questionable characters did exist. One had to explore if it was possible to insert a little of Vienna’s old charm and the remaining typical features of Vienna into the film that was often

overwhelmed by ugly events and sad scenery.”

Despite that darkness, however, Mr. Nassau says he and other Austrians working on the film found the experience a decidedly pleasant one.

“Yes, we were paid well, even if in Austrian schillings. More important was the fact that the Hofburg Restaurant was rented for the entire shooting time and all of us, including the hungry Austrian crew members, were fed four lavish meals a day. The waiters would appear at tea breaks with white towels and a most professional appearance, even in the sewers [where some shooting took place]. And I learned, learned by watching the very best. Carol Reed was a fabulous director, relaxed and peaceful, but meticulous in all details. He was a marvel to watch as he worked with, or often opposite, a very eccentric star.”

The end of the Allied occupation was the dawn of a new era for Austria and Mr. Nassau, who joined the recently created television branch of



Willy Nassau on assignment for CJOH, leaving a spotter plane on Cyprus during the Cyprus crisis; shot for Larry Henderson (1966)

the Austrian national broadcasting service in 1956.

"I documented political events and theater premieres, was sent to Monte Carlo to shoot the Grand Prix and to St. Pölten to film a dog show.

I followed bicycles and steam locomotives and enjoyed myself – and hopefully my viewers did as well – at free style wrestling."

While covering a ski competition, Mr. Nassau had a chance meeting

with Erik Durschmied, an expatriate Austrian working in Canadian television who subsequently invited Mr. Nassau to join him.

"In 1959 I arrived in Ottawa and immediately was tossed into North American-style television. With my new camera I stood on Sparks Street in a light snowfall as Erik Durschmied asked passers-by who would win the Grey Cup. Of course, I had no idea at that time what that was."

Always eager for new challenges, Mr. Nassau next joined the staff of CJOH, Ottawa's first local, private television station. This new position led to another fateful encounter when an assignment took him to the Austrian embassy, where a conversation with the ambassador triggered a sense of nostalgia for Austria.

"That was when the idea of founding an Austrian Society in Ottawa was conceived. With very active assistance by the embassy and its friendly staff, a small group of Austrians got together and proceeded to build a bridge between the two worlds. In the Austrian Society I would also meet my wife Hermine, who would have a very good influence on my future. With a few white-haired heads this group of Austrians still survives after all these years."

Mr. Nassau began yet another phase in his career in the 1960s after another fateful meeting while on an assignment involving officials from what was then known as Waterloo Lutheran University.

"We talked about a small progressive university which was interested in the new world of film studies and perhaps, television of its own," he recalls.

Mr. Nassau joined the faculty of that "small, progressive" institution, dubbed Wilfrid Laurier University, at the end of the decade, following stopovers at ABC, CTV and the National Film Board.



*The Third Man*, one of the last scenes: The Vienna Special Sewer Police enters the sewer system to catch the Third Man.



Joseph Cotten scene in *The Third Man*. Shot location: Am Hof, towards the ending of the movie when the chase for the Third Man begins

Aside from founding Laurier's film program and audio-visual department, Mr. Nassau stayed true to his life's motto and went in many productive directions: He co-founded Telecollege, Laurier's televised distance education program (one of Canada's first), and explored yet another path, Laurier's Archeology Department, which would grant him a Master's degree. His thesis, entitled "Typology and Description of the Technology of Roman Glass", is an exploration of another of this prolific thinker's passions, one he has cultivated over the past 12 years through affiliation with the Austrian Glass Museum at Bärnbach, where he has acted as an advisor and researcher.

Mr. Nassau is also a longtime associate of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo and has produced a number of documentaries on the subject, including "The Miracle of Glass," which received international distribution. In recognition of his work in this area, Laurier saluted Mr. Nassau with an honorary doctorate.

Now retired, the 88-year-old remains actively involved at Laurier where he teaches in the Continuing Education Department.

And, bringing the story full-circle back to photography, Mr. Nassau (along with long-time colleague and collaborator John Durst) compiled a collection of some 500 cameras that are now on display at Laurier. The Waterloo Region Record said, "the history of photography is told through the surprising and impressive collection."

Reflecting on his career in an October 2009 profile in the Record, Mr. Nassau reminisced about those early days of using art to find beauty in the aftermath of war:

"There are so many things in the world ... that are ugly. So many things make us unhappy. Art can compensate. So, for a little while you can forget the black and ugly things that surround you every day."

Steven Fouchard

## Gender and modernity

*Continued from p. 5*

all; these rapid changes brought out many anxieties that manifested themselves in a flare-up of misogyny and anti-Semitism, for instance. These phenomena, seen through the prism of Jewish intellectual women and the important part they played in fin-de-siècle modernity, are discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

Still within the context of gender and modernity, Chapters 12 and 13 discuss the political and historical legacies of Austria-Hungary and their impact on borders and minorities, an impact still felt today. Finally, through the analysis of a Sissi-nostalgia, Chapter 14 reflects on the ways in which memories of the Monarchy have been used and abused for shaping gender roles in contemporary Hungary along traditional and anti-modernist political forces – a development similar to other countries in the region as well where we can observe a resurgence of conservative nationalist ideologies that rely on traditional, pre-modern concepts of gender.

The discussion of these questions is relevant not only in Central Europe but in most parts of our globalized world. Thus this book highlights yet again the importance of Central European studies and confirms what Moritz Csáky has observed in *Kakanien Revisited: Das Eigene und das Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie* (2001): "Because of its ethnic and cultural particularities, Central Europe has been considered a 'laboratory' in which processes have taken place that, in the age of globalization and the building of cultural networks, can take on a general, i.e. world-wide importance" (p. 47). The relevance of the legacies of Austria-Hungary therefore calls for a continuation of these discussions.

Agatha Schwarz

## Austrian “Heimatecho” Choir of Calgary celebrates 30th anniversary

It was shortly before Christmas 1980, and shortly after a new Austrian-Canadian Cultural Centre just off Deerfoot Trail in Calgary had been constructed by the local Austrian-Canadian Society, that several members of the Club got together to practice a few songs for the upcoming family Christmas celebration in the new clubhouse. The majority of those present originated from the Austrian province of Carinthia, and as the old saying in that part of the world goes, whenever three Carinthians meet, singing is the order of the day.

So it was on the day that Mara and Paul Michor, Theresia and Heinz Franke and Claudia and Fred Bosch got together to rehearse for the upcoming Christmas celebration. As the beautiful songs and harmonies from old Austria rang out, it was decided then and there to continue singing as a group after the holidays, and in this way the Austrian “Heimatecho” Choir of Calgary was born. Soon the little group grew to over 30 members that developed an eclectic musical repertoire consisting of traditional, folk, classical and popular Austrian music in four-part harmony. The membership has fluctuated over the years; today the Choir has 19 active members who enthusiastically carry on their Austrian cultural traditions. For the past nine years the Choir has been under the musical direction of Jeannie Park (a native South Korean) who has led the choir with great sensitivity and empathy for the Austrian style.

The Choir considers itself a proud representative of Austrian culture, and it is invariably a welcome guest at churches, seniors’ homes, at Austrian Club events, Christmas concerts, birthdays and sometimes even at funerals. The Choir performs at various venues in Calgary, but is also a regu-



Austrian “Heimatecho” Choir at the 2010 Wirth Institute Christmas concert

lar participant at the biennial Prairie *Sängerfest*, which has taken it to such places as Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. Above all, the choir has become a regular participant over the past decade in the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies’ annual Central European Christmas concert, where they perform as representatives of Austria along with Polish, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak and Slovenian community choirs.

Currently the Choir is busy preparing for the next Prairie *Sängerfest*, which will take place at Jack Singer Concert Hall in Calgary on May 15, 2011. At this event all German-speaking choirs from across Western Canada will be performing on stage together, but the “Heimatecho” choir is the only Austrian one among them, and the only one devoting itself to a traditional Austrian repertoire. Naturally, over the years many singers have joined the Choir who are not native Austrians, but they have all been seduced by the charm of Austrian songs, and many have been with the Choir almost from the beginning.

Unfortunately, as is the case for so many European choirs, the “Heimatecho” suffers from a lack of young blood, especially among the male voices, the owners of some of which are already in their 80s. The Choir is therefore always eager to welcome new members. Anyone wishing more information or interested in joining should visit the website of the Austrian-Canadian Society of Calgary at [www.austrianclub.ca/](http://www.austrianclub.ca/).

But even as the years pass, and the voices lose some of their youthful brilliance, the Choir continues to sing with passionate commitment to the wonderful song tradition of Austria. One day, the Choir members tell us, they will all have to sing the famous Viennese song, “Wann der Herrgott net will, nutzt es gar nix” (If the Lord does not wish it, it is all in vain). At that stage, the members say, they will exit with a delicate pianissimo, but until such time Calgary’s “Heimatecho” Choir continues to move all who hear them, and remains one of the most vibrant cultural ambassadors of Austrian traditions in Canada.

*Gisa Hammel and Vic Lavicka*

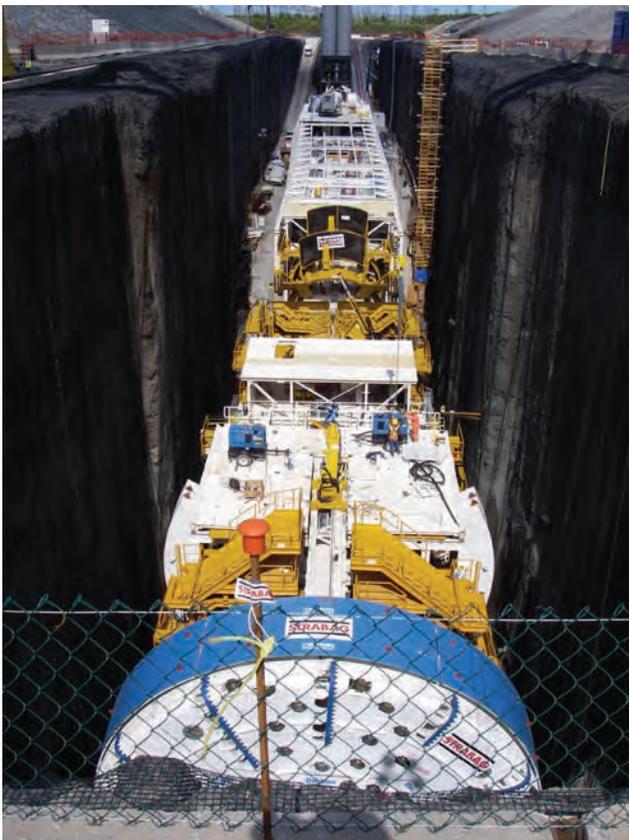
## Austrian experts help build water diversion tunnel in Niagara Falls

In 2005 the Strabag AG, a world-renowned Austrian engineering and construction company based in Vienna, Austria was hired by the Ontario Power Generation Company to drill and build a 10.4 km tunnel 140 meters beneath the City of Niagara Falls. The tunnel project is now in its final stages; the initial breakthrough occurred on March 1, 2011. It will carry water to the power generating plant at the Sir Adam Beck Complex at Queenston. Once completed, the Niagara Tunnel will allow Ontario Power Generation to provide enough clean water power to generate a further 1.6 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually – enough to meet the electricity needs of about 160,000 homes.



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Left to right: Members of the Austrian team Christopher Roessler, Alfred Pucher and Andy Ostermann. Photo: Paul Maxwell



"Big Becky" being prepared for work. Photo: Erich Kapeller (senior construction engineer manager)



Andreas Pichler (electric superintendent). Photo: Andreas Ostermann

## Austrian emperor commemorated at Alberta conference

The Austrian Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Maximilian I, is famous for coining the device: "Let others wage war; you, happy Austria, marry!" He himself has gone down in history not only for his own propitious marriage to Mary of Burgundy, which virtually doubled the size of the Habsburg patrimony in Europe, but also for the marriages he arranged for his children and grandchildren that stretched the dynasty's rule over an empire on which, proverbially, the sun never set. The Habsburgs ruled the whole Spanish Empire throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and for a part of that time the Portuguese Empire as well, and it was Maximilian's marriage arrangement for his grandson Ferdinand (who married Anne of Hungary and Bohemia) that paved the way for the emergence of the Austrian Empire in Central Europe.

The year 2009 marked the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Maximilian's birth in 1459 as well as the 490<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death in 1519. To commemorate these events, the University of Alberta's Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, in support of the University of Innsbruck's scholarly "Maximilian Project," mounted an international conference entitled "Emperor Maximilian I: Perception, Transfer, Comparison" on October 2 and 3, 2009. The conference was also partly sponsored by the University of Innsbruck's Centre for Canadian Studies (*Zentrum für Kanadastudien*). Attended by some of the world's leading experts on the history of the reign of Maximilian, the proceedings are now available in a German-language volume published by Innsbruck's Studien Verlag under the title *Maximilian I. (1459-1519): Wahrnehmung – Übersetzung – Integration*, edited by Heinz Noflatscher, Michael Chisolm



Emperor Maximilian I.

and Bertrand Schnerb.

Ironically, the year 2009 also marked the death of Maximilian's most important biographer, the venerable Austrian historian and sometime rector of the University of Graz, Hermann Wiesflecker, whose five-volume study is the standard historical work on the subject. Wiesflecker died in Graz at the age of 96 only days before the conference took place, and as a consequence the conference participants took the opportunity to

dedicate the event to Wiesflecker's memory. The then Assistant Director of the Wirth Institute, Dr. Michael Chisolm, delivered a eulogy on Wiesflecker to open the conference.

The conference was spearheaded by contemporary Austria's leading historians on the reign of Maximilian, led by Heinz Noflatscher of the University of Innsbruck, and including Manfred Hollegger of the Austrian Academy of

*Continued on p. 24*

## University of Alberta welcomes new Austrian guest professor and research fellows

As part of the Austrian government's support for the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research supports two important visiting positions: a visiting Austrian guest professor through the Austrian Academic Exchange programme (ÖAD) for a period of three to five years, and an annual graduate student intern who receives a Doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute.

Though, as reported in these pages, a new Austrian Visiting Professor was appointed in 2008 in the person of Dr. Irene Fussl, having been offered a permanent appointment at the University of Salzburg, she left her position at Alberta after only one year. The Austrian literature courses she was scheduled to teach in Canada during the 2009/2010 academic year were delegated to a sessional lecturer, who fortuitously happened to specialize in the same field. At the same time a search was begun for a new Austrian Visiting Professor for the period 2010/2013.

The choice of the University of Alberta fell on Dr. Helga Mitterbauer. A native of the Innviertel in Upper Austria and a graduate of the Karl-Franzens

University of Graz, she specializes in Austrian and German Literature from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and was accordingly appointed to the University of Alberta's Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies. Dr. Mitterbauer taught at the Universities of Graz and Vienna over the previous 17 years, and has been a visiting professor at the Universities of Budapest and Zagreb.



Katrin Fennesz

After a documentation of literary prizes during the National Socialist era and a Ph.D. thesis on the Austrian writer Franz Blei, Dr. Mitterbauer obtained her *Habilitation* at the University of Graz with a monograph on trans-cultural relations between Austrian und (Central) European literature around 1900. In addition to these monographs she has published books on identity, on memory, on communication and on letters in Austrian and Hungarian literature as well as on cultural transfers. Interested not only in empirical studies but also in literary and cultural theories, she founded and is the main editor of a yearbook on cultural studies discussing recent questions, like emo-

tions, ageing or ethics, from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Currently, Dr. Mitterbauer is also a member of an international project on the literature of migration in Europe.

The second part of the Austrian government's support for the Wirth Institute is the annual Doctoral Research Fellowship, awarded to a promising Austrian doctoral student for a period of 12 months. The successful applicants serve as interns at the Institute. The winner of the Austrian Science Ministry's Doctoral Research Fellowship for the academic year 2009/2010 was Ms. Katrin Fennesz. A native of Horitschon near Oberpullendorf in Burgenland and a Ph.D. student at the University of Vienna, Ms. Fennesz was especially interested in doing research in Canada since her specialty is Canadian literature. Interested in the problems of space and memory in contemporary Canadian novels, her research focused on Margaret Atwood's *Lady Oracle* (1976), Robert Kroetsch's *Alibi* (1983) and Aritha van Herk's *Restlessness* (1998).

The winner of the Austrian Science Ministry's Doctoral Research Fellowship for the academic year 2010/2011



Katharina Schiffner



Dr. Helga Mitterbauer

was Ms. Katharina Schiffner. Though born in Tyrol, Ms. Schiffner grew up in Fernitz bei Graz, Styria, and attended the University of Graz, where she is currently enrolled in a Ph.D. program

in social and economic sciences. Her research focuses on business crime and its consequences, and she is using her time in Canada to gain comparative insights into business

crime-related issues and the new and different approaches to the field that are current in this country.

Franz A.J. Szabo

### Major ACC Donation

*Continued from p. 3*

Federal Government determined to establish the Austrian Centre at the University of Alberta.

Cooperation between the ACC and the new Austrian Centre (and sub-

sequent Wirth Institute) continued on many fronts throughout the following years. The Director of the Wirth Institute remains an ex officio member of the ACC Executive, the Institute administers the ACC's Dissertation

Prize, and the two have cooperated in co-sponsoring conferences and other events such as the national gathering of Austrians in Ottawa in 2005.

Franz A.J. Szabo

## Austrian pianist Stefan Stroissnig plays at the University of Ottawa

Born in Vienna in 1985, Stefan Stroissnig attended his first piano lessons at the age of seven. He completed his studies with Oleg Maisenberg in Vienna and has received further artistic advice from Daniel Barenboim, Rudolf Kehrner, Dmitri Bashkirov and Vadim Suchanow.



Stefan Stroissnig

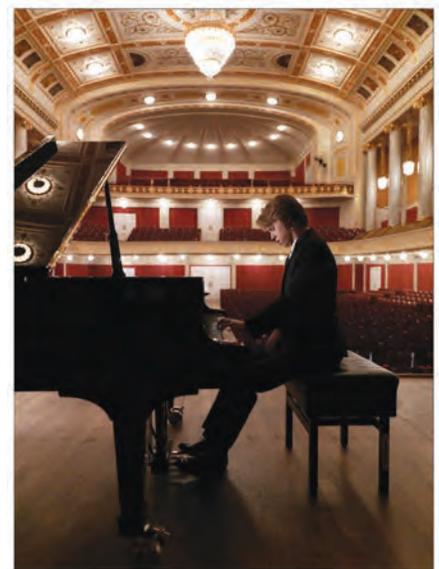
Since the age of eleven Stefan Stroissnig has performed as a soloist,

chamber musician and with orchestras (the Bruckner Orchestra and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, among others) in Europe's most important concert halls such as the Wiener Musikverein, the Wiener Konzerthaus, and the Berlin Philharmonic Hall as well as in America and Japan.

Furthermore, he won first prize and the EMCY award at the International Greta Erikson's Piano Competition in Karlstad (Sweden), and received an award at the International Piano Competition for Young Pianists in Ettlingen (Germany).

In 2003 Stefan Stroissnig, together with Dalibor Karvay (violin) and Milan Karanovic (cello), formed a piano trio, which received the Karajan-Fellowship in Vienna the same year. Their chamber music performances have been given high praise in major European cities such as Rome, Berlin, London and Vienna, and at various festivals around the world. A CD released in 2004 was also immensely successful.

On March 25, 2011 Stefan Stroissnig played Schubert's four-movement Sonata in D major, ("Gasteiner"), Brahms' Sonata No. 2 in F sharp min-



or, Liszt's *Benediction de Dieu dans la solitude* (from *Harmonies poetiques et religieuses*) and Austrian composer Friedrich Cerha's *Network Fantasy* in a free recital presented by the Embassy of Austria at the University of Ottawa's Tabaret Hall. The concert was offered as part of the Embassy's Arts Café concert series, which showcases Austrian and Canadian musicians in free concerts.

Manfred Prokop / Austrian Embassy

## Austrian Science Talk held in Canada for the first time

The annual "Austrian Science Talk," organized under the aegis of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology by Brainpower Austria was held in 2010 for the first time in its seven-year history in Canada. The Austrian Science Talks had previously been organized alternately on the East and West coasts of the U.S. to serve as a link between Austrian scholars living in North America and their homeland for the purpose of maintaining and strengthening mutual contacts. It has been estimated that some 15,000 Austrian citizens live in North America of whom more than 2,000 hold a Ph.D. or other doctoral degree. Of these, some 100 Austrian scholars and researchers from across North America attended the event in Vancouver on September 18, 2010. The theme of the conference was "The globalization of science and technology – opportunities and challenges in Austria."

Globalization has had a tremendous impact on science and technology. Asia in particular has made enormous strides in catching up to North America and Europe in areas of crucial importance. China, for example, has increased the number of Ph.D. graduates tenfold to about 21,000, which, in terms of mere quantity, is very close to the number of scholars graduated in the United States. A similar growth pattern has occurred in the number of active researchers: of the 5.7 million researchers worldwide the U.S. and Europe accounted for about 1.4 million each in 2007, but at the same time, China increased its output of researchers from about 500,000 in 1995 to about 1.4 million in 2007.

The issue how Austria and North America are responding to these developments was addressed at the 2010 Austrian Science Talk by Austrian representatives from science



Mag. Friedrich Faulhammer at his opening remarks at the conference. He is a Secretary General (*Sektionschef*) at the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF) and Director General for Higher Education, Universities, Universities for Applied Sciences, Private Universities and Human Resource Management (*Leiter der Sektion Universitäten, Fachhochschulen, Personal und Raum*)

and industry and by policy makers in research and technology. An evening reception and dinner also offered the participants an opportunity to inform themselves about the most recent developments in Austria as well as to network and intensify contacts with the Austrian scientific community.

Three conference panels addressed the following topics: "New developments in Austria's science and research policy", "Opportunities and challenges in basic research" and "Applied research as a stimulus for industry, or vice versa?" The panel members included Ingolf Schädler (Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology), Friedrich Faulhammer (Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Technology), Karin Gutiérrez Lobos (Vienna Medical University), Thomas König (Scientific Associate to the President of the European Research Council), Helmut Leopold (Austrian Institute of Technology) and Arno Rettenbacher

(Head of Future Technologies, Swarovski AG). Recurring themes in the presentations and the subsequent discussions included assessing the quality and quantity of Austrian research after a recent system evaluation, internationalization, support for young researchers and research in general, the creation of common infrastructures in research, the relative lack of mobility of Austrian academics, university rankings, external research funding, grantsmanship, the peer review processes, the commercialization of advances in technology, transparency of research and creeping administrative bureaucratization.

The keynote address on "Globalization of science and technology: European Union, the U.S. and Asia" was delivered by Friedrich Prinz, the Rodney H. Adams Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University, in which he analyzed the different ways in which North American, European and Asian universities have

come to terms and, indeed, have exploited the globalization phenomenon. Among other things, he stressed that European universities have not been sufficiently open and welcoming to students and academics from all over the world, which impacts their international competitiveness.

In the afternoon session, the panel members and others led lively group discussions with the participants on these and related topics, such as work and residence permits, support for job searches, mentoring, dissemination of scientific knowledge, career opportunities in research, the European Research Council Grants and their evaluation.

On the Friday evening prior to the conference the Austrian Scientists and Scholars in North America (ASciNA) Awards were presented by the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research. These prizes are awarded to junior researchers for the excellence of their scholarly work published in the preceding 12 months while resident at a North American research institution. Dr. Thomas Müller, who had been working at the IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center in New York, received the "Young Scientists Award," while Marius Wernig of Stanford University received the "Junior Principal Investigators Award."



Left to right: Dr. Peter Nagele (President, ASciNA), Dr. Thomas Müller (Young Scientists Award), Prof. Dr. Walter Munk (Ehrenkreuz), Dr. Marius Wernig (Junior Principal Investigator Award), Mag. Friedrich Faulhammer (Federal Ministry for Science and Research), MMag. Philipp Marxgut (Director, Office of Science and Technology)

ASciNA is a network of Austrian scientists and scholars in the U.S. and Canada. The group's principal objective is to support and promote Austrian scientists and scholars in North America and to facilitate interaction and collaboration between Austrian scientists and scholars and international research institutions. Its members offer information and career development support, sponsor events and represent the interests of Austrian scholars and scientists.

Also on this occasion the Aus-

trian-born, world-renowned physical oceanographer, Professor Walter Munk, emeritus professor of geophysics and Secretary of the Navy/Chief of Naval Operations Oceanography Chair at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California, was awarded the Austrian Order of Merit for the Arts and Sciences (*Ehrenkreuz für Wissenschaft und Kunst 1. Klasse*) in recognition of his lifetime contribution to his field.

*Manfred Prokop / Austrian Embassy*

### Controversial Austrian filmmaker

*Continued from p. 9*

house or progressive-politics movies that try to provoke feelings of moral outrage.

In a very Kafkaesque way, Haneke's viewers are made to suffer the punishment for crimes they did not know they had committed, but for which they finally come to recognize their guilt. The crimes that Haneke is fundamentally trying to reveal are not those of overt violence, though there

is plenty of that in his films, and it is repeatedly used as a way of getting the viewer's serious attention. Rather, what he especially loathes is the social and psychological environment that calls forth these acts of violence: an environment of numbness, moral laziness, ethical cowardice, thoughtless and self-serving collusion with the vast edifice of vacuous materialist comfort, an environment so deeply alienated that almost anything else is preferable.

There's a burning purity in the

moral standards that Haneke illustrates with his characters and imposes on his viewers. His ethical bar is very high, and no one is allowed to duck under it. There is no patience for pragmatic solutions or the compromises that almost everyone feels are necessary to make in order to get through life. There is nothing worse than a moderately talented musician, unless it is a moderately committed filmmaker.

*William Beard*

## Josef Penninger: “From regulation of bone loss to breast cancer prevention”

On March 24, 2011 Dr. Josef Penninger, leading medical researcher, presented his groundbreaking work on breast cancer and osteoporosis prevention and treatment. The lecture was organized as part of a new series titled “Austrian Canadian Science Talks” and was hosted by the Embassy of Austria and the Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine at the University of Ottawa.

Dr. Penninger reported on research carried out over the last 10 years related to the topics of osteoporosis and breast cancer susceptibility. His work ranges from novel ways to prevent bone loss in the elderly to the development of new drug targets for the treatment of breast cancer. He discovered the master gene for osteoporosis and of the DREAM gene, a master regulator that allows us to feel pain. The main focus of his research lies in heart, lung and bone diseases, autoimmune diseases and cancers.

Scientifically, his basic approach is to genetically manipulate and change genes in mice and to determine the effects of these mutations in



*Josef Penninger*

the development of the whole organism and in diseases. Through these mutations, he tries to establish basic principles of development and basic mechanisms of disease pathogenesis.

Josef Penninger is Austria's most prominent medical researcher. He is the Director of the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology (IMBA) in Vienna,

professor of genetics at the University of Vienna and teaches immunology at the University of Toronto.

Born in Austria, Josef Penninger has spent most of his research career in Canada, first at the Ontario Cancer Institute in Toronto and later, from 1994 to 2002, as a lead researcher at the Amgen Research Institute. In 1999 he received the “William E. Rawls Prize” for outstanding contribution to cancer research from the National Cancer Institute of Canada and the “Young Canadian Explorer Award” in 2002. In 2000 and 2001 he was in the “Top Ten list of the most cited researchers in the world”. In 2000 he was named “Young Leader in Medicine in Canada” and two years later, “One of the 10 most promising scientists in all fields of science in the world” by the Esquire Magazine. In 2003 he was named “Austrian Scientist of the Year” and in 2004 “Austrian of the Year.”

More information about Dr. Penninger's work is available at <http://www.imba.oeaw.ac.at/?L=2125>.

*Manfred Prokop / Austrian Embassy*

### Water diversion tunnel

*Continued from p. 17*

A big tunnel boring machine, nicknamed “Big Becky” after Sir Adam Beck, the founder of public electric power in Ontario, has been working hard to drill a hole 14.4 m in diameter, beneath two outdated tunnels that had been constructed in the 1950s.

On March 15, 2011 CBC's Rick Mercer gave an inside report on the project, bringing this amazing construction phase to Canadian audiences. He explained that this tunnel

will be 1.5 times bigger than the Euro-tunnel. It will divert 500 m<sup>3</sup> of water per second from the headwaters of the Niagara River to the power plant underneath Niagara Falls.

A video of the breakthrough is available at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-G4te5Kv\\_0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-G4te5Kv_0).

For this project, the Austrian company brought about twenty tunnel experts from Austria, mostly from Carinthia, to work alongside Canadian sub-contractors.

Two years ago, on a flight from

Austria to Canada, I happened to sit beside Alfred Pucher, who is the tunnel superintendent of this project. He explained that this was the largest project with which he had ever been involved. It was also Alfred Pucher through whom I met Christopher Roessler and Andreas Ostermann, two Austrians, who while working on the project, came together with others and established a club called “The Friends of Austria, Niagara Falls”.

*Roland K. Pirker*

**Austrian emperor commemorated**

*Continued from p. 18*



Hermann Wiesflecker

Sciences (*Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften*), as well as the group of younger scholars involved with the Maximilian project at the University of Innsbruck, Christina Antenhofer, Klaus Brandstätter and Daniela Unterholzner. The conference also included some of North America's lead-



ing scholars on Early Modern Austria including Paula Sutter Fichtner, Professor Emerita at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, Keith Polk, Professor Emeritus at the University of New Hampshire, Joseph Patrouch of Florida International University and Howard Louthan of the University of Florida.

Rounding out the broad international group of participants were

Isabella Lazzarini of the University of Molise in Campobasso, Italy, Michail Boytsov of the University of Moscow, Heather Madar of Humboldt State University and Thomas Schauerte of the University of Trier. The Wirth Institute's principal patron, Dr. Alfred G. Wirth, a keen enthusiast for Austrian history, also attended the conference.

Franz A.J. Szabo

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