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THE "PATH OF REMEMBRANCE" DEDICATED

AUSTRIAN CENTRE CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

ACC DISSERTATION PRIZE AWARDED TO MUSICOLOGIST

ALBERTA'S AUSTRIAN LIBRARY COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTED

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### Web sites on Austrian-Canadian affairs

- Austrian-Canadian Council: <http://www.austrian-canadian-council.ca/>
- Austrian Embassy, Ottawa: <http://www.austro.org/>
- Cultural events in the Austrian-Canadian community: <http://www.austro.org/>, then click on "Kulturforum Ottawa" and then "Veranstaltungen"
- Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies: <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/wi/>
- Austrian Trade Commission, Toronto: <http://www.advantageaustria.org/ca>
- Canadian Embassy, Vienna: <http://www.kanada.at/>
- What's on: Canadian events in Austria:* [http://geo.international.gc.ca/canada-Europa/austria/embassy/Canadian\\_Events-en.asp](http://geo.international.gc.ca/canada-Europa/austria/embassy/Canadian_Events-en.asp)
- OeCulture On-line:* <http://www.oeculture.ca>

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## Austrian Centre celebrates 10th anniversary



Ambassador Ditz introduces Minister Hahn's video message

THE Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta – initially known as the Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies – celebrated its 10th anniversary on Friday, September 5, 2008. Opened on the first Friday of September in 1998 by the then Austrian Federal Minister of the Sciences, Dr. Caspar Einem, the Canadian Secretary of State for Science, Research and Development, the late Hon. Ronald Duhamel, the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, the Hon. Clint Dunford, the President of the University of Alberta, Dr. Roderick C. Fraser, and the Dean of Arts, Patricia Clements – it has since earned a national and international reputation as Canada's focal point of Austrian and Central European Studies and one of the leading centres of its kind in the world. This recognition was reflected in the broad range of dignitaries who attended the 10th anniversary celebration.

The Wirth Institute was originally established upon a joint initiative by

the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Sciences, the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Conference of University Presidents, who selected the University of Alberta as the university most able and prepared to establish Austrian and Central European Studies as a clear university priority. On October 29, 2003 the Centre was formally renamed "Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies" in recognition of Dr. Manfred and Dr. Alfred Wirth's generous donations, which have secured the future of the Institute with an endowment totaling nearly \$10 million. An appropriate Memorandum of Understanding was originally signed between the Government of Austria and the University of Alberta on March 3, 1998, and one of the highlights of the 10th anniversary celebration was the signing of a formal renewal of this Memorandum.

Subsequent to this agreement between the Government of Austria and the University of Alberta, negotiations were undertaken with the embassies of Austria's neighbouring countries

that shared her historical legacy with the aim of winning the support of these countries for a broader programme of Central European area studies. As a result the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia all joined Austria as additional sponsors of the Centre. In the course of the following three years the ambassadors of each of these countries visited the University of Alberta, and in formal flag-presentation ceremonies pledged the support of their respective countries for the Centre.

As a result, high-ranking representatives of all these governments attended the anniversary celebration. The current Austrian Minister of Science and Research, Dr. Johannes Hahn, had intended to attend, but the sudden collapse of the Austrian coalition government and the Austrian elections prevented him from doing so at the last minute. Dr. Hahn therefore sent a video message of ongoing support for the Institute, which was introduced by the Austrian Ambassador, Dr. Otto Ditz – one of his last official acts before his recall from Canada. Other representatives of the Austrian Ministry of Science and Research who traveled from Vienna for the occasion were Dr. Christoph Ramoser, Head of the Department for International University Relations, and his assistants, Ms. Ulrike Csura and Mr. Florian Gerhardus. In addition to Ambassador Ditz, the Director of the Austrian Cultural Forum at the Embassy in Ottawa, Dr. Peter Storer, and the Director, Office of Science and Technology of the Austrian Embassy in Washington, D.C., Dr. Philipp Marxgut, were also present. Austrian universities were represented by Dr. Hans Moser, former President of the University of Innsbruck, and his wife, Dr. Ursula Moser, Director of Center

for Canadian Studies there, as well as Dr. Arnold Suppan, Head of the Institute of East European History at the University of Vienna and Dr. Dieter Binder of the University of Graz.

1997-1998 in the original initiative to establish the Institute, and which continues to support its activities, was represented by its Honourary Chair, Dr. Alfred Wirth – who is also the prin-

mirrored by the participation at the anniversary ceremony of every level of the university administration, including Mr. Brian Heidecker, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Dr. Indira Samarasekera, President and Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Carl Amrhein, Provost and Vice-President Academic, and Dr. Daniel Woolf, Dean of Arts.

The Wirth Institute remains the only university institute in Canada that devotes itself exclusively to the interdisciplinary study and understanding of Austrian and Central European subjects. It coordinates interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary Austrian and Central European studies at the University of Alberta, and works with community groups in a broad range of outreach activities. Its mandate is to sponsor and encourage scholarship on Central European subjects across the broad range of disciplines within the university, to raise the profile of Central Europe and Central European Studies in Canada and to provide a



Dignitaries and guests from Europe and North America gather for the Institute's anniversary celebration in front of the University of Alberta's Arts Building

The other supporting countries were represented by equally high-ranking dignitaries. The Hungarian delegation was led by Dr. Katalin Bogyay, the Hungarian Secretary of State for Education, and by Dr. Pál Vastagh, Hungarian Ambassador to Canada. The Czech delegation was headed by Dr. Vlastimil Ružička, Czech Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports; Slovenia was represented by Tomaž Kunstelj, Slovenian Ambassador to Canada; and Slovakia by Pavol Svetík, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Slovakia (Ambassador Opiela, who had fully intended to attend personally, was prevented from doing so by a medical emergency). Poland was represented by Mr. Artur Michalski, Chargé d'affaires of the Polish Embassy, and by Mr. Krzysztof Kasprzyk, Consul General at the Polish Consulate General in New York.

The Austrian-Canadian Council, which had been instrumental during

principal patron of the Institute – and by Mr. Hans Raschke, Vice-President of the ACC. In addition to a number of members of the Austrian community in Edmonton present at the event, Mrs. Christine Meyer, President of the Canadian Austrian Society of Toronto, and Mrs. Maria Strausz, President of The Friends of Austria in Winnipeg, also traveled to Edmonton for the occasion.

The recognition the Wirth Institute has earned locally was well reflected by the presence of the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, the Hon. Doug Horner, MLA Thomas Lukaszuk, and Deputy Mayor of Edmonton, Don Iveson, who presented Institute Director Franz Szabo with the Mayor's Proclamation of "Austrian and Central European Cultural Week" in Edmonton. Within the university itself both the respect the Institute has obtained as well as the institution's commitment to Austrian and Central European Studies was



Left to right: Vice-President Amrhein, Ambassador Ditz and Dean Woolf sign the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding. Standing behind them, Dr. Christoph Ramoser and Dr. Franz Szabo.

leadership role in a network of cooperation in this field within the University of Alberta and with other Canadian universities.

In its ten-year existence, the Wirth Institute has launched a wide variety of activities to meet its objectives. Above all, it has made the University of Alberta a hub of international scholarship on Central European subjects

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## From Brazil to Canada: Welcome to the new Austrian Ambassador!

“It is indeed a formidable task to promote Austrian interests in a country that is a hundred times bigger than Austria, but I very much look forward to this challenge,” says Werner Brandstetter, the new Austrian Ambassador in Canada.

Ambassador Brandstetter and his wife Leonie-Maria arrived in Ottawa on September 17, 2008 after having spent four exciting and intensive years in Brazil, another country of continental proportions. As political highlights of his term in Brasilia, Ambassador Brandstetter names the state visits of Austrian Federal President Heinz Fischer to Brazil and, during Austria's chairmanship in the EU, of Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to Austria as well as a marked increase in economic and cultural activities between the two countries.

On October 21, 2008 Ambassador Brandstetter presented his letter of credence to the Honourable Governor General Michaëlle Jean. He was very impressed by the warm welcome afforded to him and by the interest of the Governor General in Austria and Austrian culture.

Mr. Brandstetter grew up in Lower Austria and, following graduation from the University of Economics in Vienna and post-graduate study at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna, joined the Austrian Foreign Service in 1979.

A seasoned career diplomat, Mr. Brandstetter served at the Austrian Embassy in Moscow from 1981 to 1983 and was then posted to the Austrian Consulate General in New York. After three years at the headquarters in Vienna between 1987 and 1990, he went on to Berlin in 1990 and to Prague in 1991 and was appointed Austrian Consul General in Los Angel-

es in 1995. In 2000 he returned to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna and joined the cabinet of then Austrian Foreign Minister Ferrero-Waldner. After almost four years as foreign policy adviser



Governor General Michaëlle Jean and Ambassador Werner Brandstetter. Photo: Sgt. Serge Gouin, Rideau Hall

and speech writer to the then Foreign Minister he was appointed Austrian Ambassador in Brazil.

In terms of priorities involved in representing Austria in Canada, Ambassador Brandstetter mentions the further enhancement of cultural, scientific and people-to-people ties between Austria and Canada. He wishes not only to intensify bilateral relations, but would like to diversify them and include the provinces as much as possible.

Ambassador Brandstetter views Austrians living in Canada and Austro-Canadian friendship organizations as instrumental in this endeavour and also underlines the Embassy's role of seeing to the needs of Austrians living in Canada. Beyond that, he is

looking forward to making new friends for Austria among Canadians.

Referring to the Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, which are slated to be an important event for the two winter sport nations Canada and Austria, the Ambassador believes that sports is likely to become an ever more important field of common interests, even if Austrians and Canadians might be fierce competitors in winter sports.

As for political relations, Ambassador Brandstetter expects new avenues of cooperation with Canada as a result of Austria's holding a non-permanent seat on the Security Council of the United Nations for the period 2009/10. Canada had generously supported Austria's candidature. The two countries share common values and a long-standing tradition in support of human rights, human security issues, and co-operation in the multilateral framework.

Ambassador Brandstetter also recalls that Canada is Austria's fourth-largest trading partner overseas. For him, this warrants paying much attention to one of the modern tasks of an Austrian Embassy, namely to create favourable conditions for trade relations, a task carried out in cooperation with the Austrian trade commissions. Both countries, at this point, look well set to weather the international financial crisis due to responsible, yet market-friendly fiscal and regulatory policies.

Ambassador Brandstetter is the author of a number of publications on East-West economic issues, in particular on energy projections and on the American and the Austrian political system.

With his two adult children now living in Austria, Ambassador Brandstetter hopes to be able to devote more of his leisure time in Canada to his favourite hobbies: hiking, jeeping and playing the piano.

*OeCulture* wishes Ambassador Brandstetter success for his new assignment.

*Mag. Peter Storer*  
Director of the Austrian Cultural Forum

Austrian Society Ottawa members welcoming Ambassador Brandstetter on October 3, 2008. Left to right: Hans Wyslouzil, Ambassador Mag. Werner Brandstetter, Heidi-C. Temelie and Roland K Pirker.  
Photo: Irene Orasjaerue for Rollframe



## Alfred Wirth continues to support charities aimed at health, culture and education

**B**USINESSMAN and philanthropist Alfred Wirth is well-known to the readers of *OeCulture* and the Austrian-Canadian community at large for his multi-million dollar gift to the University of Alberta's Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies (see *OeCulture* 2004, Nos. 1 and 2). In the meantime, he has continued to support several other important projects in an amazing variety of fields.

In 2007, he established an Endowment Fund for Special Studies at the C.D. Howe Institute, Canada's most influential think tank, with a donation of more than \$1,000,000, the largest gift ever made to the Institute in its 50-year old history. This fund will support analysis and public policy papers on important subjects which are not of commercial interest and therefore would not get done otherwise. The donation will bolster the Institute's research capacity in five key areas: fiscal and monetary policy, economic

growth and innovation, trade policy, social policy and public institutions, and governance questions.

In the same year, Alfred Wirth do-



nated funds to the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada's largest, to establish the Wirth Gallery of the Middle East. This gallery, which occupies more than 4,000 square feet, highlights the many key contributions to our civilization (including religion, writing, mathematics, food, etc.) originating

from these ancient lands. More than 1,000 artefacts examine the region's contributions to both eastern and western civilizations through culture and technology from the Palaeolithic Age to AD 1900. The Wirth Gallery of the Middle East was opened in February 2008. You can visit it at <http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/wculture/middleeast.php>.

Dr. Wirth continues to support the SOS Children's Villages, both monetarily and by serving as a member of the Board of Directors. He has also made major contributions to the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta, to the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research in Toronto, and, together with his daughter Elizabeth, to the Arthritis and Autoimmunity Research Centre Foundation at University Health Network in Toronto.

*Manfred Prokop*

## Conference at the University of Ottawa: Gender and modernity in Central Europe: The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its legacy

THE conference “Gender and Modernity in Central Europe: The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its Legacy” was held at the University of Ottawa between May 16 and 18, 2008. It was hosted by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

and the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, and sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Sheraton Ottawa Hotel, the Faculty of Arts (U of Ottawa), the Austrian-Canadian Council, the Austrian Cultural Forum, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (U of Ottawa), the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary, the Rákóczi Foundation, the Canada-Hungary Educational Foundation and the Embassy of Romania. The conference intended to explore, in an interdisciplinary forum, the complex interplay between gender and modernity in the region that once made up the Habsburg Empire, reflect on the multiple legacies resulting from this interplay and increase awareness about those legacies in Canada. The conference thus brought together scholars and graduate students from Austria, Canada, Hungary, India, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, the U.K. and the U.S. from various disciplines (history, literature, sociology, psychology, art history) who work in the field of Habsburg studies so as to explore,

discuss and expand recent developments in the study of gender and modernity in Central Europe. The opening address was given by the organizers (Prof. Agatha Schwartz and Prof. Judith Szapor), Prof. Franz Szabo, Director of the

of national manhood in fin-de-siècle Hungary, re-definitions of masculinity through sport and the impact of the Viennese *Jugendkultur* on gender concepts of the Kibbutz of Hashomer Hatzair. The role that Jewish women of Vienna and Budapest



and the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, and sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Sheraton Ottawa Hotel, the Faculty of Arts (U of Ottawa), the Austrian-Canadian Council, the Austrian Cultural Forum, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures (U of Ottawa), the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary, the Rákóczi Foundation, the Canada-Hungary Educational Foundation and the Embassy of Romania. The conference intended to explore, in an interdisciplinary forum, the complex interplay between gender and modernity in the region that once made up the Habsburg Empire, reflect on the multiple legacies resulting from this interplay and increase awareness about those legacies in Canada. The conference thus brought together scholars and graduate students from Austria, Canada, Hungary, India, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, the U.K. and the U.S. from various disciplines (history, literature, sociology, psychology, art history) who work in the field of Habsburg studies so as to explore,

Wirth Institute, László Bakos, Consul of the Embassy of Hungary, and Dr. Lori Burns, Vice-Dean (Research) of the Faculty of Arts.

The first plenary session was presented by distinguished Hungarian historian Viktor Karády who lectured on women's entry into higher education in Dualist Hungary. The panels on the first day analysed the crisis

played in the construction of modernity was also explored, as were lesser-known psychoanalysts of the period such as Sándor Ferenczi and women who contributed to the field.

The second plenary session was opened on Saturday morning by Jirina Šmejkalová, specialist in Central and East European feminism, who presented on Czech feminist phil-

