Conceptions of the Desirable

What Cities Ought to Know about the Future

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And Now for Something Completely Different.

If you want to know what's really crucial to a society, then take a look at a city's most prominent building. In former times, the palaces and cathedrals marked the centers of power, universities indicated concentrations of knowledge, and a splendid town square announced a commercial metropolis. These days, television towers loom over media cities, bank towers illuminate financial districts, and towers teeming with administrators bureaucratize cities with heavy concentrations of civil servants.

Over the years, our society has thus become wealthier in the numbers of high-rise storeys piled on top of each other. And thereby also richer in the material sense. No question about it. But perhaps impoverished when it comes to manifestations of inner substance, of matters of value to society and the human spirit alike. We suspect this has to do with the fact that the souls of human beings cannot keep pace with the speed of development.

In Graz, 129 acres of prime construction land offer the opportunity to pose afresh the question of personal and societal felicity. For this reason this book anticipates what might really concern or touch people in 2017. And finds – for inhabitants, developers and investors – answers to the question of what will endure.

Foreword

by Clifford Pearson

Clifford Pearson is a deputy editor of Architectural Record. Since joining the magazine in 1989, he has written on a broad range of topics – from individual projects such as the Rose Center for Earth and Space by the Polshek Partnership and the Hong Kong International Airport by Foster & Partners to essays on school design and housing. From 1993 to 1997, he edited Record's annual section on architecture in the Pacific Rim and today he is in charge of the magazine's Chinese edition. In 2003, he received a Media Fellowship from the U.S.-Japan Foundation. Mr. Pearson holds a master's degree in architectural history from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in urban studies from Cornell University.

Look around America and Europe and you'll find precious few examples of successful new communities built in the past 50 years. After the much publicized failures of urban renewal in cities around the United States in the 1960s and '70s, government lost faith in its ability to plan attractive places for people to live, ceding the job to private developers whose primary goal was to make money. These developers overwhelmingly built gated communities and planned-unit developments that metastasized into what we now call suburban sprawl. In Europe, some governments have taken active roles in planning or subsidizing inner-city housing developments in places such as the old docklands of Amsterdam and Barcelona. But much of the new housing in Europe has followed the American model of income-segregated "communities" built by private developers in the suburban rings outside city centers.

Building real communities where diverse groups of people live, work and play has always been extremely difficult. Almost all of the best of such places grow slowly, organically over time, designed by many different hands in response to changing tastes, economic conditions, and technological forces. Utopian communities planned by individual thinkers or organized according to particular sets of belief rarely succeed as on-going, thriving entities. We may admire some of the ideals behind the Shaker communities of the 19th century or Robert Owen's New Harmony in Indiana, but the vision that made each of these places remarkable was unable to last very long. In the late 20th century, the New Urbanist movement has tried to create mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities based on lessons learned from American towns that many people admire – places such as Alexandria, Virginia; Charleston, South Carolina; and Greenwich Village in Manhattan. The New Urbanists have tried to harness their vision to market forces, relying on private developers to build according to

their planning codes and design guidelines. The results, though, have been disappointing. While some New Urbanist developments have been undeniable economic successes (especially the instantly quaint resort town of Seaside, Florida), none has come anywhere close to being a truly diverse, truly urban place, and many are almost indistinguishable from the run-of-the-mill planned-unit developments that keep stretching municipal infrastructure further and further from urban cores.

So anyone who buys 123 acres of prime real estate and thinks he can create an economically vibrant, demographically diverse, socially rich community must be a bit crazy. The track record of such endeavors is abysmal. Which makes you wonder about Asset One AG, the company that bought the old Reininghaus Brewery site near the center of Graz, Austria. The people behind the effort, including Asset One ceo Ernst Scholdan, are smart folks. So why do they think they can succeed where others have failed? What makes them believe they can do anything other than the usual well-intentioned-but-ultimately-one-dimensional kind of new development?

Well, first of all, they have a great piece of land – adjacent to an urban center, rather than on the rural fringe beyond the city limits. So instead of requiring people to drive long distances and creating more sprawl, Asset One will bring people back downtown where existing infrastructure can be upgraded and re-used. This site has a history of industrial development that can be tapped to give the new community a connection to the past without resorting to architectural nostalgia. No need for Neo-Beaux-Arts or mock-Baroque here. By reaching out to the city's existing road and rail systems, the development can heal the wounds that separated the old brewery from the rest of Graz. Recycling, integration and regeneration can make this new community a model of sustainable development.

Secondly, the Asset One people are thinking more like residents than developers. Instead of rushing forward to start generating revenue as soon as possible, they are sitting around talking with people who live in the area, roaming Europe for lessons to be learned from other places, and asking lots of questions. Usually developers want to quickly hire planners and architects to draw up plans, so they can start selling houses and plots of land. But here, the Asset One team has decided to create a book, the one you're reading now. Mind you, this isn't a book with answers. It won't tell you how to build a successful community or show you any drawings or photographs of the place Asset One plans to build. It doesn't map out a vision of the Reininghaus site 20 years from now. Rather, this book brings together lots of different voices talking in rambling fashion about all kinds of things – some of which seem related to building a community, some of which seem quite tangential. What is a conversation with a clinical psychologist doing in a book like this? Who ever heard of including an interview with a homeless person in this kind of publication? And do we really need to hear from a songwriter?

But it is exactly this kind of nonlinear, unconventional thinking that offers hope that the Reininghaus district of Graz will be different from most other privately developed communities. Cities are places where random conversations with unrelated people are possible. In fact, we love cities because we know there's always the chance of some unexpected, unplanned, out-of-the-ordinary encounter. Cities aren't linear, they're networked. They aren't straightforward, they're round-about and tangential. So is this book – which makes me think that perhaps Reininghaus will have some of these qualities too.

Writing a book rather than drawing up architectural plans is an odd way to start building a new urban district. But in the past 50 years, books have proved to be powerful factors in reshaping urban planning. For example, Jane Jacobs's The Death and Life of Great American Cities, published in 1961, helped transform our thinking about cities and communities, sparking a revolution against the mega-plans of officials like Robert Moses. Learning from Las Vegas, written by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour in 1972, also challenged long-established views on what makes a city appealing and shook up the field of urban design. So there are important precedents for seeing books as catalysts for remaking the way we build communities.

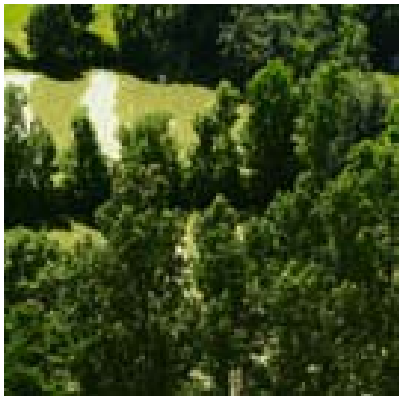
I don't know what Reininghaus will be like when people start moving there. I have no idea if it will be a model that other developers or community builders will want to follow. But I am impressed with the way its founders are approaching their task. They're asking the right questions and talking to some fascinating people. They're thinking and wondering before they start defining and designing. By doing so, they've gotten my attention. Like a lot of people who care about cities, I'm going to follow this ambitious project as it evolves and matures. I get the sense it will be a place that makes a difference.

Grounds for Writing a Book.

Right in the heart of Graz, an entire city district had simply fallen into oblivion. Now, the industrial park of the former Reininghaus Brewery has been rediscovered. The new owners have taken up the search for answers. For example: How, in future, we wish to work and live.

An Editorial Board for the Future.

The future emerges as we reflect collectively on the present. Thus, the ideal form in which to contemplate publicly on this issue could well be – conversation. Thirtytwo citizens of Graz, both men and women, traversed Europe conducting such conversations, thereby undertaking a contemplative journey forward to the year 2017.



The rediscovery of a forgotten district of the city: Right now, the largest portion of Graz-Reininghaus constitutes a romantic setting for strollers. Roland Koppensteiner (left) and Ernst Scholdan, members of the new owner's Management Board, have kicked off the start of new era for this historic part of the city – with a search for new qualities.

A Place Where Wishing's Allowed.

Asset One AG is the new owner of the lands accumulated by Brau AG over the years. One of the development projects is the Reininghaus site which, with an area of almost 130 acres, is almost exactly the size of the nearby medieval city core of Graz. Asset-One CEO Ernst Scholdan, who adds a wealth of experience from other endeavors to his new expertise in real estate, speaks to the future of Reininghaus:

What does Graz-Reininghaus mean for you personally?
At the moment it is, first and foremost, an archeological site with a lot of green space. But this white space on the Graz city map is, above all, a precious and rare opportunity to do things right. This biotope opens new prospects for the city and represents, by virtue of its size, one of the last possibilities in all of Europe to accomplish something really splendid in an inner-city environment. It would fulfill my own personal dream if, ten years from now, two people would be sitting on a park bench and one would say to the other: "What we did here was pretty well thought through." That's why we've embarked on a search for precisely those qualities this district can and should develop – so that people will want to reside, work and experience life here and nowhere else. That's our goal. There are too many people who are somewhere, but who lack the intentionality and the passion to be precisely where they are. And that's exactly the kind of wishing that is now emerging.

Can one build an entire city district with conversations, visits abroad, and a book?
Personally, I've never built a city district. And as far as I know, there aren't too many private companies that take on something like this. But I'm convinced that it's entirely possible. Even if people say: "That's not the way to do it!" That's precisely how we are going to do it, and if that's not the conventional approach, so be it. We want at least to make the attempt. If you attend the largest real estate fair in the world, you'll see that 22,500 real estate professionals approach this topic in a very linear fashion. As far as we're concerned, that leaves absolutely no room for us to proceed as they do. Not that we want to take that approach in any case.

How long will this development take?
For this process we've granted ourselves four years' time, because we want to let these qualities ripen – and only then will we translate them, step by step, into economic concepts, architecture, and then finally an urban district in its own right.

When will we be able to see architectural results?
Everybody says: "Show me something!" But I promise that it'll take a long time for us to have something to show. We don't want the architects to start drafting right now The architecture will come along in any case. On the day we say "Go!" to the architects, the lines will start to course through the property. And the buildings will be both large and small. One house will be beautiful, and another will be ugly; some will like it, others won't. But we've got a bit of time till we're there. It's really a matter of seeing to it that individuals have the desire to move here.

How does one accomplish that?
I don't know what we can accomplish in this regard, but we can certainly prevent imprecision and negligence and thereby avoid producing dashed hopes. I'm not yet sure of all the forms that happiness can take, but I know how people can be unhappy, what kinds of disappointments there are, and the havoc that negligence and destruction wreak. In this district we still have a lot of green space, flora and fauna. And as long as it's not dead and gone, the possibility to do something good is alive as well.

What is actually possible, then?
That's what this process is intended to tell us, and that's exactly what I find so incredibly fascinating. The search for quality is the only search that really pays off. And one day people will say: "It's an urban district that started off as a book. They really thought about things, knowing also that they wouldn't be able to know everything in advance. But they gave it their best shot."

The Quest for Quality.

A blank space on a city map is a provocation and a challenge. Nothing has been ruined here – yet. And there remains much that can still be done right in future. In order to do as many things right as possible, almost 130 acres provided good reason not to begin the development of an entire city district as is usually done – with drafting lines, densities and allowable heights – but to pose anew and in advance the question of personal and societal happiness, and to seek corresponding answers.

32 people
A diverse group Graz residents, women and men, representing various backgrounds and stations of life, came together to take up the hypothesis that the quality of discussion is decisive to a project's success. And pursuing this hypothesis, they decided to think publicly – through a series of interviews – not only about an urban district, but about the blank space, the indeterminacy – in other words, about the future itself.

form an Editorial Board
To ensure that, in their quest for conceptualizations of the desirable, they would not discard anything essential, they decided to document the search and publish the results. And since the future is, in essence, the collective reflection of the present, work began on a publication full of unapologetically subjective sociopolitical reflections on the ways in which people would like, in future, to configure life, work, education and urbanity. These themes are reflected in the four Editorial Teams.

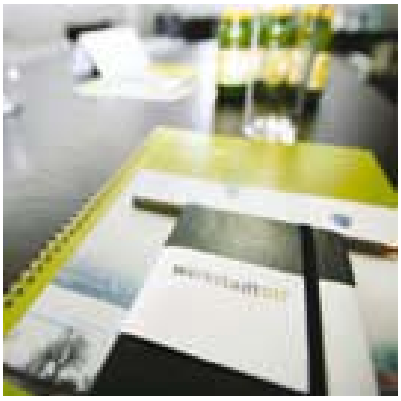
conduct discussions
The selection of our diverse discussion partners inside Austria and internationally was informed by the wish to assemble the broadest possible spectrum of ideas. Despite – or because of – the contradictions and inadequacies this entails, the idea was to allow into this process of configuring the future (and simultaneously those urban precincts that point towards the future) the human scale that is so often forgotten today – an amnesia that carries with it the result that people – and with them, entire cities – have unlearned the art of formulating wishes and desires.

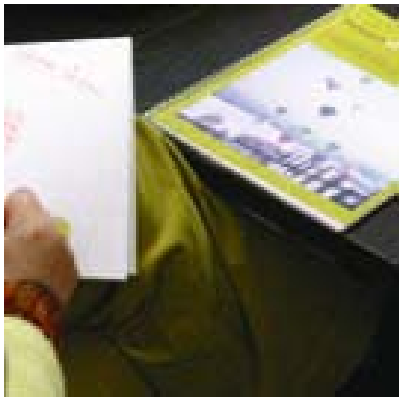
embark on a journey
The quest for desirable futures also points the four Editorial Teams in the direction of Europe, in order to encounter – up close and personal – examples of wishes that have been brought to life in selected venues – and from there, in the form of conversations, to peek behind the scenes of the emerging future.

and make a book
So that the thoughts also make their way into the public realm, the Editorial Board decides to look for appropriate publishing houses – for the German and English editions – that are able to identify with the project of embarking on a differentiated and comprehensive survey of the possibilities of "doing things right" as a motivation for further thinking. So that precisely this book – the one you are now reading – can come about.

as the basis for further public consideration
The book is a step in the direction of those qualities and characteristics from which human beings can derive mental images regarding how, in the future, they wish to live, work and learn – and then, in Graz-Reininghaus can actually transform these images into reality.

Even if we don't yet know exactly what will be there in the end. If, in a few years, people want to be there, then we'll also know that, in our quest for quality, we didn't take the worst of all paths.





Notebook and pencil become the tools of urban development – the 32 members of the Editorial Board, apportioned into four thematically constituted Teams, attempt to get a significant step closer to the future. "Conversations as a form of public contemplation" is the credo that takes our Editorial Board through half of Europe – in many conversations and four separate journeys.

Conceptions of the Desirable.

Life
Work
Urbanity
Education

When we speak of “life” in this context, then we mean a high quality of living. And not just for the individual, but above all for society as a whole. We are proceeding on a quest for the conditions that produce the greatest possible shared contentment. What, back then, the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham termed “the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people.” As we proceed, we are following our conviction that individual and collective happiness should constitute, in the case of the desirable, something like a double helix in which both strands are inextricably bound up with each other. And that the responsibility for both always rests in the private as well as the public realm.

The “Life” Team.

1 | Bertram Werle
A native of the Vorarlberg region of mountainous western Austria, Bertram Werle first studied biology and then switched to regional planning. He went on to become the youngest-ever director of municipal planning and building for the city of Graz. He is married and the father of two daughters. The only things that can really make him lose his cool are thoughtlessness and architecture of the cheapest sort.

2 | Christoph Weiermair
After completing his studies, which brought him from Upper Austria to Graz, Christoph Weiermair would like to work as a journalist, keeping a wary eye on the high and mighty, both exercising criticism and providing enlightenment as needed.

3 | Birgit Pölzl
Birgit Pölzl is in charge of the "Literature" department of the *Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten*, an important Graz venue for presentations and discussions of contemporary art, culture and religion. An author in her own right who is currently working on an "experimentally fragmented novel," she is married and the mother of four grown children who were intentionally brought up contrary.

4 | Clarissa Mayer-Heinisch
With degrees in journalism and political science, Clarissa Mayer-Heinisch considers herself "hooked on culture." Accordingly, having just about completed raising her three children, she is actively involved, in addition to her job as a journalist, in the work of the boards of several artistic institutions.

5 | Jürgen Fortin
"You only fly as far as your thoughts have already taken you." With this as his motto, the researcher, entrepreneur and prize-winning innovator-inventor Jürgen Fortin has covered great distances. The World Economic Forum rates the technology he helped to develop as "transforming society on a sustained basis."

6 | Burghard Kaltenbeck
As a booster of private industry in Styria, Burghard Kaltenbeck usually has a lot to do with clusters, innovation and broadband. For this father of three children, intellectual-spiritual development ranks much higher than material development; he wishes for high-quality foodstuffs for all humanity.

7 | Barbara Porotschnig
As a student and the single mother of a son, Barbara Porotschnig didn't accept the notion that she should have to forego all societal support. So she founded – while majoring in social work and social management – a residential and networking initiative for those in similar situations.

8 | Michael Sammer | Section Editor
A sociologist by training, Michael Sammer is a self-employed motivational and social researcher. He is the father of a daughter and has a background in theater. At the moment he's attempting, as an act of applied deceleration, to teach himself the piano.

“There should be artistic possibilities beyond the realm of the both elite and the banal – possibilities that contribute to an intensification of life. Art not as a substitute for therapy, but as the experience of one’s self and of life itself.” Birgit Pölzl

“The need is great for a civil society in which citizens become involved for each other’s sake. The future belongs to those who are uncool. To the cool, the future holds too little interest.” Jürgen Fortin

“The high pace and dynamic of change require increased stability as a counterweight.” Burghard Kaltenbeck

“Institutions, laws and infrastructure are insufficiently orientated to the worlds that people are actually inhabiting.”

Barbara Porotschnig

“Individual mobility leads to collective immobility. These sorts of paradoxical systems are typical of our society, of a last walling up before the collapse. Like a spruce tree that, at the end of its life cycle, once more disgorges more cones than ever before.” Bertram Werle

“Happiness is self-generating: Its sources are the bonds of family, the circle of friends and functioning working conditions. Not money. But society has developed from family and societal cohesion into an egotistical one-man-show.”

Clarissa Mayer-Heinisch

“The social question is becoming ever more important, since the antipodes in society, on many levels, are drifting farther and farther apart.” Christoph Weiermair

Edith Lindbauer
in Conversation with Jürgen Fortin

Simply Stop from Time to Time.

As a clinical psychologist in both a hospital setting and private practice, Edith H. Lindbauer attentively follows her patients' psychological distress and anxieties back to their root causes. Sees and hears what is too much for them, what they can cope with only with difficulty or not at all. Against this background, her diagnostic assessment of those forms of suffering that are symptomatic of our time has grown more and more acute. The mother of three children works in the Styrian cities of Judenburg and Graz.

Edith Lindbauer sees the times moving faster and faster. More and more people suffer from stress-related illnesses. Places of momentary repose and a positive attitude towards life provide the energy necessary for withstanding the increasing pressures of the working world. .

What do you think of when you contemplate the future?
My first thought is whether my children will be provided for on the job market. Whether they'll be in a position to start and feed a family, whether the social network will be appropriate to their needs, whether there will be sufficient local infrastructure, whether the world will be as open as it has thus far appeared to be for me, or if the world will become even more open, and how my children will be at home in it.

What kinds of problems lie ahead for the people of the future?
In earlier times, children grew up in the loving security of the family. Now they have to grow up in the security offered by a non-familial community. In earlier times, the grandmothers were the ones who held the children on their laps and who also introduced them to culture and tradition by telling them the same things over and over – those kinds of things are then just part of their inner being, and they simply live them. It's important that this be preserved in some way. These days, the decisive question is whom the parents engage to help them raise their children. Because growing up is being increasingly relocated to the kindergartens, the schools and to other venues, for example the places where young people spend their afternoons – whether that's within a school setting or whether they simply have the freedom to come and go and do and not do as they please. We're going to have to rethink this. Because I know from experience that children need role models and clear structures. If we don't offer them this kind of orientation, then they'll seek clear structures elsewhere; and that might, in some circumstances, turn out to be a group which only seemingly provides security and a sense of belonging – sects, for example, or a group that's into drugs.

Will life in the future be easier or more difficult than today?
I don't know what to say right now, because I'd really like it just to stay as it is. I've been able to live during a time of enormous social progress; I think I'm privileged to be able to live in these times. And I'm really totally happy that I'm alive now and that I'm as old as I am. I wouldn't want to be younger, and I wouldn't want to be older. Because I could well imagine that life is going to get more difficult. The technical advances have reached a stage where I enjoy them; in ten years, though, it's possible I'll no longer understand them. Everything's getting a bit more complicated. If I go to the supermarket today and stand in front of the yoghurt display, I often have a problem. I'm simply overwhelmed by the necessity of choosing. And that's only a minor example, but I think it's indicative of where things are going in general, whether we're talking about the economy, or research, or technology; or whether it has to do with the mountain of paper that we confront, or the contents of our computers: Sooner or later, we're not going to be able to take all of this in and make sense of it. In other words, I believe that it's going to be a bit more difficult in the future. Even apart from all the other things, for example, it will be more difficult on the job market.

Why is stress-related emotional illness such as burn-out on the rise?
First of all, I think we're increasingly worried about our workplace. For people whose thoughts tend in this direction, this brings them into the predicament that they may do more than is good for them, that they stay at work longer, and go at it more intensely, that they feel they have to prove why they of all people have this job. There's pressure from the employer, but also from co-workers. And on top of this, people who are vulnerable in this way possibly don't have at their disposal the right means to decouple work from free time. In other words, they don't identify an appropriate means of recreation and recuperation that they would need to be able to go back to their work.

Do employers put so much pressure on their employees?
With burn-out, it's often the case that there's massive pressure from some supervisor or other. But there's a very special personality component that gets added in. Frequently, those who suffer burn-out set extremely high standards for themselves. If extremely high expectations

then also come from others, they aren't able to cope, and then they work and work up to the point where their body signals to them that something's wrong. That's something that people usually can't accept, so they take some sort of medicine so they'll feel better. Or they start to do excessive amounts of physical exercise. They sense that something's wrong, but the body's signals are often not correctly interpreted. At some point the body simply gives up, and the patient can't do anything more at all.

Do you treat victims of burn-out?
Yes, a relatively high number, actually. Burn-out is an ailment that is enormously burdensome – not only for the patient herself or himself, but especially for the company for which the patient works. The reason is: If someone overlooks the symptoms, then they can't cope with any work load at all for a relatively long period of time – it takes months to come back from a burn-out.

Can patients accept a diagnosis of burn-out?
They're mostly very relieved when they get the diagnosis, because up to this point they've had absolutely no sense of what's going on with them. In other words, they come to me and say: "I'm having panic attacks; I can't sleep any more. No matter what I do, I'm always restless. I can't just sit somewhere peacefully; all I want to do is just lie down. What's wrong with me?" – When I discover, through the diagnostic process, that we're dealing with burn-out syndrome, then the patients experience relief by virtue of this knowledge. Then I tell them what they can do and what a therapy would look like. From this the patients know how things will develop; that, for example, they'll need some time for the treatment to work. And that they can grant themselves this "time-out," that they shouldn't put pressure on themselves to say: "But the day after tomorrow I'll be back in the office!"

What would you recommend, for example, to a business owner who would like to prevent burn-out among his staff?
That depends on the size of the business. If it's just a small company with a modest number of employees, then it's probably good to simply have private conversations, or even group discussions, from time to time in which one can find out how people are doing. . . . I'd like to have some time to think about this topic. I think there are still quite a few possibilities to do something actively, but I'm not able just to give patent recipes on the fly.

Another question: If someone asked how they could protect themselves against stress, what would you advise them?
One just has to stop for a second from time to time, in order to be able to comprehend and consciously experience how good things actually are. Simply stop for a time.

How can one impart repose and relaxation to another person?
In earlier times every part of town had a church, and that was a place of peace, quiet, and reflection. If, from time to time, you allow yourself to enter into such a large enclosure, to sense the silence and the atmosphere that's there, and also to feel how your energy returns – that's something that one can impart to anybody. All of us know that ourselves already; and sometimes we feel it when we allow ourselves to be impressed by the grandeur, the expanse, the coolness of a church, by these very special vibrations that might be present. And when one is taken by this atmosphere, then one senses that there is something very special there, and that something is going on within us. Afterwards, when we go out into the open again and let the noise of the city impinge on us, then we are aware of ourselves in a different way.

Are there enough places like that, where one can "collect oneself"?
It would be wonderful if everyone could do that in their own home. But if that isn't possible, if a person's relationship won't allow it or it's too difficult with the kids, then, I think, there is much too little space for peace and quiet. And if one doesn't find this repose, then things will be bad at work, then being with the kids won't work, then food won't taste good, and one's apartment will be a pigsty. I could well imagine that in the cities of the future, centers of emotional well-being, if you permit the expression, will be established. That, for example, employees of a company will not only have the right, but the obligation to have themselves checked out at regular intervals, to see if they're really thriving. And there they'll meet with experts who can recognize when danger is lurking, long before the person himself or herself is aware of it. These centers could be combined with "wellness" programs, which is something that's a part of the current trend in any case. It might be possible to create true oases here. So that, in the same way people used to go to church on Sunday, in the future they

would go once a week on a regular basis to the Center for Psychological Well-Being. I could imagine that a center like that would be something wonderful and great, a model project, so that people wish: "If only I could live there!"

In order to find repose, one must also take time for oneself. But in today's work world, that kind of time is in short supply. How should one handle this?
Well, I have my own way of looking at it. Think of a tree – it has leaves, it sprouts blossoms, produces fruit. It can't produce uninterruptedly. If I as a human being don't ensure that I obtain nourishment – that which the tree takes from the ground – so that I can blossom and bear fruit, then I'll not really look healthy. And neither will I be able to take proper care of the little tree shoots that are under my protection. In other words, it's my job to check regularly, on my own behalf, whether I've taken proper care of myself. Taking proper care of myself also means enjoying my early morning coffee or consciously enjoying the fact that I have hot water with which to wash myself. It's a matter of enjoyment. It's a matter of being happy that one is going to work. It's a matter of doing everything – or most things – that we do in life, of doing them with a sense of joy. There are many things I can't pick out for myself. Quite a few things are simply put onto my plate with the statement: "You'll just have to do it." But despite this I say that everything has two sides. There's not just the negative side that is so often in the foreground; but there's also a positive side. And that's something you have to look for and be able to see.

Ad Notam

The Knowledge of Life.

A Visit to India. By Jürgen Fortin.

It's easy to claim that, in the matter of existential wisdom, one is an authority. But the number of individuals who can furnish the corresponding proof are few and far between. One of them is Dr. Neelima Kapreh. For she is a master practitioner of that Indian art of healing that, in translation, means precisely "life wisdom." Ayurveda. I spoke with her. And, impeccably the master, she finds astonishingly simple and penetratingly forceful words on the topic of the fulfilled life.
According to that "Science of Life" called the Ayurveda, each of us has our own physical, mental and spiritual constitution, as well as our limits. The more we succeed in living in accordance with our own nature, the happier we will be. The problem: We twenty-first century human beings do not heed our inner voice to the extent that benefits our health and feeling of well-being, because to do so is considered "uncool." Instead, we battle against our own nature and, acting out of the cupidity of desiring everything and doing almost anything in return, we pay the price in the form of physical and psychological problems. We want to be perfect and complete, but for precisely this reason we lose our inner harmony. Neelima sees her mission as showing people the relative senselessness of the things for which they are struggling, and how they can use their energy in far better ways.

Society and its individuals have fallen victim to a materialistic and self-centered orientation. They think less and less about the others in whose ambit they live. If they thought more of others and saw themselves in the context of their surroundings, they would all be happier. The proper interplay of the parts is as important in society as it is in medicine. Concerned only with themselves, the individual parts will not get far on their own. Our personal happiness rests to a considerable extent on the shoulders of others. So one needs to develop images of others as good, positive fellow human beings. For everything in the world depends on how one thinks the world is. And if one thinks of this world with love, then one reaps the most reliable indication of happiness. And that is a smile, says Dr. Neelima Kapreh. And smiles.

Gert Steinbäcker
in Conversation with Bertram Werle

Tactful Resistance.

His best-known songs are an indispensable part of Austrian culture. And so, people here know almost everything about the longings, family ties, and big-city traumas of the singer and songwriter Gert Steinbäcker, who was born in Graz in 1952 and has played with several musical groups. It makes no difference whether what he writes about the warm sand, his grandfather, and his chronic homesickness for the place the song calls "F" (and Austrians identify as "Fürstenfeld") is actually true. At least it could be.

Why the loss of authentic personalities and products is just as regrettable as the fact that people don't talk enough with each other. That's what we talked about with someone who is the former and does the latter.

When you look to the future, which feeling predominates – joyful anticipation or skepticism?
I hope I'm wrong, but I don't believe things will get better. I don't think I'm pessimistic, but there are so incredibly many indications, not least in the world of media. If you're in your car and hear the same pop song on three different stations, that's somehow insane. They're always playing the same old thing. A leveling down to a shared superficiality that is evidently lucrative. That's a growing tendency. If I were to indulge in philosophical contemplation, then I'd say this lack of content is becoming a terrible problem, especially in those areas where I'm active, for example the media and culture. These days there is a dearth of personalities – both in the arts and in politics. I suspect this is the consequence of a trend that makes it boring to be a personality. But the big supermarkets or box stores are the same. Instead of the seven articles we could choose from before, there are only the three best-sellers on the shelves – everything else is disappearing from the warehouses, and people get used to the three, and then to two, and finally to the one that's left. In the past, the relatively large grocery stores still used to know that people liked this or that. Today they have computerized sales statistics, and everything that doesn't correspond to the mainstream gets axed. Or if you're watching TV somewhere in Europe and you see a bunch of people, and they don't tell you where it is, you'd be hard pressed to figure it out, because they're all dressed the same. I think that's a loss that has to do not with the EU, but with globalization. Until at some point everything and everyone is the same.

Do you think people will eventually get fed up with having everything the same?
I don't know if the pendulum will swing back again. What's on offer has been skillfully laid out – it's not just one package next to another one, but you've got one product in 400 different variations. The people who make money with these things aren't inexpert, you know. They get at least one new idea per day. But it takes insanely long for us to notice what's going on. Big business is breeding and raising a whole new generation in its own image. I don't know if that's a habit one can break.

So you're observing this leveling in many areas?
Yes, absolutely. That's a strange reversal. In past times the cabinet-maker said, "I'll build a terrific cabinet, and then I'll sell it for a lot of money." Today his primary thought is making a lot of money for some product or other. It doesn't have to be the best cabinet in the world. The main thing is, it costs very little money to produce. That's a different way of thinking. It's sales volume that counts, not quality. The rest is of no interest. It's only a question of how easily something can be converted into cash. That applies to labor policies, too. All my friends are totally dissatisfied with their job, but they all really like to work. It seems to me that in the last few years the universities have introduced a lot of courses on the topic: "How do I piss off my colleague so much he becomes insecure, so he can be induced to quit at my convenience?" On the one hand, they say there's no money for social security benefits, but on the other hand they achieve one billion-Euro profit after another. There's been a shift of values here. In crucial ways, everything is becoming increasingly and decidedly more expensive. For many people that's a big problem, since salaries aren't keeping pace. That leads to an un-mellow mood in very many people.

What would have to happen for the mood to improve again?
I think that, by virtue of this new situation that's bringing about a globalized world, very many people are being made insecure. That a certain amount of time simply has to pass, that certain things have to be transformed back into values so that you know what you have in front of you. When I say "values," then I mean it in a value-free sense. I asked a teacher friend of mine the following: "When are you going to retire?" And she replied: "I don't know. It depends when they send me packing." No matter where you look, everything is insecure, more insecure than it was before.

To what extent do we lack a sense of security today?
It's my sense that our educational system has contributed to this in some measure. My personal pillars stand on more venerable foundations. It's easier for me in the current situation because I can simply observe what's going on and don't stress out when somebody wants something from me. But I don't know how, say, a thirty-year-old should respond to the fact that a handshake no longer gives the assurance it once did. Which is not quite right either, but these days we assume that the binding handshake no longer exists.

How do young people deal with this?
That's really a very broad and complex issue. If, like me, you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth, then you're prepared for all kinds of things. You become familiar with multiple facets of life and you take your life into your own hands. You're also ready to get involved, to make commitments. But most young people today know only a world in which everything works as it should, you know, where everything is present in abundance. At least materially. A portion of the drug problem also comes from this, since there often just isn't the desire to fight for something. These are blatant situations in which people are just overwhelmed. Of course, among young people there are also other groups that recognize this and that grapple with the issue seriously and soberly. But many others are of a mind that resistance, in whatever form, is not on; everything is supposed to come off without resistance, and that's just not possible.

What would you wish for yourself?
In times in which people are fired via email, what is there left to say? To make music together is a form of communication, to talk with each other is a form of communication, and both of them are disappearing. Television is getting better, at least regarding the quantity of entertainment offered. You've got 380 channels or you just stick in a DVD. With the result that, if I don't feel like it, I don't need anybody to talk to. I believe we're living in a time where communication has become secondary; but I also believe it's a periodic fluctuation, because if that were really the case, all the pubs should really have had to close up shop, but that's not the case, either. But on the whole, increased communication, more authentic conversation with each other, would be desirable.

Are you a direct communicator?
Yes, that's what I like above all else. And I have enough people who like it just as much as I do. SMSing, emailing, phoning and things like that can't ever really replace face-to-face communication. These things are all wonderful if human communication is not restricted to them alone. The daughter of one of my acquaintances recently got a cell-phone bill for more than 700 Euros. She's thirteen years old. And, you know, that's precisely the paradoxical aspect of the whole story. The need for communication, for speaking person-to-person, is growing; and despite that, it's becoming more and more difficult really to find face-to-face conversation. And it's the children, more than anyone, who are suffering from this deficiency, and not just sporadically. Often the parents don't have time, and nobody listens to the kids. And then they feel it's personal communication if somebody tell them: "If you send an SMS and vote for me, then in return you'll get something that appears to be affection." Increasingly, that also applies to older people. But this perversion of the media isn't new. My parents made sure that I didn't watch a lot of TV. In those days the stations went off the air at a certain time each night, and the kiddies' shows didn't start till 5:00 pm. But having it constantly available makes it much worse.. And now we're even about to get the "round-the-clock baby channel."

So what would you like to see?
That's a question of age. In certain circumstances, you know that if you don't have a broad mass of people behind you, you can't accomplish anything. And then you have to wait for a development, where a broader-based interest group takes a position for or against something.

What constitutes for you, in a very personal sense, a life worth living?
Really banal stuff. That you can meet with people and talk with them and tell them: "This is what's great right now"; or: "This is what's getting on my nerves." And I very much enjoy the privilege of being able to move freely around in this tiny Central Europe of ours. That's basically it in a nutshell – there's so much freedom connected with this, and there are so many possibilities in my head, that I feel pretty good about the whole thing. And because of this, I also experience a fundamental feeling of gratitude.

Religion as a Form of Wisdom.

The journalist and author Johannes Kaup ponders the future of belief.

Religion has the capacity to bring forth in human beings that which is most sublime and most horrible; it can lead to truth, and it can also destroy that which makes us human. Because religion has been intertwined with human culture from the very beginning, there is no doubt that in future, people will also believe. The decisive question is not whether people believe, but what and how they believe. For, way back then, Martin Luther recognized clearly: "Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God." Those whose hearts cling to Mammon, to status symbols, to positions of power; or who also, with the help of esoteric practices, want to leverage a "competitive advantage" for their own ego vis-à-vis others, these people create for themselves the corresponding pantheon. This pseudo-belief creates that egocentric world of avarice and constant rushing around whose actual consequences are visible in the fissures between human beings and in the great global crises. This "belief" is above all the result of misguided needs and what Heidegger terms the "oblivion of being," amnesia of what existence really is.
But traditional Christianity, too, at least in the West, finds itself in a process of decay as it is also undergoing a transformation. It was Sigmund Freud, many years ago, who described the essential reasons for the process of decay. He criticized religion as "an illusion" that "derives its strength from the fact that it falls in with our instinctual desires." According to Freud, the sources of religion are the need to be protected from the dangers of life, the wish for a sense of balancing justice in an unjust world, and the wish to prolong our finite existence. Freud demanded that we recognize these wishes as illusions, face up to the reality of human existence without the possibility of divine consolation, and take our fate into our own hands.

It is both undeniable and human that these wishes exist and also that many believers are adherents of a religion of needs. The fact that in the West there are over a billion human beings who feel no need to believe in God in order to live a good and ethical life is also both undeniable and human. Already in the early twentieth-century, Freud showed that the connection to reality and truth belongs to the core of human existence. It is life's task to bring one's own truth to light.

But then the question of religion is posed anew. If there is a God who is my creator, then I can only know of Him if He somehow allows me to catch a glimpse of Him and if my confidence in Him represents the answer.

And then one could ask oneself: How does it come to be that time *to be* has been granted me? Time and Possibility are continuously being granted me to respond to the present that is my life, to take my own stand vis-à-vis this life, to do good and eschew evil. In this ongoing process, I am addressed by the world's profundity, by something holy, a mystery. It is this which the religions call "God." It is not, therefore, about a "higher being" imagined by human beings that is then interposed between us and God as an image of that which is desirable or fearful. Those who attend to this giving, which constantly grants me time to *be*, have arrived at the roots of religion, where they learn astonishment and gratitude with regard to this Ineffable Thing. And thereby explode their miniature egos and know themselves to be supported and preserved, without having to imagine an "omnipotent Supreme Father-figure." I see this experiential religion increasingly in the offing. But it will probably also – as is the fate of all wisdom – not become a mass phenomenon.

Kamdem Mou Poh à Hom
in Conversation with Birgit Pölzl

Parallel Lines Don’t Intersect.

What it means to be a migrant – that’s something Kamdem Mou Poh à Hom has known since the time when, having studied political science and law, he left Cameroon, where he was born and raised. And it’s something he has come to know as chair of the “Foreigners’ Council of the City of Graz,” where he has lived since 1995. Since then, he has endeavored intensively to ameliorate conditions for newcomers and to search for trend-setting avenues of dialogue and the intercultural exchange of ideas and experiences.

Even if it sounds paradoxical, Kamdem Mou Poh à Hom is certain that we not doing well because we are doing so well materially. That affluence leaves us speechless. And that, as a result, intersecting with each other, as the actual source of human well-being, is disappearing.

In thinking about the future, what's the first thing that occurs to you?
I think that for several years the world has been developing such that the custom of conversing with each other is losing out. Everyone is occupied with other matters, but very few people occupy themselves with other human beings. In my work I have a lot of interaction with school-age and post-secondary students. One notices simply that the young people just don't listen at all. Many young people are no longer capable of engaging in conversation. The mobile phones, electronic games, and other so-called interesting things constantly divert their attention. Conversation as a form of communication is increasingly losing importance. One has only to look at the relationship between children and parents. They aren't really talking with each other there any more, either. Just in passing. It's not working, and it won't work. I'd say that dialogue is lacking, even though we very often hear this word.

Where do the causes lie?
That's the downside of this technologically highly advanced society. On the one hand, technology is good, and on the other hand it is precisely this technology that prevents people from really coming together. That's easy for me to say, for I come from a society in which technology is not yet so highly developed, and in which the culture of conversation is still there. Back home we call this "palaver" – the evening discussions with grandpa, with the family. Naturally one can't say that it's good to be poor, but in the so-called underdeveloped countries one can see that people communicate much more with each other, and that there's also a lot more listening going on.

Is technology the culprit?
No. The more affluent we become, the more self-centered we become and the more arrogant we also get. "I've got a good job, I'm working, I no longer need other people." That's the paradox. Naturally I need other people, but just tangentially, not really human beings per se. That doesn't really work. As soon as one has a bit of money, one thinks "I'm better than him." That's materialism. And in society there exists this strong sense of competition. Our neighbor has this; there are these constant comparisons, people are always looking around: "He's got that, why don't I?" It's not bad, basically, to become well-off, but we abuse this condition. We ourselves abuse this affluence. There are sufficient means at our disposal, sufficient money, sufficient infrastructure, but I have the impression that we are all overwhelmed by this society. We've created this society ourselves, have desired this affluence, but we no longer have any sense of what we should do with it. That's a huge problem.

What are the various aspects of this overload?
There's this sense of pressure within society. Many people fear for their livelihoods, even though our society is in a state of affluence. "How come we don't have any kids?" Quite a mundane point. Forty-eight percent of Austrians say: "If I have a child now, then I will have cut off all my options, or at the very least I'll suffer a set-back in my professional career." On the one hand there are some people who live in a super-situation, and on the other hand it's embarrassing that within this affluent society we have so many poor people or people who are threatened by poverty. And it can be quite a quick slide into poverty, even from a middle-class starting point. And that's a source of anxiety. And so we need to redefine things. Where do we want to go? How should the whole thing look? Society should be structured anew, and with this we would restructure the possibilities for personal development. Not only with regard to children. Why, for example, are seventy to eighty percent of older men here in homes for the aged? That's a consequence of this development. We simply no longer have the time to take care of ourselves.

How does it come to pass that we in the West, in Austria, are so pressed for time at every turn? Is the pressure really so great?
There are various aspects. We're all searching for money, career, free time, self-interest, and all of this has to be seen as a package, as a consequence of the furious pace of development. The richer we become, the more self-centered we are. Everyone looks to himself or herself, that's the so-called "boomerang effect." One sees it even back home where I come from, in various countries of Africa. Those who grow rich also grow arrogant. People try to conform to exclusively Western definitions of being modern, progressive, and technologically advanced.

How would you bring about an integration of the generations?
All I can do here is express my wishes. There is a very large gap between young and old. Most young people have no contact with the elderly. Naturally they have contact with their own grandparents, but that's not the point. But they have no understanding for, show no respect to, a grandma or grandpa whom they meet in the streetcar or on the bus. Young people often don't offer their seats to these older people, even though there are signs all over the place asking them to. They don't even notice. For me, it's very evident that this respect is lacking. Personally, I believe that they haven't learned it; that this, too, is something that their parents failed to communicate to them with sufficient clarity and emphasis.

How could one start facilitating increased contact again?
There's going to be more superficial communication, but simultaneously less real dialogue. People are going to come together very infrequently. There are too few places for face-to-face interchange. That's a point that's very, very important to me. It's important, if institutions like cultural centers are communicating more with the populace, to design common plans and to work together. In ways that people have the feeling: "That's my project; I was part of it!" I think that, in the realm of culture, society has evolved in a direction where there is a certain set of offerings in the area of high culture, which is certainly good, but it reaches only a part of the populace. The majority is excluded from cultural life in Austria. For a variety of reasons: For some, it's not affordable – for others, it holds little appeal. There's a monopoly on art, and there are some artists who have managed to get access to this little circle of art lovers. But the large majority has absolutely no piece of the action. For example, I don't see exhibitions of great Serbian painters, or of artists from Guatemala or public readings by African writers.

What's missing? Why don't these forms of communicative exchange come about?
Up to now we've seen minorities, but we don't take notice of them. We've ignored them and continue to do so. In the meantime, however, their numbers have increased more and more. That's a very important point. In Graz alone, there are over two hundred migrants' associations that take it upon themselves to carry out a lot of cultural programming, often without financial support and without being noticed. When the budgets for art and culture are being negotiated, nobody says: "Oh, hold on, ten percent of the population are migrants." So the only question is: "Which art?" If we need them to do drumming or for other folklore performances at about 200 Euros a shot, then they come, and after that it's finished and done with. There's a lack of buy-in; the groups simply aren't recognized as being present. That's a considerable problem in Europe. Migration is often simply the victim of denial. Remember: In Austria there is no migration, although in Graz alone there are 40,000 people who are migrants. Who are these men and women – who is a migrant? That's the point for me. Whether a Czech or a German in Austria is considered a "migrant" – that's something about which we should strive to achieve agreement.

What would success look like in integrating immigrants and considering them as members of society?
I wouldn't speak of it in terms of integrating them. One can't say: "Come here, I'll integrate you into society!" For me, it turns on the question of being different, but being present. They would have to tell me: "OK, you're a Cameroonian. What do you need in order to establish yourself here, so that you can speak good German, so you can work here, so you feel at ease here?" Naturally I also have to work at it, so that I don't represent a burden to society, so that I'm also contributing to society in some way. That's incredibly important. This constant whining, "They don't like us, we're victims, you know": That's a non-starter. It's important that someone is prepared to say: "I want to be here, and for that reason I have to have something to offer, too." To do that, however, I need appropriate opportunities.

What precisely do newcomers to Austria have to offer?
Many immigrants have a profession, with corresponding training. A certain percent are university graduates. They can bring know-how. But they can also bring us cultural diversity, another perspective on the world, another set of sensibilities. I know people who have been here for five years. They're not allowed to work; they sleep under miserable conditions; but they also say: "Tomorrow will be better, tomorrow it'll be good." That's patience. No society is perfect, and that holds for newcomers, too. When someone comes here, they've got all kinds of things in their virtual luggage. One should always see it from this perspective. The more societies intermingle, the clearer it becomes that this entails more than a mixing of colors. But the people aren't really living "with" each other, aren't really allowing their lives to intersect – instead, they're living alongside each other, in parallel worlds; and that's been going on in Austria for years. Newcomers and Austrians who are neighbors, but who have no common enterprise and who often don't even say hello to each other. Each is there in her or his own world. There is the fear of foreigners that's very firmly anchored in society. And that's because Austrian history has not been adequately addressed, understood, taught.

Where does this fear come from?
A bit earlier we talked of existential angst. That's the cause. When I, as an Austrian, hear that more and more immigrants are coming to Austria, I say: "It's their fault that I don't have a job; they're grabbing all the jobs for themselves." That's how xenophobia arises. The history of migration in Europe has taken a perverse turn in that very many things are simply blamed on immigrants. There's something wrong there. I've often considered the question of what would happen if suddenly there were no more immigrants, absolutely none any more – what would happen then? How would this society be? I don't know myself. But it would be interesting to know how that would work. Who'd be the scapegoat then?

What would the percentage of non-Austrian residents have to be so that Austrians would experience the newcomers and their cultures as enriching Austrian society?
I consciously distance myself from anything involving percentages. I think that, even without the so-called "migrants," Austrian society is already quite diverse. Austria can take in more – of that I'm convinced. The people who assert the contrary are scaredy-cats who have nothing to offer. The problem is: There are immigrants who have been in Austria for twenty years, but who are nevertheless "absent." That's embarrassing for a country like Austria, not to have provided for these people. We should let them work. They should be told: "You're not getting any more money from the state. But we're giving you the opportunity to learn a profession and earn your own living." One can't curse at them and then give them money. In the final analysis, I consider that a really rotten attitude. I think there's not only a financial loss involved there, but also a spiritual one. They're sitting around doing nothing. That's no good. On the whole, Austria refuses to accept the fact that a large portion of our society consists of immigrants who are capable of contributing something to this society. That's a huge problem. I don't think Austria wants to look at countries like the U.S., Canada, and Australia. Even though the process of integration there is, despite many problems, more successful than here. Even if somebody wants to learn German in Austria, he can't be certain of being placed in a German course. That's symptomatic.

What's so good about Canada?
In Canada immigrants can start working after only three or four weeks. I know a few people who were still in the process of having their refugee claims adjudicated, but who nevertheless got a work permit. One can't compare societies one-to-one. It depends on the labor market, on people's attitudes. For me, Canada is a positive example. Naturally they have a quota system, which I don't like very much, but it works there.

What are your personal wishes for the future?
So far, I'm very happy that everything has gone so well for my children. In school and so forth. I hope things continue this way, but above all that living together in harmony will work. But also that there will emerge a sense of what has to happen in our society, so that people are the center of all societal activity. As an immigrant, I naturally wish for reduced exclusion, that people see the human being and not his skin color. I have nothing against somebody seeing me as an African, but I want to be able to contribute something new. Simply: That we immigrants are also seen as a chance for Austria. That's very, very important because at the moment, it's not yet the case.

Christian Mikunda
in Conversation with Clarissa Mayer-Heinisch

Crazy for Intensity.

Putting things in motion is something he learned in film and TV. And since then, the theory and practice of enactment has kept its hold on him in real life, too. In books, speeches and seminars he voices his expertise about taboo space and "Third Spaces" everywhere, and how, with space, one can produce positive feelings. And he stages these feelings together with partners of high repute. Christian Mikunda was born in Vienna and still lives there whenever he and his family aren't on the road.

For Christian Mikunda, there's no question that, for the individual, life is getting harder. All the more reason for him to take on the task of creating beautiful and authentic spaces. Spaces where people can relax, have a feeling of wellness, and sense themselves and life more intensely.

What do you think of if you look fifteen to twenty years into the future?
I think of the fact that my son will have a harder time of it than I have; and that he, like his father, will probably have to embark on an independent, insane path in order to be successful and happy. I actually invented my profession myself, and in the future many more people will have to find and invent their own paths in life. It'll get appreciably more difficult to master the quite normal approach to everyday life and work, even in the private sphere. One might be married, suddenly divorced, and married again; or maybe it will be necessary for financial or other reasons for the two families to live under one roof, because there's no other option and because it's also possible. My first and second wives are very good friends. The kids, too. Things like that which are still unusual today will be much more normal. I'm also intensively concerned with my professional future. I don't know what I'll be doing in ten years, only that it will be something different from what I'm doing now.

Different to what extent?
Probably I'll be working primarily with artists. My new theory has to do with enacted emotional peaks, with the psychological, neurophysiological mechanisms behind them: the codes, the language, of this phenomenon. In the last few decades we've found some 2,000 codes through which we, in our roles as listeners, observers, participants, are transported into states of highest emotion. One finds these codes in Gothic cathedrals as well as at the Iguazu Falls, in a rendition by Cecilia Bartoli, and at the Carnival in Rio. I'm working on a method to ensure that the bringing together of creative personalities occurs not solely on the basis of which agents or recording labels have them under contract, but according to who is a good fit with whom and why.

As an individual, how can I enact my own feelings of elation?
I believe that spaces that are simply beautiful, places where one can catch one's breath from time to time, are important for the inner life of the soul. Places where social constraints are no longer foregrounded so prominently. Twenty years ago, if one wanted to go inside somewhere on a rainy November day in Vienna or London, one had to consume something or pay an entrance fee – and that's no longer the case today, which I find very fine and good. Earlier, design was something for a quite well-defined, extremely well-heeled group of potential clients. Prada Shops, which one didn't dare enter if one couldn't break the supercilious attitude of the sales staff through one's own superciliousness within two minutes. That's no longer the case today. If you look at new shops in New York these days, those are first-class places where even a student can enter and look for his life and style, and where he can learn a bit about the brand and about design, places where there are jazz concerts and readings. These days the so-called MQ – the Museum Complex – in Vienna, for example, has become a first-class place to spend time, in both summer and winter. If there's even a speck of sunshine, there are 300 to 400 people lying on the lounge-chairs there.

Is a human being worth more now than fifteen years ago?
From my perspective, that's clearly the case. People's individuality is clearly valued more highly, and is also in higher demand, by the private sector, too. But the pressure on people has also grown. And so, too, has the need for chilling out in a public space increased, because we're all stuck on the same treadmill. But we have also to function there, and that's why we need the enacted psychological massage in public spaces even more than we did earlier. A mere ten, twelve years ago, companies weren't prepared to put money into making themselves places whose identity is expressed through the experience customers have there . The folks from internal audit wouldn't countenance it. These days, those in charge are no longer afraid to the same extent of planning in precisely these "soft" factors. Today, the head offices of many large corporations find ways to appeal to their clients' emotions as well as their intellect.

In your opinion, is the internal audit squad, understood as a job type, on the way out?
No question about it – people are fed up with this kind of kind of corporate consultant; they're aware of how much they've ruined; and they're less and less able to deal with the kind of regimentation that's connected with them. It's also the case that there has been a clear rethinking within the consulting firms. I'm not interested in maximizing my financial gain from a space. But profit still ensues in most cases because a space that is well done is an attractive space, and attractive spaces allow one to do all kinds of things. That's a reciprocal give and take, and all spaces that are well designed are naturally also their own walk-in advertisement. Intensive shaping of a space is, in the first instance, a gift to the client, to the guest; and usually, people react well to gifts and for this reason are happy to buy something in return. One notices that major commercial success comes about on the basis of one's sensing what a particular space requires. What's crucial when it comes to a space is genuineness and authenticity.

What do you mean with the concept of the "Third Space"?
Every space that is so emotionally charged that people acquire something of this charge and take it with them, no matter whether they consume it there or not. And in the final analysis, it's a space where people live, a "home away from home," a temporary living space that creates belonging and identity and that tells people who they are.

Spaces as a form of life-counseling?
Absolutely. Someone who senses what's there can enjoy it so much more; they regard it as life-enriching, they sense life still more acutely. Just as it's wonderful to hear great music, just as it's wonderful to see a great picture, in the same way it's wonderful to visit a great shop. And then there are people who have absolutely no feeling for such things, for whom it makes no difference – but we're not doing it for them.

How does it come about that many people don't sense this, or no longer sense it, or don't have access to it? How can one change that?
It's getting better every year. It's a result of the advance of so-called "media literacy" – competence in dealing skillfully with the media and the visual world, as well as with consumerism and modern life. We notice increasingly that people, when they're in a well-designed shop, also talk about the fact that it's well-done. Or they simply take a few deep breaths or turn off their cell phones for twenty minutes, just give themselves a pleasant respite. There are more and more well-designed spaces that are accessible to the public. It's not like it was earlier, when the well-configured spaces were reserved only for the members of the aristocracy or the clergy; or the palaces and the churches – they were always beautiful. And the high nobility also possessed enacted gardens; they always knew what was good for themselves. In earlier times these designed and shaped spaces weren't accessible to normal people. They had their crude enactments, festivals, carnivals, where masters and servants switched roles.

Do you personally have the wish to change society for the better by configuring good spaces that are accessible to all?
My actual engagement is directed to the fact that I believe to the depths of my soul that that which defines being human and lends inner coherence to the world cannot be defined solely within the framing brackets of capital or of value systems, or of politics and power, but that there exist fourth and fifth frames. Namely – the fact that deep within us is the capacity to imbue our ongoing configuring of the world with an aesthetic and uplifting dimension. We've built all these spaces, buildings, gardens, plazas et cetera so that they'll be noticed, perceived and experienced by us. If we don't do that for ourselves, something profoundly human is lost within us. Then we are left with only the other possibilities of being emotional: war, in the main. And illness. In earlier times it was said that illness was the poor man's version of travel. To get out of daily existence. A warm meal was, despite the pains, an experience. New acquaintances, to be somewhere else, and occasionally to do something else than what we normally do. To sense life. The more we're able to control disease and the struggle for material existence, the more we need the configured world around us for our existential intensity.

How acute is the shortage of "Third Space" in cities today?
That depends on the individual city, but in general, such spaces continue to increase. The public spaces of museums constitute an important part, but so, too, do hotel lobbies, "city events," performances in public spaces during the weeks of Advent, if there's a special cultural anniversary. Globally, you see, Austria is one of the world leaders in the dramatic staging of public space. What's happening right now, is that the "First Space" – in other words, one's residence –; the "Second Space" – one's work place – and the "Third Space" are melding together quite dramatically. That means that residences are increasingly becoming public again; people are suddenly putting on, for example, their own private vernissages in the manner of the salons of earlier days. The work place is either being increasingly relocated to the home or is becoming a place of temporary dwelling. And the reciprocal of the home office is the office home, with plants and pets at work. Communicating is becoming more and more important.

But can people follow this? I hear increasingly of loneliness and of people who are depressed.
I think the "turn-around" has been achieved in the meantime. I've never seen so many people working in cafés and restaurants and hotels and airports. A sense of personal feeling and empathy in general are important, and that's what people have recognized. That's why three-dimensional spaces are booming, because people again want to go to authentic spaces. That's why shops, but also museums, are booming all over the world. Educational sites have also suddenly turned into first-class spaces. People are increasingly going back to museums, restaurants, shopping, etc., in their own cities. They're seeking contact with other people.

As you know, there are frightening statistics according to which only a very small number – that means about ten percept of society as a whole – participate in or consume culture.
The error lies in a false definition of culture. Seeing it exclusively via classical High Culture. But that misses how many people have seen an opera on the public square in front of the Vienna City Hall or that City Hall Square as a whole, with its large-screen events, is something cultural. Enacted trees and paths are culture: They're aesthetic, they're beautiful, they're done by artists. A well-done restaurant is naturally culture and functions according to the same codes. Even in the soccer stadium the hooligans suddenly become as docile as lambs because they are offered a different form of happening. The aggression is relieved by the entrance of singers or cheerleaders, but also by virtue of the optical transformation of the stadium. And what we had always secretly suspected, that football might be culture, is suddenly visible. Suddenly it becomes a first-class event, and more people go there than they did before. Even good hospitals look more like wellness hotels these days. It's known that the surroundings contribute to healing. These days, young physicians explain what's involved with an examination or test that one is afraid of, and during the examination they say "It'll just hurt for a second," and they show you what's going on inside you at that moment. Quite different from how things used to be. And that's how, everywhere, things are being increasingly treated as dramatic performances.

Is the future positive?
Life is clearly getting tougher. It's going to be harder and harder to survive – if something happens, if one gets sick, if one gets old, if one hasn't provided for the future, if there are some other kinds of problems. The social safety net has more holes in it.

Will the chasm widen or close up again?
It'll certainly continue to widen for a considerable period of time.

How would you explain to your son in one sentence what constitutes a life worth living?
Try to go his own way and find out what fascinates him – and try to understand that which fascinates him. And when he does understand it, it will automatically become his calling, his profession.

Bodo Hell
in Conversation with Christoph Weiermair

City, Alpine Pasture, Art.

Bodo Hell was born in Salzburg in 1943. Studied organ, visual arts, philosophy, literature and history. Ergo, he's an independent author in Vienna and in the summer an even more independent tender of herds somewhere on a plateau in the mountains of central Austria. His award-winning works include "prose, radio scripts, theater, writings for public spaces, texts accompanying works of art, photography, film, music, exhibitions, tending herds in Alpine pasturages."

Author Bodo Hell on art as nourishment for life, new forms of solidarity, the need for immediate deceleration, and concealed stigmasterol in butterfat as a possible spur to a consumer boycott.

What's your Alpine pasturage going to look like in fifteen years?
I hope the road won't yet go all the way up to my meadows, even though the logging roads keep snaking up higher and higher. I hope the pasturage will be largely untouched. But in saying this, I don't have anything against soft tourism. It's always a highly interesting affair when the old-time herders come up with their favorite guests – then something happens that one otherwise never experiences: They tell stories they've made up themselves, and it's not just the children who are listening, it's adults, too. Wonderful things will continue to exist as long as these old-timers are still around, but most of them are already over eighty.

Of course, you don't just live up in the Alpine meadows but in Vienna, too. How come?
I think you need both places. I can't imagine just sitting there without being exposed to influences of a cultural nature – as they exist in the city. Basically, every city should also function a bit like a village. In that everybody can make some contribution. On the other hand, it's interesting to live up there at the frontiers of civilization and to produce something there – cheese, for example.

What are the challenges for the next ten to fifteen years?
The first thing that occurs to me is globalization. One notices it in everything – in the smallest interchange with people on the street and in meeting people – because nobody has any time. A kind of inattentiveness has come onto the scene. Everybody in a public space is simultaneously caught up with, and distracted by, smoking, phoning, eating and drinking on the go, as well as loud self-displays and acoustic infiltration. A form of public life has developed that has grown quite inattentive, dangerous and aggressive. That's all just a consequence of the fact that insecurity in all forms is increasing.

What gives rise to all this stress, this hustle and bustle?
The fear of missing out on something, or not getting to do something. Friday afternoon or weekdays after six p.m. is when it starts. This rushing around, the deafening noise, it's really total insanity. You put more and more on your "to-do" list; I notice this myself – actually I should turning down many more things. In my free time, too. And really important: The planability is missing. Conditions for doing academic work, for example, are absurd. Many research positions and professorships remain unfilled. The people at the universities and research institutes don't know where they'll be in three years. It's a similar situation for pensioners: Right now we've got a generation of happy pensioners who are taking trips around the world or who set up residence in the picturesque Ramsau area southeast of Salzburg, but they still have the certainty and security that they'll be able to afford it and carry out their plans – but soon that'll no longer be possible. It's remarkable what people have to put up with these days. Everyone is just overwhelmed from all sides.

Who has to be in charge in order for this sense of security to increase again?
That's hard to say, but we'd have to make sure we emerge from this gap between rich and poor with a different economic concept. How that can happen, I don't know, either. On the basis of my own socialization I have the feeling that it's wrong to dissociate work and free time, that it can't be seen from this perspective unless we're talking about factory work. So that, in one's so-called "free time" as well, one is still doing something that contributes positively to the substance of one's life and, in the long or short run, also brings remuneration.

What's going to decrease – work or life?
If you define it so that life is that which is outside of work, then it will certainly be life that will be shrinking.

What will be seen in future as intimately bound up with quality of life?
Air, water and food.

What will a desirable approach to nutrition look like in future?
Naturally, I hope that we'll nourish ourselves well and that the corresponding consciousness of the importance good nourishment will ensue. In the past, people spent a third or even more of their total income on food. This proportion is diminishing continuously because people need the money for other things, too. Sure, there are also positive developments, but as long as people just look at the price, or have to look at the price, the quality of our food won't improve. Let's take butterfat for example. What's sold as "pure butterfat" contains stigmasterol, a soy-product. You'd have to term that deceptive labeling, because what you read is "pure butterfat." Nobody asks why this is, how much is in there, and which soy product we're talking about. You have to be an expert and look very exactly, because the individual is no longer in a position to monitor what's put in front of him. A consumer boycott of certain things would bring results. Unfortunately, though, up to now it's mostly been confined to a few especially conspicuous individual firms.

Fifteen years from now, where will we find "spaces of deceleration"?
Only in "wild" nature. Or in historical gardens and parks. Actually, there would really have to be a rapid deceleration in architecture. All too often, building these days is really about how to exhibit one's self in the most striking way. If an architect lived in his own building as a try-out – which doesn't happen very often – he'd experience physically and emotionally that which he's built for others. It's all the more positive to see that there are architects who really think everything through very carefully. For example, at the Franz-Josef-Hospital in Vienna, where they designed the geriatric center so that doctors and patients have to enter by the same door. But to do something like that, one also needs the appropriate developer who'll finance it. Because it's not the optimal utilization of the floor plan that's decisive here, but the optimal utilization of the mind.

What will the average family look like in ten to fifteen years?
It might be a bit more patchwork-like than now. Even among farmers these days it's already the case that people don't get married any more; they just live together. And exogamy will increase. The young girls marry African men; or one married a Capoeira dancer from Brazil, which is still a bit ticklish because despite having an Austrian wife, he doesn't get a residence permit. I know two cases like this among my circle of acquaintances. The young women then have babies, and the men have to leave the country. These kinds of precarious relationships will increase.

What role will the family play in general – how important will family be?
That's hard to say. Naturally it would be desirable if new forms of solidarity would develop within larger networks of association. Where physical and mental health in the larger sense would result. Especially for young people growing up.

You're an artist. How can art contribute, in a forward-looking way, towards allowing people to live together within society?
Art has to be understood as food, as existential nourishment. Art should simply be a part of life, because one needs it to breathe. Art is simply part of the picture; I need it for me. It doesn't do to leave it to the others, the so-called specialists. In my own field – in other words, literature – I try to get very close to real life. To life-worlds that otherwise don't surface, with which one otherwise doesn't concern oneself, but which do occur in nature and society. As a contemporary artist, I advance, above all, the view that it's not just historical art that is valid. In supporting the arts, it's the case, you know, that the lion's share flows to historical monuments and reproduction: They'd rather upgrade another room in the Grafenegg Castle, even though there are all kinds of performance venues in Lower Austria already. But the task would be, even when we're talking about existing festivals, to invest more in our young creative artists and their projects.

And why isn't that the case?
The cliché that emanates from art is, after all, entertainment, prettification, or astronomically high prices. It doesn't seem to be the case that anybody wants to learn from art. I hope that more people actively discover art as a nourishment that enriches their lives, and not as decoration or the work of experts that is simply consumed.

The Value(s) of Technology: Dealing with Divergence.

Alexander Bogner of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, on wishes in technology design.

No question: technological progress has opened new realms of action and has multiplied our decision-making options. At the same time, new risks and dangers have arisen. Just think of the Seveso dioxin release, or Chernobyl, and their consequences. These catastrophes force upon us the question: What kind of technology do we want? And it's not to be divorced from: What kind of future and what kind of life do we actually desire?

Right now, advances in biomedicine confront us with new kinds of design constraints. Is the early embryo already a human being with all the attendant rights to protection; or, contrarily, just a conglomeration of cells and thereby a legitimate object of research? This example alone shows us that today the various opinions increasingly stand next to and over against each other. That, when it comes to conflicts about technology, there is no consensus. On the contrary, there's a divergence of competing values that frequently cannot be bridged. How, then, should we now make decisions? What is the best solution?

In modern society there no longer exists a higher and highest authority that would be able to assert credibly that it knew what would be best for everyone. Such a role is no longer confined to either politicians or the clergy. For science, too, the Golden Age is past in which it, with the unassailable authority of a secular religion, showed society which direction it had to go in future. Now all of us are being asked these questions, and there is no reason or basis to exclude anyone from the discourse and the decision-making process. Why should the recommendation of a scientist carry more weight than the (completely contrary) opinion of other citizens? In view of this divergence, these days it's a matter of finding or inventing processes that allow compromise and decision, and that simultaneously ensure and assure their own legitimacy and acceptability. One possible path here: Bringing into the process people who aren't usually involved in discussing and deciding such things. The demand for such participation proceeds from the assumption that the "Good" is not realized primarily through the marketplace or through virtuous citizens, but through that discourse which is oriented towards achieving mutual understanding. Accordingly, what is needed is the institutionalization of discourse as a possibility for politicizing the private.

A core aim of processes such as citizens' meetings or consensus conferences is to articulate and include in the decision-making process points of view that, had one been proceeding purely on the basis of expert opinions, would not have been taken into account at all or only insufficiently, even though they are of great importance in the public sphere. These kinds of participative approaches that diverge from the established paths of decision-making via parliaments, administrative authorities and scientific committees, do not, however, enjoy a well-established tradition in Austria. In the meanwhile, however, there are signs that this is changing.

Politics should grapple more intensively with the desirability of particular technologies, and should bring into the decision-making process a multiplicity of diverse actors, recognizing the critical importance of feedback from user groups and thereby taking into account not only the development of the technology itself, but also its use. Right now there are no alternatives to this approach. If we are to be able to deal intelligently with diverging values in questions of the development and design of technology, we must find new approaches. For in the short run, there is no prospect of attaining substantive consensus on the goals and pace of technological development.

Silvia Staub-Bernasconi
in Conversation with Barbara Porotschnig

Think Globally, Act Globally.

After completing her degree in sociology, social psychology and education, Silvia Staub-Bernasconi spent a considerable period as a lecturer in social work and human rights in Zurich and Berlin. Since 2002 she has been the academic director of the Master's degree program in social work offered jointly by four postsecondary institutions in the German capital. Her work concentrates on social problems and theories of action for social work. Born in Zurich in 1936, she lives and works alternately in the city of her birth and in Berlin.

What an experienced social scientist thinks about the possibilities, but also the limits, of networks of solidarity and the necessary internationalization of social work. And what the male of the species can contribute to the Golden Age.

Do you spend a lot of time thinking about the future?
Yes. After almost all the degree programs in the humanities and social sciences at the Technical University of Berlin (TU) fell victim to the financial crisis, the possibility arose for the TU and relevant colleges of applied science to develop a joint Master's program in social work focusing on human rights. Our fourth student cohort – each course of study takes two and a-half years – began their studies last spring. What still lies ahead is the planning for a doctorate in social work in which various European universities will collaborate.

What can one derive for the future from the most recent past?
Within social work, but not only there, there exists the unmistakable tendency to make organizational structures, processes and approaches serve neo-liberal, economically instrumentalized modes of thought and the management instruments associated with them. In my opinion, what's involved here is a rethinking – or in many cases a first reflection – of what constitutes professionalism in general. For the future, this means that in social work we can't simply look at clearing individual cases in the most efficient way possible. Rather, we have to devote just as much attention to the professional, creative and politically expert shaping of social relations in families, neighborhoods and communities, especially in organizations and other nexuses of social interaction.

How widely represented is this view of social work?
I would say that it's still strongly underrepresented, but on the rise. Social work can no longer ignore the fact that almost all social problems, both in their distribution and in their etiology, derive from the structure and dynamic of global society. Think of poverty, unemployment, migration and its consequences, the trade in human beings, racism and so forth. For that reason the slogan "think globally, act locally" no longer suffices. It's also a matter of "thinking locally and acting globally."

Do you think that in future, life will be easier or harder?
There's no general answer to this question. The question should be: For whom, for which populations or social categories, will life get easier or harder? And which social actors, organizations, governments, social movements contribute in which ways. If government policy – especially the social policies of the rich nations – remains an ethnocentrically closed function that wastes no time on the problem of "international justice," the political weather forecast will be more like a storm warning. The rich nations speak of a "culture of welcoming," of dialogue and communication, of language courses in cases where it's a matter of integrating migrants socio-structurally or socio-economically. And governments that "forget" their own endemic lower strata will reap xenophobia, racism and right-wing extremism. While the trade unions in the rich countries complain about the fact that economic growth is taking place without a concomitant increase in jobs, or that jobs are being transferred to the so-called "low-wage" countries, for the people in the Third World, this represents an opportunity.

Where will the focus lie in the future?
In addition to those things I've already mentioned, it will be a matter of improving educational opportunities. We know how much these opportunities depend on social background. Education is also relevant in the following connection: It fosters mature citizens capable of independent judgment. And with reference to the increase in religious fundamentalism in all three Abrahamic religions and in religiously implicated conflicts, this is absolutely central.

Where will people want to spend their time in the future?
Many people will continue to want to come to Europe, more precisely to European cities, because they suspect there will be work and a less burdensome life there. As you know, we're subjecting them, via television, to a constant stream of stories of our modern urban style of life and leisure. Even backpackers from Europe arouse these longings in the most untouched regions of the world. Longings in the sense of visions of a better world

are something we probably all have, if we haven't been talked out of them on the basis that they're unattainable. These longings are, however, highly diverse: Those who suffer under pronounced stress to achieve, develop longings for a "dolce far niente," a life of carefree leisure. Lower-level office workers will long for a row house with a backyard. And for many people, the desire is for stable social relationships. Longings of a quite different nature are felt by recipients of social assistance. These people, who are always having something cut because the politicians don't dare to cut where there is all kinds of income and money without a quid pro quo, long for freedom, existential security and material well-being. I also think of the insatiable longing for justice, freedom from violence, and peace in the many parts of the world plagued by war and crisis. In comparison to them, our yearnings for a consumer and holiday paradise are nothing short of shameful.

To what extent will municipal work, in planning and conceptualizing, have to take into account people's wishes for the future and their perspectives?
I hope to have demonstrated that in social work and in the municipal context it's not a question simply of taking into account the "wishes for the future"; but, on the contrary, of getting on top of extremely tangible social and cultural problems.

What's your assessment of the future development of networks, which as you know are on everybody's lips right now?
If something's "on everybody's lips," then I always get very suspicious. Right now it seems to be the magic pill to solve everybody's problems, even the social problems of a society. The idea of a civil society characterized by and based on solidarity and mutuality – the society that's supposed to emerge when the welfare state retreats – is fraught with all kinds of utopian ideas and almost childish yearnings and distracts us from the fact that our society – and even more global society – is, with respect to resources, primarily structured in a strongly hierarchical way. How are you going to fight poverty and unemployment, ethnocentrism, sexism and racism with voluntary networks? I'm not rejecting networks, but we have to recognize that their capacity to achieve results and solve problems is limited. Thus, for example, neighborhood networks can have an important function in protecting women and children from violence – both threatened and perpetrated – by their husbands and fathers. Or when, after a divorce, they allow women with children to remain in that part of the city in which they are well integrated. But precisely here one can't simply wait for "civil society"; rather, such networks must be set up and nurtured through professional advice and support.

It's said of women that they don't use networks as efficiently as men. What's your take on this?
There are research findings that confirm this. But when you think of how many thousand years men had to build up their networks, then the women, who in the classical family model didn't have any chance to interact outside the house, are now catching up. It may well be that they have as yet learned but little in the way of using networks for their own interests. To put it somewhat sloppily: Women will sit together and ask each other, for example, how they are doing, how their research has progressed since they last saw each other. Men will negotiate about inviting each other to give a paper at the next conference, the game rules and strategies for putting in a research grant application, or the article they're writing for a scholarly collection.

How do you assess the harmony of work and life?
If one listens around in the business world, then one has to say: a purely romantic dream – except for those who can let others do the work for them! And it is and remains the unresolved problem of most women who would like to find a good way to combine partnership, children, studying, work, free time, and then on top of that, a career. If men would seriously take up this "work-life balance," we'd be moving toward the Golden Age. There are exceptions, but I remain extremely skeptical.

What does deceleration mean to you
I'm in the happy position of being more or less able to determine how much job stress I place on myself. Deceleration means to me time one can define for oneself. It means I can choose whether I prepare for a course or meet friends. But I'm aware that this is a privilege. This privilege could benefit everyone if – as a real life utopia – everybody had an income that assured their basic existence.

The City as an Ever-Changing Being.

Cornelia Ehmayer, Austria's only self-employed urban psychologist, on urban development that responds to needs and on the desirable approach to dealing with sensitive beings.

To leave urban planning solely to those with political responsibility, to planners and architects, no longer suffices in the face of the challenges of the twenty-first century. It is becoming ever more important to grasp the fact that urban development is more than erecting buildings and issuing zoning plans. It's also no longer timely to look separately at the construction development, economic development, social development and so forth of a city. We need approaches that reflect an understanding of the city as a living entity, as a constantly changing whole that is capable of learning.

To comprehend the essence of a city also means to grasp its soul – in other words precisely that which is going on between the buildings: hopes and anxieties, joy and sorrow, past and future. Thus, all those things that lend a city its personal sense, mood and atmosphere. The reciprocal effect between the city as a living being and people as urban beings. How human actions affect the city's development and how urban development affects human behavior.

The "needs-responsive" model of urban development that urban psychologists employ proceeds from the assumption that in a city there are diverse needs that are striving to be satisfied. Unless there are professionals to apprehend these needs and bring them into the decision-making process, and without the resulting concrete action, in the long run it isn't possible to have satisfying urban development. A city that is designed in accordance with the needs of the people who live and work in it creates more satisfaction and leads to a higher quality of life. And then the city and the people living in it can develop and blossom that much better. The city becomes attractive, and it stays that way. And only an attractive city is economically interesting. Jobs are secure, the standard of living is preserved, and the danger of losing people to other, (yet) larger cities is minimized. An attractive and vital city is a city with a future.

I'm convinced that participatory urban development must become a necessary communal tool to secure the survival of a city. If the financial distress of the municipalities and cities continues to grow, and that's what we have to expect, those with political responsibility will also be increasingly reliant on the assistance of the people who live there. But the population will also have things demanded of it in this connection, for when garbage collection no longer functions regularly, if perhaps an open-air pool has to be closed because the community can no longer pay the operating costs and it's no longer economically viable, or if other things no longer ensure that life in a city is pleasant, then it'll get uncomfortable in the city, slowly but surely.

Two scenarios are conceivable: Either a certain state of neglect will arise in a city and, in conjunction with this, a depressive-passive deterioration of mood on the part of the population. In other words, the so-called "there's just nothing we can do" attitude that stands in diametrical opposition to positive development in a city. Or people get together and get active for the sake of the city, to preserve the city's and their own quality of life. This will be especially successful in those situations where people have started early to exercise the spirit of "common engagement for the city," where a stable community life is present on its own or has been developed as a preventive measure to secure the future of one's own city.

Franz Küberl
in Conversation with Peter Rabl

Anarchism with Feeling.

The principal (and principled) achievement of Caritas President Franz Küberl is that, by engaging his heart and his passion, he refuses to look away. He makes visible that reality which many of us would be all too happy to overlook and which is nevertheless also our reality. Born in 1953, this voice of our social conscience and avid mountain-climber lives with his wife and two children in Graz. He is the CEO of the action committee that he founded and that bears the name "Love Thy Neighbor."

Franz Küberl thinks out loud about why we again need more zing in dealing with social questions, and how the elites, of all people, should in future improve a few things with respect to their "lived solidarity." And deprives us of our title as world champion donor to charitable causes.

The work of the Catholic organization Caritas and of its president is largely driven by what's happening right now. Is there any time and energy left over for longer-range thinking, to plan for sustainability, to consider the future?
There's always an opportunity for thought. The question is whether and how one takes the time to do it. Whether it's in conversation with friends, or during a flight or while jogging. Or during a boring theater performance. But in any case I always get the greatest impetus when I'm together with interesting people. In reality, the biggest chance we have is getting together with a bunch of people on a daily basis; people who, as the saying goes, have been taken for all they're worth. And who are worth listening to. It's a source of fascination what's inside such people. Above all it's a matter of seeing to it you're not doing all the talking yourself, but are listening as well. Then the potential is inexhaustible.

Caritas deals with triple challenges: poverty, aging, and political asylum – people in those three categories are your main clientele. How should, how can, how will, this shift in the next ten to fifteen years?
What worries me most is that we're so important – or too important – right now, because these questions are, so to speak, too important. A juncture that I would call a dilemma. That these questions, given the lack of a future-directed dynamic, will grow too strong and therefore become insoluble. In a thriving, vigorous young society these issues can unquestionably be dealt with. But those aren't the only questions. The question of older people is a classic case and a huge challenge for a society. But sometimes I get the impression that all we have to do is solve it. And after that, we'll nurse ourselves into satiety, and then everything will be okay. But the real question for the future is – okay, do the kids have a chance? Do we have enough anarchy out of which, so to speak, something new can grow? Do we have the feeling that, when we're looking at kindergartens, unquestionably the best and brightest young women and men are right there in order, so to speak, to develop something? We have to debate that. Naturally we need very good people to take care of old people. But that can't be the only question. It's the same case with the issues of political asylum and immigration.

Kindergartens aren't exactly one of Caritas' traditional concerns, you know; but it's typical that you feel you have to worry about them.
We're faced with the problem that, in a whole array of questions, we've lost our competence to move forwards towards the future, and we've also lost our zip. The administration of poverty in Austria, for example, is actually based on an edict of Emperor Karl V at the Imperial Diet of Regensburg in 1531. It's there that he made the imperial free cities and the municipalities responsible for taking care of the poor – and that's what you find today in the social assistance laws. We actually need a kind of revolution in order to make progress. Immigration is a similar question. I'd say that the "in-migration" arguably begins in Anatolia. So why don't we go there and talk to people and tell them what to expect in Austria? What learning another language entails, what kind of bridges they'll have to build to be able to live here, what kinds of possibilities exist to live and work here.

Twenty years ago that seemed to work in Austria, didn't it?
No. In reality it didn't work. It wasn't until 2001 that we began, for the first time, to put information brochures into the hands of immigrants, or guest-workers, as they used to be called. Paradoxically, it took a, let's say, drastic new government for Austria to think it over and say: "Uh-oh, maybe we have to do something different for a change."

But doesn't this development also mean that social policies – and social politics – are increasingly becoming privatized? How should, and how must responsibility for social policy burdens be distributed between the state and the private sector?
I think it would be smart for our country to think about what, on the one hand, a sensible new sharing of responsibilities among the federal government, the federal states, and the municipalities might look like; and whether we have the social structures we need so that people in difficult situations can be helped back on their feet. There's quite a bit that demands focused and serious thought. I think that, in the first instance, the public purse has to make sure that those things that people need when they're in difficulty – in other words measures that guarantee their basic existence – are actually available. That nobody has to live below the minimum guaranteed by law to people on pensions. But combating poverty and doing the kinds of things I find desirable can only function and flourish if the state acts in an altogether more future-directed way. My approach would be that other things be taken more seriously so that these problems can be solved more easily in the normal course of events. Because without question, we naturally have to get on top of this aging of society. That concerns us all, and it would be a good idea to have a next generation that was in a position to help out accordingly.

What remains for the private sector?
Not only for Caritas, but also for the citizen?
I think what we need and what we possibly have to discover anew, is that, to live in society as individuals, we need a basic stock of self-evident solidarity and a self-evident form of being there for each other.

For example, Austrians are considered, you know, world champion donors to charitable causes. Is that enough?
No, Austrians aren't the world champions. They're somewhere in the middle of the pack. But we do have this great capacity, if a couple of hundred people donate very large amounts to charitable campaigns, that then six million other Austrians will hide behind them and say "We're terrific!" So again, I think that solidarity that is lived out in a personal way is important. I would say that solidarity is a two-sided coin. One side is how we live our personal lives, and the other side is structural solidarity that is part of society. It's clear that my personally-lived solidarity cannot replace social benefits, no question about that. But I maintain that structural solidarity and its symbolic impact are comprehensible only if there is the personally-lived solidarity in the appropriate form and amount. These are the mechanisms that help ensure that, for those who are experiencing difficulty in their lives, there is an acknowledged and obvious entitlement– in the good sense of the word – to assistance, and that they have recourse to it. If we really need a law that makes the refusal to render assistance punishable, then we also know, so to speak, that the gauge is at a critical level. And I would tend to assert that the gauge is moving somewhat in the wrong direction. That's not how to get things moving forward!

How does one change this?
By your and my becoming aware of this and living it. And also by talking about these things with our acquaintances and friends. I think that's the one thing; and the other has to do with the overly thorny relationship between the private sector and social conscience. There are some overtures out there of a symbolic nature, like the famous "Corporate Social Responsibility." But in reality the private sector and social conscience are pretty far removed from each other. We've got the problem that the large corporations, as a German politician has put it, "are dumping the unemployed before the politicians' door." That's a fairly hefty formulation, but in its essence it nails the question of how much social responsibility the private sector needs. Once again: The private sector is not the substitute for Caritas or for social measures brought in by the state, but the total lack of contact between the private sector and social issues is, to me, one of our society's major weaknesses. But I can also put it in a more positive way. I'd like it if, in future, it were customary for the leadership of large corporations to automatically do an annual one-week internship with a social institution. That would model good practice for others. We know that the elite set the tone in a society – also in determining what, as they say, is in vogue. In the matter of a social sensibility anchored in society, I would consider it a smart idea if, at the universities, it were customary for students to pursue a corresponding certificate program, with all the attendant academic requirements,

in questions of social responsibility and social expertise. Makes no difference if someone works in technology, or is a manager, or if she or he has a basic modicum of social sensibility: Knowledge about things social, and social responsibility – that's desirable. In this regard we're not exactly starting at point 0.0 – but maybe at point 0.3.

In Austria – but not only in Austria – the social architecture is getting all mixed up. You're the author of the dictum: "The European Union has to be a Social Union or it won't be at all."
First I have to note that I consider the European Union a masterwork of political architecture. The EU will have a future, but if a social dynamic doesn't make itself evident, then the whole thing will collapse. The question is if we are in a position to export a European way of life on the basis of a socially and environmentally responsible market economy, to export it to the farthest reaches of Europe and beyond. Not long ago I was in Kiev, and the Caritas of the Czech Republic is our partner there in projects dealing with street kids! The Czechs are at least as good as we are, and yet not ten years ago people didn't know, so to speak, whether they were going to make it. What's not on, is "Fortress Europe." That would be the Tower of Babel, round two. There is no fortress in the world that didn't collapse at some point. But social architecture also means to really consider how, in detail, we're going to deal with social dynamics. When I look and see what we get offered in the way of accommodations for refugees – that example alone suffices! Naturally, they're in devastated neighborhoods. Which contributes to the people's immediately feeling even more devastated. The difficult question arises how we see to it that the people who come to us don't feel diminished still further by us.

You once said: "The poor don't have a lobby, nor do they have a political party behind them." If you include those on the brink of poverty, in Austria we're talking about a million human beings. How can we give these people a sense of self-worth, or get them to be politically active?
We still have a lot to learn when it comes to the politics of democracy. We rightly have the concept of popular sovereignty. That the individual, and hence all of us including myself, are the sovereigns of this state. The problem is that the concept of sovereignty permeates as far down as the lower middle classes – but it doesn't make it all the way to those living in poverty. In this state, the poor aren't sovereign. That starts with being treated differently. One has only to take a look at a regional government office or at a social benefits office and compare how the people there receive what's due to them versus how a middle-class business owner gets what is due to him. These people are invisible in daily life. And in the media for sure. We'd have to find possibilities and modalities for introducing a totally different concept of education in order to create momentum so that this class of people is liberated from the lower class. What we have to do, you see, is a somewhat comparable to the rise of the working class from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. We'll have to see that a certain lower class that has reconstituted itself can be emancipated, and that we give its members the means to develop themselves. We as Caritas basically don't have the necessary capacity when it's a question of helping people to organize themselves and take their lives back into their own hands. What's needed would be or is a larger multiplication factor.

What are your personal wishes for the future?
To me it's important to have as many friends as possible, because without friends and family it's not possible to live. And anyone of my age who has no friends won't have any when he's eighty, either. And that's the most expensive thing for the Austrian Republic, if you're eighty years old and don't have any friends. For if you position solidarity a bit differently, then it has to do with the fact that one has a group based on mutuality, and this being there for each other pays off in multiple regards. That's the most important thing.


Spring ud i farver

Copenhagen.

Or how we found out that being relaxed doesn't mean there's someone rottenly lazy in the state of Denmark.

Did you bring along an image that contains images? There's one quality I've brought along that contains images: the quality of being laid back – laid-back-ness in its most diverse iterations. A little laugh and both feet on the ground, engagement with a touch of deliberation, a delicate balance between individuality and a sense of community, a preference – also aesthetically – for essentials. What being laid-back in the Nordic variant is not: not-giving-a-damn and Marlboro-Man-demeanor, nor being hip on the ego-scale. In response to the question of why many things are going better for them than elsewhere in Europe, they say: Yes, they are more laid-back and relaxed, and for that reason, stress takes on a different quality.

It's not only the public transit system in Copenhagen that presents a colorful face to the world. When the weather gets nicer and warmer, one also sees more of the corresponding people on the street and out in nature – which is very present in the city. And in museums (neither of which are in the photograph). A society that claims to be especially relaxed apparently also has an adequate supply of tolerance in stock.

In fact, there's nothing rotten in the state of Denmark. Economic growth is far above the European average. Unemployment is not a serious problem. And in other respects, too, people look confidently to the future.

Why? Why, we ask with cold hands and wet feet – so it's probably not function of the climate. "Yes," they say in their unabashed but relaxed manner, it is also a function of the climate, of waiting for spring, of living intensively. Of course, they also refer to the good balance between life and work and to the social safety net. You can have children – which the Danes do in large numbers – and accommodate both kids and your career as a man. Or as a woman. As they say, they've got the structures to make this possible. You can lose your job and you'll still have a soft landing. The social safety net is built to respond to such situations. Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? Are they relaxed, we ask, because they have appropriate structures; or do they have the appropriate structures because they're relaxed? Whichever (and they really are relaxed), it works. In any case, they say, it's not a matter of chicken-and-egg-stories, but rather of making connections, of processes, of feedback loops. And here, they're

(relaxed) masters. The massive Øresund-Bridge connecting Copenhagen with Malmö and marking one of the largest economic zones of Northern Europe is an example of this. So are the designer flowers that we see made into chains around the necks of beautiful women. Something else that's more relaxed is the traffic, thanks to the passion for cycling that is supported by infrastructure.

This relaxed attitude transmits itself to us, despite the high prices that could also make one's pulse race. Is it the air that comes in from the sea? The unobtrusive friendliness of the people that sends the message: We like talking with you, and it's fine if that's all there is to it? Is it the space that people accord to people and things that are different, the untrimmed, self-regulating otherness as in Christiania? Probably all of the above.

Ørestad.

The subway glides silently into the station. We get out, in Nowhere, a couple of miles south of Copenhagen, on a concrete platform. It's not till we see the station's name that we know where we are: Ørestad. Here's where, a few years ago, they started building a new city. Meanwhile, it's become the biggest building site in Northern Europe. Completed office and apartment towers alternate with those still under construction; as well, there's a large shopping center. Lots of steel, lots of glass, lots of concrete, and very little life. For now. And maybe dependent on weather and time of year. In the next ten to fifteen years 20,000 students, 30,000 residents, and 70,000 workers are supposed to be going in and out here. Ørestad has much to offer: from subway stations to bike paths, from a golf club to extensive green spaces, from kindergarten, school and university to theater and concert hall. Some of this already exists. A lot of it is under construction. The parcel of ripped-up land, three miles long and nearly half-a-mile wide, is the playground of planners and architects – who promise their investors that, in 2024, this very spot will house the Olympic Stadium. By the way, from the beginning, the subway has been the metronome that sets the beat for construction. In the process, it sets two new standards. Not only was it the first subway line in Copenhagen. It's also driverless. Amazing in any case. Even if the tikketing system doesn't always work the way it's supposed to.

The first construction site to have its own subway station. Not far from the center of Copenhagen and occupying 770 acres, a new suburb has, for the past few years, been rising from the nothingness of a former military training site. On the largest construction site in northern Europe, the first contours are becoming visible, allowing a good many insights into an open society.

Excursion to Malmö.

If you take the train past Ørestad, under the sea, and over the Øresund Bridge, you see Santiago Calatrava's "Turning Torso" the highest (residential) tower in Sweden, dynamically spiraling into the heights – effortlessly and without showing off. It's both landmark and eye-catcher. From close up, it's the tension between the tower and the new district that is so captivating. The vertical dynamo receives, at its feet, an urban district conscious of its limitations. Within the height restrictions, maximum architectural diversity is achieved. One house stands next to the other, and each house has its own visage.

And in between, canals and dikes and marina facilities; towards the sea, parks, beaches, promenades. The wind sweeps overhead, the sea smells good, and one sees people who are strolling in smiling conversation or peaceful contentment. Cafes and shops, restaurants, cattails out front and boardwalks. That it's nice to live here is reflected in the faces of the people, in their movements.

An atmosphere like that of a city that has evolved organically over time. And yet: Here, construction began only in 2001. Village-like structures ensure quality of life of the kind one seeks in vain in many newly developed urban districts – even many years after construction has been completed. No wonder that "Western Harbour" right now is one of the places most frequently visited by city planners and developers from all over the world.

What a picture for a landmark – twisted though it is. The "Turning Torso" rises not far from Copenhagen, in Malmö, Sweden, overlooking a former commercial port that, in respect to both diversity and environmental friendliness, has "turned" into a sustainable model for urban development.

They Want to Ride their Bicycles.

Perfectly styled bikes, covered in fur and with animal horns on the handlebars; two-wheelers for daily use; discarded pedal-donkeys with bent spokes. From cult object, to pack-animals, to composting, bicycles help define Copenhagen's cityscape. One encounters them as tourist bicycle-rickshaws or leaning on corners or against the walls of houses, concentrated together at the bike-parking stands, or scattered and no longer quite new under bridges. Denmark's capital seems to be ahead of the wave when it comes to two-wheeling locomotion. Riding down glowing blue bike lanes, bikers enjoy an unencumbered ride; the subway stations offer secure and sheltered bike stands.

A network of bikeways runs throughout the city; commuters arrive at work on two wheels instead of four, reducing, we hear at City Hall, both motorized traffic and fine particle pollution. Freedom of movement is the promise of the "City Bikes" in the city center, which can be rented for a few Kroner. The jam-to-travel ratio would appear small. The bikes are kept fit under the aegis of a social services project. Copenhageners didn't invent the bicycle, but their enthusiasm for it has an innovative edge. It manifests itself through lived, sensible, and alternative mobility which benefits both the individual and the community. We didn't test it out. But we incline, on mature reflection, to classify it as credible.

The outdoor temperature was to blame. But actually, the Copenhageners love their bikes. No matter whether they're standard City Bikes or more individually decorated specimens. The city is full of them. The infrastructure for trouble-free cycling is impressive and is slated to be improved still further by 2012, so that the percentage of Copenhageners who use their bikes to get to work will rise from 34% to 40%.

Christiania.

Since 1971 the Free State of Christiania has existed as a social experiment and in largely political sovereignty. To live differently was one of the basic ideas of the Free State's founders: hippies, rockers, families with lots of kids, stranded persons, alternative culture adherents, Greens, dropouts, political visionaries, visionaries. Graffiti and circular prohibitory signs with diagonal lines through cameras are the first thing one notices when entering the Free State. A different sense of order, shabbiness, novel objects in the low-cost range, cozy pubs. Into the visitor's nose wafts a mixture of dank mustiness and marijuana; into his ears comes the demand to heed the prohibition and stop taking pictures. Whether the Christiania experiment has been a success is moot; what's important is that it exists and provides space for that which is un-cute, oppositional, alternative. In Copenhagen, too, this take on life isn't everyone's cup of tea. But nobody would want to give up this creative, untamable and anarchical style of life. As an enrichment and the possibility of being different.

Carlsberg.

Even if it's not evident at first glance, strategic philanthropy has a good name in Copenhagen and leads to satisfaction. The satisfaction of the people of Copenhagen as well as those who keep alive the heritage of beer brewer J.C. Jacobsen. It seems that his aggravation at his son and his devotion to science had led him to decide, in 1876, to set up a foundation that subsequently was supposed to take over management of the company. And thus it is that Carlsberg is not only one of the largest breweries in the world, but the only one we know that is managed by a directorate of scientists. If one takes a look at the company's success, then this was a forward-looking step. In addition, the Carlsberg Foundation is tasked with returning a significant portion of the company's profits to the population in the form of funding that flows abundantly into the areas of science, the arts and social projects. And following the directorate's decision of spring 2006 to close their production facility in the middle of Copenhagen, they are charged with developing a plan for the former brewery lands.

Povl Krogsgaard-Larsen is a scientist and Chairman of the Board of one of the largest breweries in the world. As such, he's responsible not only for 30,000 employees and the export of beer to 150 countries worldwide, but also for fostering science, the arts, and the public good. And that's something that leads to satisfaction – not only for him.

The Opera.

The impressive edifice with the glass prow and a roof that towers over the sea to the west impresses the viewer with its "towering" architectural gesture. Its location on the former wharf lands is no accident. It was the logical consequence of following the architectural line connecting Marble Church, Amalienborg and Opera (Church – Crown – Culture).

Billionaire Arnold Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller donated the building – cost: 200 million Euro – to the city, thereby providing closure to the longstanding (and boring) debate on how to finance the new opera. Confronted with an architectural fait accompli, even the laid-back Danes were struck dumb – at least to begin with.

Foundations.

Being laid back – we've already talked about that. Fewer anxieties about the future and a seemingly better system to ensure basic social needs. Also good. But why, then, do so many Danish enterprises set up foundations for the common good? It looks like there is, within Danish corporate culture, a kind of tradition (perhaps the famous "Protestant ethic?") that takes the view that one returns to the public a portion of private profits – and that one does so, if not because of tax advantages, then out of a sense of social responsibility. Like the Egmont publishing foundation. Which for the past 130 years has provided funding to help care for socially disadvantaged single mothers or unemployed youth. The self-evident manner in which solidarity is lived out – as the reciprocal relationship between the well-being of the individual and that of society as a whole – is evidence of a high degree of self-reflection. The director of the Egmont-Foundation, Margrethe Ahlefeldt, is the laid-back but sovereign epitome of this attitude, and she hits the nail on the head when she says: "Not only the poor are poor."

Architecture as a shipping magnate's gift to Copenhagen. To be precise, it was the richest private foundation in Denmark that made possible the construction of the Royal Opera, with seating for 1,500. Architect Henning Larsen provided both a new vantage point from which to view Copenhagen, and a novel sight for Copenhagen's populace.

What Cities Ought to Know about Life.

The good news: We haven't discovered the secret of a high quality of life in the future. The even better news: There is no secret. On the contrary: Most of the ingredients are already known. The not quite so good news: There's a lack of competence in implementing this knowledge, and a lack of resolve to do so. Beginning with the individual. For: Before we foist off the guilt for this failure on the usual suspects – institutions and organizations – we should first examine very carefully what we ourselves are leaving unutilized in the way of potential to effect change. Because maturity also means taking responsibility for oneself. And the future is also that which each individual makes of it. Don't worry. That doesn't mean that the general framework conditions and those who are responsible for them don't need just as much change. It just means that the automatic, trance-like finger-pointing at others as the source of the problem does not possess above-average potential for shaping the future.

We miss, at both levels, the necessary attentiveness to the other level. To put it differently: Before the processes of designing and shaping begin, listening and reflecting should again occupy their rightful places. By which we also mean self-reflection. We've asked questions and have tried to listen. And now, freely and without impediment, we can emulate Ernest Dichter, the Austrian motivational researcher, and extrapolate from the specific to the general. We have brought together those conditions we consider essential and those qualities we consider desirable for constituting a more satisfying life in the future. As a stimulus for attentive cities and people. As is so often the case in life, it is the power of the details, the sum of the small changes, which result, in the end, in large effects. Attempts at large-scale changes often meet the fate of revolutions announced in advance. They mostly don't take place. If, in reading this, you happen across contradictions – that's intended. For as we know, contradiction is precisely what makes us productive.

Art as Food for Life.

The active and passive encounter with art opens up a new level of dialogue in a world that has, in the first instance, sworn allegiance to the dictates of neo-liberal and productivity-based modes of thought. The demand for more art as a food for, and means of, life, arises from the longing for personal development. It is the school of leisure, of revolt, of resistance, and of criticism. Seeing things differently. Art thereby opens the desirable possibility of thinking and looking beneath the surface. A possibility for oneself and others. Artists were and are sensitive seismographs of a society's state of mind and body, its dissatisfactions and desires. Art does not force itself on us. It provides no answers, but instead creates conditions of consciousness that allow us to respond differently to pressing questions. Art can be a path towards a more responsible intensification of life and maximization of happiness.
A city that not only puts up with art, but facilitates it on a broad scale, is city profoundly worth living in.

Rapid Deceleration.

The rapid pace that marks our everyday professional and private lives goes beyond that which human nature can endure. As time becomes more compressed, our values and culturally conditioned responses reach their limits as does our physical and psychological health. A paradox, now that we have, after all, more free time than ever before. But this time is seldom really "free" in the sense that we ourselves determine what we do with it. The capacity to put the brakes on no longer suffices. A giant breathlessness seems to hold sway. With its insignia of being ready in all ways and at all times; of the fear that we won't keep up, that we'll miss out on something. In addition to chronic stress, depression and burn-out, the consequence is above all an all-encompassing inattentiveness. To oneself and others. The question is: How can one incorporate into an increasingly fast-paced and hectic life the countervailing times and spaces necessary for achieving balance? In doing this, the trick seems to be: Not either-or: dynamism or quietude, productivity or goofing off – but to conceive of the one as the basic prerequisite of the other. Cities have the task of offering to their inhabitants more spaces and possibilities than has heretofore been the case, in and through which they can learn to "have time." In order once more to become aware of themselves.

Missing Rituals.

The rich array of freedoms in all our lives has a threatening aspect. Authorities, structures and the rituals attached to them proved to be both functional and accepted over a long period of time. But they are now disappearing or are so devoid of meaning that they no longer provide satisfactory answers to urgent human questions, not to speak of giving us something to grasp onto. The massiveness and rapid pace of change, the complexity of a globally networked world that cannot be fully comprehended – these factors intensify the problem. The consequence of not replacing those patterns of action that provide us with orientation, of not connecting them to a socially relevant value-system, is to catapult human beings back onto themselves and to leave them fumbling helplessly in a world with too many options. There is a need for new rituals and authoritative instances which re-imbue the various axes of life with form – form of a spiritual, intellectual and sense-making nature.

Family Relationships.

The family is and remains the focus of a life worth living. The usual definition of the nuclear family that obtains in our cultural sphere is, however, only one form among many models of living together. The functions that are desirable remain, however. Security, a sense of belonging and nurture, being there for each other, as well as the numerous voluntary contributions to the common good of a society without which we cannot do – like the time spent taking care of children, the sick and infirm and the elderly. High time to recognize these accomplishments in the appropriate way. But not just as lip service. Precisely in view of demographic developments, family networks need intelligent structures that allow them to do what they're supposed to do. For example, at long last the possibility for both parents to be able to combine their professions with taking care of the children. Otherwise we're going to look pretty old pretty damn soon.

Dynamics of Insecurity.

Change and unpredictability in the realms of work, residence, social questions and health make us existentially insecure and therefore provoke anxiety. If we do not succeed in developing the model of the welfare state further as that which secures the basis for existence, the gap between the various population groups will widen, and we will vegetate more than we really live – at both the highest and lowest levels of society. We therefore make a plea for thinking over new forms of providing fundamental security as the basis for relaxed satisfaction; forms that, emanating from Europe, are also of importance in the global context.

More Orientation to "Lifeworlds."

In and of itself it's no secret that there are multiple realities. It's therefore all the more astonishing how "reality-blind" systems and institutions are, and how their connection to reality seems to limit itself to their own construction of what is real. Or how else can we explain that neither child-care institutions nor their opening times are oriented to the needs of the people who are affected. That in the design of spaces and buildings, the needs of the people who are to use them aren't taken into account. That one simply doesn't react to changing realities. But it's even more astonishing with which infinite patience those who have been ignored accept all this. How little resistance ensues, and how extensive the resignation is, nourished by a diffuse impotence, the sense that one can't change it anyhow. For ourselves and the future – we wish us both increased courage.

Multidimensional Integration.

A good measure of the quality of life in a society is how society treats those who can't attain this quality of life on their own. To ensure that the gaps between poor and rich, long-term residents and newcomers, insiders and outsiders, old and young, do not widen, we will have to talk more with each other and listen more to each other. No matter whether it's to the elderly, children, the weaker, the sick, or immigrants. New forms of working together on society, of acting in culturally and socially supportive ways, need to be developed. Voluntary activities and neighborhood networks will become more important for the simple fact that the state cannot take on all the tasks that arise, nor should it. The more effectively a city facilitates diversity in the form of alternative conceptions of life, and the better it fosters the exchange of ideas among these conceptions, the more it contributes to desirable ways of living together in harmony.

Life

Work

Urbanity

Education

Change originates at the margins of the mainstream. It's there where completely new possibilities arise. And that's precisely where the "Work" Team went looking. We posed penetrating questions, peered under the surface, and reflected critically on things we had taken for granted. What we found was a whole pile of possibilities: a "new world of entrepreneurship." A "new world of skilled trades." A "new economy of ideas." But what, in the final analysis, actually emerges will depend above all on one thing: concrete action.

The “Work” Team.

1 | Stefan Stolitzka
Stefan Stolitzka is an industrialist. In 1994, the then 35-year-old professional engineer takes over the "Legero" shoe factory in a management buyout and successfully grows the company. The avid art collector is married and the father of three children.

2 | Mathis Huber
In the beginning, Mathis Huber was a journalist. Since 1990 he's been in charge of the styriarte, Styria's classical music festival at the heart of which is conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt. On the side, this musicologist, historian and oboist is active as an urban farmer. He is married with four children.

3 | Laura Rossacher
Laura Rossacher comes from Graz. Born in 1984. Is studying journalism and mass communications at the Joanneum University of Applied Sciences in Graz. She's doing her mandatory international internship in Washington, D.C. Her goal: to get into corporate communications.

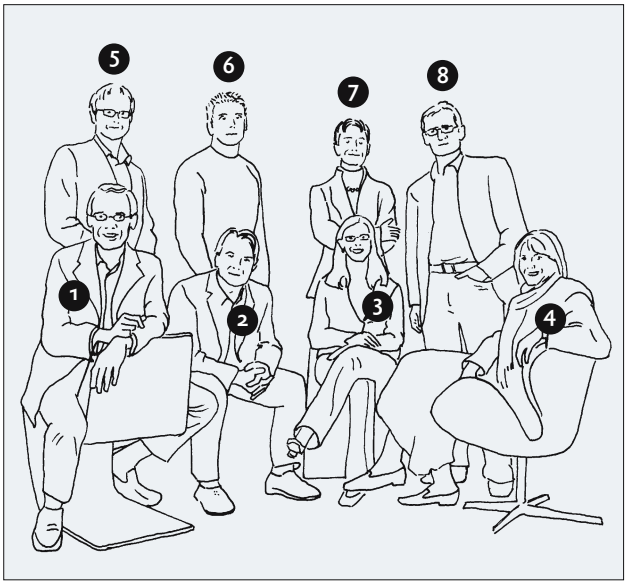
4 | Gertraud Monsberger
Born in 1969, Gertraud Monsberger is a landscape architect. Did her studying in Vienna, her practical training in Switzerland. And in Graz she was in charge of design for the 2000 International Garden Show. Today she works as a successful landscape architect with a base in Graz and a presence throughout Austria.

5 | Markus Petzl | Section Editor
Markus Petzl majored in media studies and business in Graz. But he doesn't bother finishing the latter degree. Instead, he gets into strategic communications consulting. Since 2003 he's been a brand developer in Graz.

6 | Alexander Wolfensson
Having grown up in Zagreb, the native Croatian goes to London for a couple of years to do an internship in economics. Then he comes to Graz, where, with his Couture-Boutiques, he becomes a textile missionary. He's married and the father of four children.

7 | Sabine Herlitschka
Born in 1966, Sabine Herlitschka gravitated from research to research management. And from there arrives at the newly-founded Medical University in Graz, which, in her capacity as Vice-President, she is helping to build up. Currently she is in charge of the division of European and International Programs of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG).

8 | Herbert Paierl
Herbert Paierl was born in 1952. For eight years he served as Minister of Finance and Economics for the Austrian State of Steiermark (Styria). During this time he raises the automobile manufacturing industry from a national power to an international cluster. These days he's an entrepreneur and lives in Vienna and Bad Waltersdorf.



“The topic of immigration, in connection with the question of the permeability of society, is becoming more and more important. Will I still be able to get the best minds for the often complex expertise demanded by future-oriented jobs?”

Sabine Herlitschka

“The dynamic of a city is measured by whether dynamic entrepreneurs from the second rank are pushing forward into the first.” Alexander Dukic Wolfensson

“The future is not solely a product of the economy; that’s too narrow a view. Rather, it’s a product of entrepreneurship. So we’re really talking about the entrepreneurial spirit of a society.” Herbert Paierl

“To learn a profession before you actually begin your university studies, the way many people do elsewhere, would also make sense for Austria.” Gertraud Monsberger

"Society would work better and the people would be happier if they would concern themselves more with things that are seemingly 'purposeless' and with thinking that goes beyond familiar schemata." Mathis Huber

"Not until an employee bonds with her or his company do motivation and commitment ensue. That's why it's dangerous when corporations no longer want full-time permanent employees." Laura Rossacher

"Art taps into the underlying pulse of the times and is therefore an indicator of societal change. Everything that is today had its beginning in art six or seven years ago."

Stefan Stolitzka

Hermann Hauser
in Conversation with Herbert Paierl

The Culture of Failure.

Hermann Hauser, born in 1948, is an investor, entrepreneurial father figure, Tyrolean by choice and acculturation, and Austrian expatriate. In the 1980's he founded, with Acorn Computers, the British answer to Apple. On its heels there came companies like Amadeus Capital Partners. In addition, Hermann Hauser is Non-Executive-Director many times over and a fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering. By the way, he's responsible for the Cambridge Phenomenon.

How does one approach a local hero? Just like that. It turns out that Hermann Hauser is less wound up, freer than expected. And he allows a kind of magic to arise that makes ideas appear more possible. In short: An intense encounter with the entrepreneurial spirit incarnate.

To a large extent, Hermann Hauser is responsible for that which we call today the "Cambridge Phenomenon" – one of the most thriving economic spaces in the world. That's probably why, in Great Britain, he has a firm position in the class of "local heroes" about whom everyone has a story to tell. But at the same time, nobody considers it possible to have actually met the man. So he's a kind of myth of post-modernity. An example of what is entrepreneurially possible. A father figure whose mere presence makes things appear more possible and, who over the years, has developed an unbelievable sense of what might just work. For that which will have a chance in the marketplace. And at the same time, he represents, for Cambridge, both someone to lean on and a role model. The reasons? For one thing, he's stayed in the area. And for another, he's able to pass on a part of his energy to others. Which occurred in miniature form at the end of April. We meet him at Amadeus Capital Partners in the middle of Cambridge. A place devoid of hype. No pomp. No distraction from the real topic: the power of entrepreneurial ideas, possibilities, potentialities. Hermann Hauser is in a good mood. He has no need for paper. Just uses his Tablet PC. Altogether one would probably call the whole thing "smart."

Ivy-covered Victorian halls, close-cropped English lawns, in the background punters on the River Cam – here in Cambridge every nook and cranny smells like Nobel Prize winners, like the elite. Is this what makes Cambridge so successful as a location?
It's wonderful, isn't it? The really unbelievable thing about Cambridge as a European university town, however, is our vibrant high-tech community. In the immediate vicinity of the university we have 1000 high-tech companies that employ 40,000 people, plus several science parks and a few buildings like the one that houses Amadeus Capital. Naturally, this didn't happen overnight. It took us some twenty years to build this high-tech cluster. And it's not just that. One of our special strengths is a culture of failure. Many of our start-ups are risky, and not a few of them end up going bankrupt.

On the other hand, in this environment in Cambridge many companies have come into being that dominate the world market, as Cambridge Silicon Radio (CSR) does for the Bluetooth sector.
Yes, that's the really good news. Finally we in Europe are in a position to offer Silicon Valley some competition. CSR has been around for only seven years now, but last year we already had revenues of 500 million dollars. The company was founded in Cambridge, with European money, and it went on the stock market in London – in other words a European story through and through. In this sector we're the world market leader; in other words even better than Silicon Valley.

Examples like this show how much is possible …
They show how much is possible and that it can really happen. You know, one of my pet topics is "miracles." I think if one doesn't believe in miracles, one doesn't need to become a venture capitalist. At the moment that one invests in a new company, one can't expect that it will become a three-billion-dollar corporation. But in a portfolio of twenty companies there are always one, two, or maybe even three that have the magic touch. So miracles do happen, no matter how improbable they may seem.

Two out of 20 – that's a good rate.
It's a very good rate of return. Anyone who has a miracle in his portfolio is on the right path. Someone who has two has a great return on investment. And if you've got three, you're laughing all the way to the bank. But seriously, there are naturally many other corporations that make a profit. But the investment in CSR brought us a twelve-fold return on investment.

In my experience it's usually not the money that's the problem, but the projects themselves. They say there are 300 billion Euros waiting to be invested.
You're quite right. Money isn't the problem. Smart money is the problem. It's pretty difficult to build up a venture capital community. I never would have dreamed of becoming a banker, but basically that's what I am today. I think bankers are terribly boring people. So why did I become a banker? Some say that I'm religious and believe that it's better to give than to receive. Whatever the reason, it's fun for me to help people make full use of their potential. To get the very best out of themselves. The difficulty for us venture capitalists is not drumming up funds, but deciding whom to give them to. Which technology we should support. Because it takes quite a while until one knows if something's going to work. Or isn't. It takes a while until one can look at a project and think: "Hmm, that might just work."

You mean a kind of sixth sense of which project might also find a market?
That's the first step. When I'm persuaded by an idea, the first question is: "How big is the market for something like that?" Universities often make the mistake of supporting academic work that doesn't have a chance outside the university. To understand the market and to recognize whether a technology can change the market, is the first of four criteria according to which we judge ideas.

The second criterion is the quality of the team: Does the team have experience in setting up companies? Have these people ever worked in a small company or do they come from a large corporation and so on. Not until the third step do we get to the technology itself – it's not as important as the people who have to be able to implement it. The fourth criterion is a good business plan. We put a lot of emphasis on this, and we also invest a lot of energy in it. Many start-ups come to us and say they've got an idea with which they'll blow Microsoft out of the water. But Microsoft is a large company – and not so easy to blow out of the water. So we ask them if they've ever thought about working with Microsoft. It's important to have a business plan that fits into the market structure of the sector in question.

I can recall a lecture I gave in Vienna in which I said: "You know, we invest capital in companies, get a twenty or thirty percent cut of the profits, and I stay on the Board for a bit to assist the company." And somebody in the audience put up his hand and asked: "Did I understand you correctly – you're on the Board of my company in order to tell me what to do?" I replied: "I don't tell you what to do; I'm helping you build your company." But for many Austrians, such a prospect is very strange. Here in England people stand in line to have a venture capitalist on their Board. Because it's our job to help the company achieve success: We help with business plans, bring the technology to the marketplace, and make available a network of contacts.

What kind of role did the university actually play in the development of the venture capitalist community in Cambridge?
Well, let me put it this way: One day the government caught on to the fact that there was something important happening here in Cambridge. Great Britain has a very good Ministry of Finance with a lot of good people. Many of whom come from Cambridge …

What a surprise …
… and one day these economic experts discovered a correlation between the intensity of company start-ups and the innovation level of an economic area. They recognized the significance of this correlation. Because Cambridge has developed into the biggest high-tech center of Europe, a short time later we had Tony Blair and Gordon Brown here. They wanted to find out why we were so successful, what was so special about Cambridge. What the university had contributed to this success. To tell the truth, in those days the university didn't really care very much about the start ups. They let us do our thing – that was their contribution. All these alumni networks are only starting to be pushed right now. Until a few years ago this was something you'd find only in the USA.

You said that the team was more important than the technology. What makes a good entrepreneur?
I think it's religion. As an entrepreneur, one has to be capable of believing in a project beyond all bounds of reason. On the one hand, a rock-solid faith in it is required, and on the other hand one has to be able to preach it. Good entrepreneurs are able to convince enough other people of the efficacy of their idea, no matter how

crazy it is. Sometimes there are ideas that are impossible, but someone believes in them so firmly that they suddenly become reality.

Like the belief one is able to walk on water …
Yes, sometimes you have to believe you can walk on water. But there are also a lot of totally crazy people who believe in things that won't ever work. If you'll permit the comparison, we venture capitalists are like the Inquisition: It's our job to separate the true believers from the heretics, the wheat from the chaff.

… to find those who can walk on water …
Yes. But that's not so easy. And it takes a long time to build up a venture community that can do that. It costs a pile of money and one frequently makes mistakes. That's something else one has to get used to: the possibility of failure from time to time.

May we ask how often you've failed?
Oh, a lot more often than I've succeeded! But one learns a lot more from mistakes than from successes. I don't know, I've probably done about 100 investments, of which many didn't do a thing. But three of them are worth over three billion dollars today. I want to tell you a story. There's a man. He's not an entrepreneur. I've already lost money on him twice. I financed his first company, but nothing came of it and the money ran out. Then he started another company. That didn't lead to anything either, and he left the company. That was another disaster. About a year ago he comes back to me and says: "Hermann, I need your support again." I tell him: "I've already lost money twice on your account. Why should I help you again?" – "I have an idea for a new printer." I say: "Okay, let me hear it." And he starts explaining to me that his idea will revolutionize the entire printer industry. With an ultra-fast inkjet printer whose print rollers attain 50,000 revolutions per minute. I tell him: "That'll never work." A week later he comes to me, to this very desk, and puts a pair of safety goggles into my hand. He switches on the prototype and revs it all the way up to 50,000 rpm. And the thing goes: "Sssssssss." It's running.

So it works.
It works to the extent that the vibrations are minimal. The main problem at the moment is that the ink doesn't yet stay where it's supposed to. The whole thing is totally crazy. The idea has quite a slim chance of being successful. But if he can pull it off, he'll change the entire market. It's not an Amadeus investment, however. Crazy projects like this one I finance privately.

So in a sense you're investing in a possible miracle.
If one believes that innovation is important for a country, one has to create the environment in which innovation can flourish. To this end, one also needs a liberal economic policy. In Europe the discussion goes on and on whether it's good that someone with a successful company becomes very rich. But it's actually incredibly important for that to happen, so that others see what's possible. That's the actual foundation of the dynamic in the United States – that everybody can make it. Naturally, there also needs to be equality of opportunity – or more precisely, a certain quality of possibility. A banker once called Cambridge a "compost pile" on account of the many companies that had bit the dust. This "compost pile" provides fertile soil for new undertakings.

Will there be more compost in Cambridge in 2017
There'll be both more compost and more successful companies. We've been doing this for twenty years, but I think we're just really getting into gear. It's only now that we've been successful in bringing forth a couple of really substantial companies every year. The business plans are better, the ideas more rounded, and there are a lot of people who are now establishing their second or third company. And in addition, we've now got connections to the large corporations – Microsoft is here, Intel, and Broadcom, too. For something like Cambridge to evolve took a lot of time.

Katharina Kaesbach
in Conversation with Sabine Herlitschka

Be Not Afraid.

Katharina Kaesbach is a fashion designer. Self-taught. Back in Holland her major was actually dance. And then she began with a mail-order house for ballet shoes – operating out of her apartment, together with her husband. And then, by coincidence, along came fashion. And shortly thereafter their label: Cobra-Couture. First in the Nonntal district of Salzburg. Then a second location in the city's Old Town. The photo shows – as per their wishes – both of them, because they "otherwise get to do hardly anything together."

Katharina Kaesbach is concerned about what will remain if those values are lost that were once the foundation of Europe. For example, the chance to concentrate on one's own capabilities. And to take one's fortune into one's own hands.

When you think of the future, what is it?
I recently had an interesting conversation with a pattern cutter from India. She told me that it's quite weird when one comes here to Europe from a country in which there is a very pronounced sense that things are about to happen. Over here one has the feeling: Where's it actually heading? There's almost a feeling that things are at a standstill. And it's naturally quite often a question of all the luxury that has arisen here with us. It's naturally the case that young people, growing up, are no longer used to hard work. And they have the impression that for a lot of money they can have five times the free time. That's naturally not fertile soil.

Ten years from now, will life for people here be easier or harder?
Two years ago, at a jewelry fair in Paris, I had an incredibly interesting experience: I came upon a stand with strands of pearls, really big, beautiful pearls. And a strand cost 39 Euros: a strand that otherwise, in a store, would have cost, as a necklace, 5,000 to 8,000 Euros. And this strand was from China. And afterwards I thought to myself: That might be something earthshaking there, a real earthquake. And there's really a question lurking behind there: If I haven't built up, from within myself, a value system and something to hold onto, where else would such things come from? That's a relatively heavy thing, because without them, everything just falls apart.

And these clear lines and structures that still exist in society today will just get all mixed up …
That which I cling to, yes. If something like that happens in a realm as existential as, say, your finances, then how can you be productive?

But on the other hand there's a lot of talk in Europe now about the "knowledge society."
What're you going to do with all that knowledge? If all you do is sort of muse to yourself, then in the final analysis nothing will come out of it. Somewhere, in some form, one also has to do something. There are all kinds of great ideas, you know. But you can't eat them. To be sure: If you're a knowledge society, you've got all kinds of possibilities. But then all this knowledge just drifts away, malnourished and starving.

Which places, do you think, will still be interesting ten years from now?
Places where intentionality still exists. Where projects are taking place that arise from intentions with a certain authoritativeness. They'll be strong points of attraction, because people are looking for something to hold onto.

Where do you put that into action?
Where do you provide something to hold onto?
For a start, to me it's quite a central issue that we are doing the manufacturing right here in Austria. We're basically swimming against the stream, you know. Everything's going offshore, but we produce our stuff here and nowhere else. Because it's my point of view that the person is central to everything. The situation today consists of the demand that everything has to become even less expensive, and what's left is then just a world that's dead, whether it's functioning or not. We've put it together again. Created something that's a unity again. There's the element that every individual is essential for the success of the whole, and that each individual has value. Even if he just sews the sleeves up and down, he's essential. Or also that one has the possibility, when one makes a part of a thing, that afterwards one sees the whole thing. Who in China has this possibility? And then one has an overview of the entire process and the

subsequent steps. One also sees how it is presented, or the people who wear it. That's the only way one can arrive at real quality, you know. And quality is something that is increasingly disappearing. And on the other hand it's a fact that what happens when you go shopping is just really crucial. For five or ten Euros, so to speak, you can buy your clothes, wear them three days, throw them away, and buy a new set. That's a real form of education. No sense of binding commitment comes about any more. Not solely within the fashion industry. But in this connection, too, the question arises whether I have any sense of binding commitment to myself either any more.

You say that the seamstress in China sews something but doesn't get to see what happens to it afterwards …
Yes, this disconnectedness exists almost everywhere. And naturally quality suffers as a result. But the human being who stands behind the table suffers, too. Because labor or the product enjoys higher status than the person. These are people who are everywhere and who have a life and also ought to have a life. And suddenly they're degraded to a kind of vegetative state where all they do is eat, sleep in a glass cage, and work eleven hours a day. What remains of life in that case?

And what, then, do work – and in this connection, entrepreneurship – mean to you?
Naturally, I do only what suits me – one hundred percent, every day. Absolutely. I do everything in precisely the way I sense is giving me real pleasure. And that's naturally something that carries over to my employees. That's a situation through which efficacy and authenticity come about. But if I ever thought I couldn't act authentically, then I couldn't work that way, because then I couldn't be me. And at the same time, I think that's where the big opportunity is. Naturally I have the incredible good fortune of having the possibility of being able to just do my thing. To be myself.

Where do you think you'll be in ten years?
Here's the challenge that would pique my interest: How far can you go in an entrepreneurial sense on your own identity? What is the decisive factor? It has to do with being prepared. And in this connection, you have to keep on developing yourself. You have to be able to reach out and grasp it yourself. For example, in moving up from one to two businesses, you simply become aware it's something you have to build up to. That you first have to live through it. That it has to be infused with your personal intentionality. And precisely that is authenticity. To have it and be it, you have to be in immediate touch with yourself. And it's only when you have the feeling that things are ripe that you can take the next step.

How will you develop yourself further? I think that much of what we're now talking about lives through you, through your individuality. Doesn't that also entail a certain limitation?
Yes, sure, that's right. But naturally, what's really interesting is that my employees increasingly enter into the process. I put a fair amount of work into that, too. And it's a central question – to find the right people. That's when incredibly large amounts of dynamism and joy can come about. Basically there's always the question of how one can join two things together, the combination of which results in their intensification. This principle of intensification is one of the most fascinating things for developing things further.

As an entrepreneur you work a lot. Do you have any time left over in which to live?
I'm living the whole time!

That means that your private life and work life become more vigorously intertwined …?
Not quite. It has to do with breathing, you know.
So: One needs there to be a certain amount of breath in things. One can't exhale one hundred percent of the time. One also needs the component of inhaling.

At the outset you spoke of freedoms. What, in your opinion, characterizes entrepreneurship?
Responsibility for oneself. And that's something I find glorious. To be responsible for that which one does.
I find that outstanding. I'd be absolutely unsuited to be a salaried employee. I'd be a catastrophe as an employee in a large firm, I think.

So should life become more entrepreneurial?
That would be interesting, alright, if people would take their lives into their own hands and would be more responsible for themselves. Basically, it's something all of us can do. It's just a matter of the task at hand and of the demand of taking one's life into one's own hands. And there's where the joy lies for which everyone is searching. And these things, including the many ills of society, depression and all these things.

What kinds of competences will one need, therefore, in the next ten years?
For one, the ability to get in touch with oneself. That means doing what gives one joy. The openness to learn and develop. This kind of development is extremely and decisively important. It is also the openness to own up to one's weaknesses and to take them into one's own hands. With regard to sales, for example, I have my own approach. Actually, I can't stand conventional sales at all. Basically I encourage everyone to bring out their own sensibilities, because that's what has the most power. And unfortunately that's also what one finds least these days. That one gets really honest advice from sales personnel. Where you can also get: "Sorry, but I can't imagine that on you. It doesn't really suit you somehow." And in my own sales division, that's why I look for people who have this capacity. It's emphatically a matter of authenticity, because this authenticity is really essential for longer-term sustainable effort.

But it's also a limited group of customers who come to you. Because many people don't even look for something like that any more, because they've simply forgotten how …
But let me tell you something – it's incredible – it's growing constantly. And it's the case that people are basically seeking this to an incredible extent. It's not the case that it's only a small percentage. It's a lot of people.

Ulla Pirttijärvi
in Conversation with Mathis Huber

Free Floating.

Ulla Pirttijärvi comes from northern Finland. And she's a Sami – a member of an indigenous nomadic people that has successfully resisted all attempts at Europeanization. She is counted, nevertheless, among the best-known verbal acrobats of Finland world-wide, and she's active with UNESCO as a "regional artist." Her art form is the yoik, a shamanic chant that simply comes when it's time for it.

Ulla Pirttijärvi lives in a nomadic culture. Where freedom is a central value. This gives her a totally different take on Europe, its culture, and such strange topics as EU-norms, elites, or mobility.

It's the depths of winter in Graz. And to get to Ulla Pirttijärvi at this time of year is not quite so simple for those of us who have learned to be Europeans. The question is: How does one contact someone who doesn't really have a permanent abode, whose winter action radius extends to a thousand or so miles of ice, and who since time immemorial has shown little respect for geographical borders? First one puts some thought into finding a place for a face-to-face meeting. The flight from Graz would be routed via Frankfurt, Stockholm, and at least two smaller airports with ice-runways, airports of which we here in Austria have never heard. Establishing initial contact by telephone doesn't work either. Because up there, nothing works but satellite phones; and satellite phones are, in consequence, correspondingly scarce. The solution to the communication problem turns out to be as surprising as it is simple: E-mail.

----- Original Message -----
From: styriarte Info
To: ulla.pirttijarvi-lansman
Cc: huber
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2006 2:59 PM
Subject: forsknings projekt

Hi, Ulla Pirttijärvi!
What's your concept of the future? Does anything occur to you spontaneously when you think of the year 2017?
Spontaneously: Two children who will then be 16 and 23 years old, their schooling; for myself, music, the yoik, and Sami culture are very important; I don't have any real plans for the future.

What kinds of challenges for your life will be presenting themselves in the next eleven years?
I've never really thought about it. I think life will come as it comes.

What exactly is your function within UNESCO?
I'm the "regional artist of Lapland." In this function I help other Sami. Older people; children, too. I also teach the old yoik traditions. I'll retain this UNESCO function for another two years.

How do you experience mobility as a part of your nomadic culture? Do you have suggestions on how to deal with it?
That's something that makes me nervous. People are so hectic. This form of mobility is also in the offing for us. Meaning that more cars, more snowmobiles, more streets will be built. I personally want the slower pace to continue.

Thesis: Sami life is based on great freedom. Can we and should we adopt some of your freedom for ourselves?
Our freedom, however, is already very limited. We're no longer permitted to hunt and fish when we want to. There are laws. In past times there were no borders between Norway, Finland and Sweden so far north. Now I'm no longer permitted to drive my reindeer across the borders. Our freedom comes from respect for nature. We don't have a "clock-culture" such as yours. We follow the seasons, have various occupations during the year – we talk about the "fishing time," the "berry picking time," etc. Europe has removed itself so far from this natural cycle that it will be very difficult to return to it.

With us, people are increasingly defined in terms of career success. When do you consider someone successful?
Success is not the same thing as being rich. One has to respect everyone even if they don't happen to have a job right now. The Maasai, for example, don't have a lot of money, but does that mean they're poor? The value systems and styles of life in Lapland and for example also in Tanzania are very similar: People fish, sit together, think about things, chat.

What should Central Europeans learn to do that they can't yet do or do any longer?
Respect for all human beings is very important. And respect for nature.

In our society, business is predicated on constant growth. Is there an alternative to this?
For me, the most important things are culture and tradition. It's not a matter of earning money as such, but of craftsmanship, of language.

What's your take on life in Central Europe? What amuses you when you see us at work and play?
There's nothing that's actually funny. But city life in Europe is just peculiar. Everyone follows this system; there are so many stores where you can buy all kinds of things. Even though I was just recently in Germany for three weeks, for example, I can't identify any old traditions there. Many people from all over the world live together in Germany. They should all learn to respect each other and above all retain their own ancient traditions.

What does entrepreneurship mean to you? What constitutes an entrepreneur?
…?
(Editorial note: Even when pressed to elaborate, Ulla stuck by her original answer.)

Right now in Austria there's a big discussion going on about elites and the necessity of fostering them. Do elites play a role in your culture?
In past times there were rich reindeer breeders in Lapland, but the notion of something like an elite is new in Sami culture. There are also people who have been to university, politicians. They're respected, but they're no better or more important than others who, for example, work out in nature and aren't so rich.

The world is moving towards an economy based on industrial resources that are petering out. Does that affect you? What will remain for us when the natural resources are gone?
In our way of life we don't think that far into the future. One person can't change much by himself in any case. It would be important to think about a simpler life, of not having so many cars, or using the bus more often.

What is your idea of quality? Are European Union official norms necessary to ensure quality?
The deal with the EU norms is weird. For example, there are so many different kinds of potatoes, and that's a good thing; then one can choose. The EU should be careful and not limit these things, for that's how traditions are restricted. With us, for example, a very specific way of smoking fish is jeopardized. In such cases, small changes for one country could mean big changes for another.

In our more recent past, work and life constituted strictly separate domains, domains which are now coming together again. How is it in your culture?
Life and work are connected; work is a part of life. The reindeer is the source of meat, skins, artisanship. In Europe, culture is like this: First work, then family and pleasure. But this quickly tires people out, and their energy goes to waste. If they put all of their energy into work, then they don't have any left for other things; and in factories they're simply replaced if they no longer perform well enough.

With us, the way to happiness is through economic success. Do you think that makes Europe a happier place?
Europe has a system that's built on winning and losing. But happiness comes through the way that one thinks, through respect and love for other people and for nature, through positive thinking. If one is rich, one doesn't necessarily have to be happy. I think that economic thinking does not lead to happiness.

And where do you find your happiness?
In my family, in nature, in culture and music.

In closing: With whom would you want to converse about the future?
Probably not with a politician. They're always so sad and boring. I'd seek out a spiritual person. For example the Dalai Lama.

A Little Piece of Happiness.

Fred Luks, whose field at the University of Hamburg is the economy of happiness, has taken on a single question: Why, despite increasing wealth, are we becoming increasingly less happy?

Do we live to work or work to live? "The latter!" comes the rapid reply. Really? If one pursues the question of how happiness and work are connected, a complex picture emerges. Shortages, desires, indolence, cravings, workaholism, free time, innovation, accomplishment, flexibility, satiety, waste, thrift. All of these. And more. Maybe here, too, it's the particular mixture that counts. Or as it's called today: the balance.

Economy has something to do with happiness. This fact hasn't escaped the notice of economics – the science of the marketplace. A major theme of research into happiness is the puzzle why, in the rich industrial countries of the world, despite massive increases in incomes, there has been no corresponding growth in subjective feelings of happiness. It's quite apparent that this has to do in no small measure with the fact that people quickly get used to good things, and also that the comparison with others is a central factor in an individual's sense of happiness. The joyful effect of a promotion is diminished if one's colleague is making even more money. Careful examination reveals that these findings are politically quite explosive. The advice that some happiness researchers have on hand for individuals is, on the other hand, unspectacular: "Move to a safe neighborhood, find an interesting job, don't have sex too infrequently, watch your health, surround yourself with nice people – then you'll probably be happy." Whatever. In Germany that's called a "healthy dose of common sense." But the Austrians have a better phrase for it: "House-Sense."

Nevertheless: It's good that people are talking about it. The phrase "economy of happiness" can be found in the writings of Sigmund Freud, by the way. "Every prolongation of a situation desired by the pleasure principle," he writes in Civilization and Its Discontents, "produces only a feeling of lukewarm contentment; we are so constituted that we can derive intense enjoyment only from a contrast – but very little enjoyment from an ongoing state of things." That is also certainly true when it comes to work, which makes us happy when it offers us variety and excitement. Michael Glawogger's film Workingman's Death shows us, then, the face of work that fails to make us happy. And that this form of work is, in the global perspective, far more widespread than the work we're talking about here: creative, innovative, "cool" work. The artist does art. The scientist does research. The entrepreneur is entrepreneurial. But doing what? If we follow Schumpeter, that which is new. But not every job can always provide new things to do, and it's even more the case that not all jobs can do this. So we really must distribute work differently. Those who are stressed out, we can conclude on the basis of research into the economy of happiness, should work less. And those who have zero hours of gainful employment a week should work more. It's clear we're not talking about ensuring that everybody has twenty hours a work per week. There will always be those whose happiness depends on slogging it out sixty or more hours a week. And others can make do with less income, and correspondingly less gainful employment, but also more of that which the workaholic won't ever understand. Maybe we live in order to live. And work to work. And if someone combines these two and turns out to be "good" in the twofold sense of the word, she or he might attain happiness. By working professionally and excellently, but also in a way that one's fellow human beings and the environment can live with it. Being able to think about things like this, and to come to the appropriate conclusions – that would be happiness.

Reinhart Fritsch
in Conversation with Alexander Dukic Wolfensson

A Life Less Ordinary.

Reinhart Fritsch (58) is a skilled craftsman in Graz. A skilled craftsman who, in the best sense of the word, thinks against the grain. Did his growing up in Argentina. Studied architecture in Graz. And became a cabinetmaker. With stays abroad – for example in Bali and North Africa. But despite this, he's taking his trade and hanging it up. Because not everything works the way he thought it would. But that's okay. Life goes on. But maybe no longer in Graz.

If one doesn't set the limits of the skilled trades too narrowly, some interesting possibilities arise. Provided: One's location permits this. Which is, according to Reinhart Fritsch, above all a matter of the "we"-feeling.

At the time we're conducting this interview, you're in the process of closing down your studio. How come?
The short version is that I didn't bring in enough money because at some point the orders weren't there. That has to do with my structures. And with mistakes I made myself. And it has to do with changes in the general conditions. These days, the industry no longer offers what I've been offering up to now. That includes changes in how clients value the craftsman. In past times a unique, specially created object was highly valued – today it's more the brand names that are valued highly. In terms of price, I can compete with all comers, but I don't have a recognizable brand. In practical terms, I can no longer gain a competitive advantage by saying: "I'm making this specially for you." In recognition of this trend, I would have had to create the "Fritsch" brand.

How did you get into cabinetmaking?
I studied architecture here in Graz, and at some point and for various reasons I didn't finish my degree. But I'd really always wanted to be a cabinetmaker. Since junior high school.

So you became a cabinetmaker out of passion?
Yes, it's something I'd always wanted to do. And then I simply began. With a small studio, and then it just developed from there. But not within the confines of the cabinetmaker's craft alone. Because what's important is the inclusive approach. Bringing in not only the neighboring trades, but also consciousness and thoughtfulness and design. So that a piece is not only well made in terms of craftsmanship or production criteria, but also that the design is "right". Everything taken together as a whole.

For you, then, what does quality mean in the skilled trades these days?
Quality is a demand we make of the excellence of the material, of the form – in other words, then, of the design or plan, and of the execution. And naturally quality also corresponds to the purpose that the object is meant to fulfill. Design alone doesn't do the trick.

Is high quality in fine carpentry and related crafts not also a question limiting production?
No, have a look at this (knocks on our table). That's a mass-produced item, an industrial product. And in terms of current criteria, it's a quality product.

But aren't the shops and studios of small craftsmen interesting precisely in part because they offer a sense of individuality that large-scale operations can't ever provide?
Yes, but these days individuality is valued more in the abstract. All mass producers advertise their wares using the concepts of individuality and individual solutions. That means that the mass-produced product at some point gets a red or yellow dot according to individual choice. So I can't really earn any points for myself and my profession with the word "individuality" any more.

If industrial production becomes more and more individual, where will the individual artisan have his place?
In the niche areas. Areas where that which industrial mass production is offering doesn't fit for some reason or other. And above all, where mass production doesn't offer what the client wants.

Is there something like a new sense of the skilled trades? A renaissance?
A new version of artisanship? That's not something I think I represent. But there are, for example, all these high-quality vintners in Austria. Something's in the process of unfolding there. That's a skilled trade, too. That might represent a new path.

Will this "new craftsmanship" be in demand in 2017?
If I've understood the underlying idea correctly, quite certainly. Among the fine furniture makers there are new approaches, too; there are a lot of them in the craft who've done double training – learning the theory and parallel to that applied craftsmanship. They learn to think more comprehensively.

Will the clients recognize this kind of new quality in the skilled trades at all?
Being able to recognize something is, after all, primarily a matter of consciousness. It's what I previously alluded to as the change of value assessment. When I say, "This table – somebody designed and crafted it for me alone, according to my wishes," an outsider may possibly not even recognize what that means any more. Quality, after all, is also a mental question. And that's precisely where there has been a seismic shift. That the brand name recognized by everyone has replaced the quality of the individually crafted product.

Despite all this, there are cities that have an incredible "scene" showcasing these individually styled, high-quality objects. Where does that come from?
I think that there exists something like a very well-defined quality of place. In the more restricted and the broader sense. In Greek, there's the concept of chronos, the quantity of time. And in contradistinction to chronos, there's also keiros, as the quality of time. And precisely in reference to place, as well. In Chinese philosophy this is the Feng Shui. The Chinese concept of Feng Shui is a lot more than this esoteric fluff. What's meant is the actual quality of a place. In other words, what really is determinative of the place. What kind of …

… energy?
Yes, we say energy. And there's also something like the mentality of a city. That, too, is a quality. And it makes such special things possible.

Aren't there people here, too, at home, who have this energy and whose effect is contagious?
A short time ago I was invited to the home of a friend, a well-established architect. Everybody there was like me. People who have simply done something that was important to them. Something that's worth it to them. And then my friend said: I think we never got it through our heads that, from the get-go, we were discontinued models.

Do you think that in 2017 life in this sense will be easier or more difficult than today?
I'd say, if one is streamlined and conformist, it'll certainly be easier. If not, it'll certainly be harder. Things are moving more and more in the direction of conformity, standardization, functionality, and "making nice." Conformity to social conditions, requirements, to fashion and necessities. In principle, this ability to adapt is something built into us, you know, a strategy for surviving within a collectivity. But of course it can also signify anxiousness.

Where – in what kinds of places – will life transpire in 2017
Probably less out there in the unstructured public realm – like right on the street, for example, or in public squares and the like. And more in protected spaces that are designed for such things and are also guarded and patrolled. And the walls will be higher and the entry codes more complex.

You grew up in Argentina. Could we learn something from the Argentineans?
How to play soccer. And a more laid-back lifestyle. More laid-back, with less pressure and stress. But I'm not trying to idealize Argentina, either.

Is there anyplace in Austria where you sense this lightness?
If I sense it in myself, then I can sense it all over. But then it's something I'm contributing. Or I meet someone who's got it and allow myself to be infected.

What could one infect something here in Graz, for example?
Making Graz the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2003 constituted an attempt to do this. And it was a terrible failure. But at least there was some energy and enthusiasm there that was tangible. I think this had to do with the city, with the location. There is a very pronounced sense of preventing things from happening. That, too, is a quality of this city. A characteristic. I think it may have to do with the fact that there is not much of a consciousness of a "we" in the positive sense, meaning in the sense of being an individual connected to a collectivity and responsible for it. There is indeed such a sense, but in a more patriotic direction, as in "We Styrians." But in the sense of "Why don't we do something!" Not that I'm aware of.

Will you remain here?
Maybe not. I've been here for forty years now, but I'm one of the 45% of foreigners who simply aren't willing to be integrated.

San Patrignano – Rehabilitation in the Vineyard.

Peak performance as therapy is a daring approach, says Markus Petzl. One of the best wine-growing estates in the world shows how one can conceptualize rehabilitation as a very profitable undertaking.

On May 25, 1961, John F. Kennedy pledged himself and the American people to a common goal: To send a man to the moon and back by the end of the decade. The lofty goal proved to be an impetus for peak performances, and July 1969 brought "one small step" for Neil Armstrong, and a big step forward for American self-confidence. On a smaller scale, a similar model in the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna helps drug addicts kick their habit. By putting their efforts into pressing top-quality wine, they rediscover their love of life.

In 1997 a man who had just turned fifty and a man in his thirties were strolling among the rows of grapes of an old vineyard in the hinterland of Rimini. They were discussing the idea of rehabilitating ex-junkies by getting them to cultivate first-class wine. The two men were Riccardo Cotarella, the Number One of Italian enologists, and Andrea Muccioli, who had recently succeeded his father as director of the one of the largest drug rehabilitation projects in the world. The two weren't joking around: Both knew that they were risking their reputations. All the more ambitious was their goal: To produce a half million bottles of Sangiovese and Bordeaux from a vineyard of 260 acres. The decisive factor is not to be the production of grape juice for do-gooders. The challenge consists of making an impression on connoisseurs.

How does one produce world-class wine with drug-addicts undergoing withdrawal? For Andrea Muccioli that's not the question, but rather a part of the answer. These people take drugs because they have no orientation and there are too few ideals. The production of a top quality product, no matter of what kind, provides that kind of orientation. Recognition comes through the hard work that's required to do it. Altogether, over 20,000 people came to San Patrignano for a limited period of time. Up to 2,500 former addicts work together at one time with 200 professional employees in over sixty projects – and find, in the process of learning a new profession, a way of integrating into society.

Five years later this crazy idea on the part of an enologist and the head of a rehabilitation center is confirmed by wine-lovers: The society of Italian sommeliers names San Patrignano the best Italian vineyard for 2002 and chooses Cotarella vintner of the year. Seventy-two percent of those who leave San Patrignano have kicked drugs. Two years later San Patrignano is named the social entrepreneur of the year by the World Economic Forum. Muccioli explains that the goal is a question of style: not dolce far niente, but dolce vita – the ability to live, to the extent possible, a life of excellence. "We're not engaged in the fight against drugs, at least not exclusively. We're engaged with life."

Heinz Wittenbrink
in Conversation with Laura Rossacher

The Children of the Revolution.

Heinz Wittenbrink was born in 1956. He studied German literature, philosophy, and art history at the universities of Münster, Cologne and Paris. While working for the Bertelsmann Publishing Group, he becomes project director for dictionaries and CD-ROM-encyclopedias. In addition, he personally authors numerous books on topics having to do with the Internet, like HTML, XML, RSS, and Atom. In 2005, he became Professor of New Media at the Joanneum University of Applied Sciences in Graz.

As far as Heinz Wittenbrink is concerned, strict hierarchies gum up the works of innovation. It's important rather to strengthen the autonomy of small units and give employees the freedom to develop their own ideas.

Having grown up in Germany's Ruhr Valley, Heinz Wittenbrink has been living in Styria for just over two years. As a student, he concentrated on German literature, philosophy and art history; but he ended up in the field of new media. For example, as project director for the Bertelsmann Group. Brought up a devout Catholic, he married a teacher of Protestant religion. His professional focus is HTML, but his private delights are the Roman Baroque and his garden, where he spends a great deal of time. The professor of new media at the Johanneum in Graz moves in diverse worlds. An ideal breeding ground for thinking about the future. Among the kettles and dirty cutlery in the university's staff lounge, we discuss where life, work and education are heading.

Which quality of the past would you want to preserve for the future?
I was born in 1956, and I grew up among the aftershocks of the '68-movement. My wish would be to preserve as much as possible of the anti-authoritarian spirit that prevailed back then.

And when you think back over the last eleven years, what can you extrapolate about how society will develop in the next eleven years?
Eleven years are an insanely short period of time. In the last ten years a lot has happened on the Web, but societal change always comes about much more slowly than might seem to be the case at first glance. Since the mid-1970's, society has looked pretty much the same to me. Then as now the end of industrial society has been just as much a topic of conversation as the difficulty of finding a job. Evidently neo-liberalism's prescriptions haven't had much of an effect on this crisis over the last several years.

What kind of medicine would you prescribe?
I'm thinking of an anarchist model: more emphasis on decentralization and the networking of smaller units. Right now, the large corporations are organized hierarchically. Large corporations have tiny committees that take decisions in the attempt to change the course of large tankers – and they can succeed only partially. In order for large units to be able to function better, one has to strengthen the autonomy of the small subsidiary units. By doing this, one can avoid having to conform to general guidelines that are frequently irrelevant to local situations. At Bertelsmann, where I used to work, this system functions very well.

Where – in what kinds of places – will life transpire in future?
People will stay online longer than they do today. In ten years, being permanently online will constitute a large part of our life. The question is whether the virtual world will combine with the real world in such a way that one is in both, or whether one will consciously seek out more traditional forms of communication as an alternative to the Internet.

How will technological progress influence our daily life?
We'll be living permanently in a world of information. The challenge is learning to deal with it. In the working world, the actual location of my work will be totally irrelevant for a whole series of activities. I like the concept of the "virtual workplace," because one can decide with greater autonomy where one is actually doing the work. On the other hand, this development will lead to a situation where the local service infrastructure will again become more important. It'll be more a matter of whom I can meet at the pub in the evening – despite global networking. I'll be looking more closely at which services are offered in my immediate vicinity.

What's your take on the "Open-Source" philosophy? Will other sectors adopt this concept?
For sure. It won't be the case that everything will be done collaboratively, but there will be common infrastructures. In the sporting goods branch, many companies have already adopted this principle: Lots of different brands use a quite limited number of manufacturers. That's one aspect of the cooperative approach. Another is, that international cooperation will increase.

You were telling me that at Google's headquarters in California, employees are allowed to design and set up their space themselves. There are volleyball courts, swimming pools, and a company barber. Why does Google fascinate you so much?
Lots of people find it intolerable that the worlds of work and play are growing together. I find it congenial. After all, the quality of one's working life is inextricably bound up with the relationships one has with one's colleagues. And that's why it's a shame that the Google model hasn't been introduced here yet. It's quite apparent that the search engine folks achieve a very high level of productivity by allowing their employees a lot of freedom. It's also interesting that the people who bear the brunt of Google's innovativeness are incredibly young. Between twenty and twenty-five. In Austria, we're still making too little use of this youthful potential.

What else can one learn from Google?
These days, no company can assume that it will be able to dominate its markets for years on end with established products, services and structures. It's necessary to be in a continuous process of inventing something new. One can get up to the speed required for innovation only if one has people who work extremely creatively and who receive the freedom that allows them to experiment. I myself feel best about my job when I have a large measure of freedom to do open-ended experimentation.

What kind of subjects need to be taught in 2017 so that students will be well prepared for the job market?
As an adherent of the ideal of humanistic education, I believe in those things that a traditional educational approach imparts. To teach things that will be outdated the day after tomorrow is fruitless. Education should contribute to an individual's self-orientation, should help children to find their own way. As a complement to this, I consider having a solid foundation in the natural sciences important. High school students should participate in research in order to learn how important scientific developments are these days.

One additional question about city life. What kinds of things will your ideal future city possess?
Now that the traditional nuclear family no longer works and there's no alternative in sight, it'll be increasingly important to create structures for small groups of 20 to 50 people who will maintain long-term and stable contacts with each other and who can exchange ideas with each other. In the Munich borough of Haidhausen, that works quite well because village-like conditions obtain there. The ideal urban district offers the proper mix of opportunities to retreat into seclusion and the constraint of always having to encounter others. Every town or neighborhood ought to have spaces for encountering other people.

The End of the Youth Craze.

The experience that employees possess represents enormous capital. Using Germany as an example, author Martin Aichholzer explores why it is still difficult to place such employees.

Young entrepreneurs are innovative, motivated, quick on the uptake. They have lots of ideas and are ready to jump into something new at the drop of a hat. When you consider it, good preconditions for successful entrepreneurship. Except for the inexperience that all too often brings independent enterprise to a rapid stop.

Ulrich Kipper, a German businessman who has set up his own company, found a way to inoculate himself against his own inexperience, and in the process posed a question that has been weighing heavily on the labor market in Germany (and not only there) for years. In order to compensate for the missing know-how in his newly-established company, he hired workers whom nobody else wanted: men and women over fifty. Even today, after the company's first phases of expansion and a move to new and larger quarters, more than half of his 22 employees are between 48 and 58 years old. And that in an IT-firm that has to respond to the pulse-beat of the times, if it's to stay ahead of the competition. For Ulrich Kipper, however, that's something that's not at all unusual. For him, it's a classic "win-win" situation. What he values in his older employees? Their treasure-trove of experience. And their well-developed networks that they use to good advantage in their work. And in addition, their social competence, their unflappability and level-headedness, their reliability and loyalty. Especially this last trait is of existential importance to IT-companies, since their true capital reposes, after all, in "trade secrets."

If you ask other employers, it is precisely these qualities that put older employees ahead of their younger colleagues. Nevertheless, people over 50 aren't holding a good hand in the card game we call the job market. There's just too great a longing for young employees who aren't yet "used up."

Let's stick with Germany. A good 60% of German corporations don't hire anybody over 50. "This youth craze is going to be over in 2020 at the latest," prophecies Reiner Klingholz, Director of the Berlin Institute for Population and Development. "That's when the cohort born before 1972 will retire. And that's the very latest point when the job market will need older employees. Not only because there are too few young people, but also because the clientele, themselves older, will demand service advisers who are just as old and have just as much experience as they do." But until this point is reached, a large number of long-term unemployed will go straight over into early retirement. That's because Ulrich Kipper, with his conviction that older employees possess especially valuable qualities, is still more or less a voice in the wilderness. If others are concerned with this problem at all, then only because demographic change forces them to, not because they expect advantages for themselves.

Even the odd "test case" that has already been interpreted as a signpost towards the future has often been overestimated or misunderstood. For example: A company was looking to hire eight "senior citizens" – meaning employees over 45 years old. For an outfit that employs 3,000 people in Germany, a pretty modest number. But the media were keen; and for the company, this resulted in high scores for empathy and first place in the competition for the German PR-prize. Interestingly, all the company was trying to do was encourage older employees to apply for work using the normal appointment process.

But how should an attitude that's the result of 20 years of encouraging people to take early retirement simply change from one day to the next?

Gabriele Fischer und Peter Lau
in Conversation with Markus Petzl

Everything's Getting Better.

brand eins. Of the German-language business magazines, it's the one most pregnant with futurity. Some people label it the first fanzine of the private sector. Gabriele Fischer and her editorial team founded it in 1999, and since then have led it through high points and low. She lives in Hamburg and is in love with a man in Bremen. Her colleague Peter Lau, a journalist who formerly covered the world of music, writes for brand eins about the city, society, and people.

Why asking questions is important. What makes empty spaces valuable. How come the current system will be replaced. And why this needn't cause trepidation. These and other optimistic stories by and with Gabriele Fischer and Peter Lau.

How would you explain your profession to a 12-year-old?
Fischer: I tell stories. About things I don't understand, things that leave a question mark in my head. Kids are very creative in this regard; they ask quite wonderful questions. And that's precisely the kind of question-asking that good journalists have preserved from their own childhood. They see a company and say: "That's all fine and dandy, but how can this be?" That's how it starts: Every good story begins with a question mark.

Lau: I actually don't have any favorite stories; I have favorite books. At the head of the list is probably Winnie the Pooh. The stories I like best don't answer everything – they leave an empty space at the end in which the reader can set up house. One can imagine it as an empty room in which one experiences a moment of quiet, of repose, a form of self-reflection. Children still have this empty space within themselves. Adults experience it only rarely, because they're actually continuously tied up with other things.

What could "grown-ups" do to preserve this empty space in and for themselves?
Fischer: The job of growing up consists, in part, of slowly but surely coming to know yourself and getting an idea of who you are and what you find interesting. I think that, during this process, it's completely impossible to preserve this empty space for yourself. But I also think that once you are grown up, it's possible to create anew places where you're by yourself. And I think, too, that in the process of becoming adults, we lose something else that children very clearly have: the feeling of being the center-point of the world. What's more, children are very entrepreneurial, because they are constantly solving problems, dealing with difficult situations, and starting projects. In other words, children are involved with everything that has to do with entrepreneurship. In a difficult and wearing process that we call "school," all of this gets covered over by rubble. If the process succeeds in its own terms, these children eventually become employees in a large corporation. If it fails, they do something entrepreneurial.

Will 2017 be more entrepreneurial than now?
Fischer: Most certainly. We're exiting from a structure in which quite a bit was regulated – something that served the advancement of well-being and prosperity in general, but that wasn't necessarily advantageous for the well-being and prosperity of the individual. That's now a thing of the past. I don't think we'll be able to make any more advances if we just follow the old prescriptions, the classical means of production in industrialized society. That will lead to a situation in which many people who in earlier times would have gotten a secure job with a large corporation will have to become independent business people. For example, right at this moment, our line of work – journalism – is becoming incredibly independent. There's no longer the certainty that a journalist can stay on as the employee of a large periodical publishing house, where in former times, if he was lucky, he might be forgotten until he was 65, at which point he could be released back onto the street. And now there are a few journalists who can do the entrepreneurial thing very skillfully, and who learn very quickly, because they're just different. Sometimes the transformation is painful, but there's no getting around the fact that people have to be the entrepreneurs of their own lives to a much larger degree than was the case earlier. And when I take a look at the younger generation, about whom it's repeatedly asserted that they're supposedly so passive, I have to say: They're a heck of a lot more entrepreneurial than we were.

Lau: And there's something else: Life is supposed to be fun. And from this perspective, I think, the most important thing one can keep asking oneself is: "What do I really want?" The only thing is, most people have trouble with this, because there's so much rubble lying on top if it, the rubble of habits, prejudices and anxiety.

Fischer: When we encounter people who have done something wonderful, something interesting, we frequently notice that it was self-motivated, it was

something they themselves decided to do. That's the point to which we have to bring people: So that they again make their own decisions. A topic that never fails to fascinate me is the way industrialized society is lionized. I think it's absolutely disgusting. Last week I saw an article in which a company was praised to the skies for creating a slew of jobs in Germany. And what is it this company does? They produce dog leashes, those little ones that retract when you push the button. They're produced here in Germany, by manual labor, and now this made everybody happy. But then they saw the room in which the leashes are made. And here you've got a bunch of people sitting there at sewing machines sewing dog leashes from eight o'clock in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon. One day it's pink ones, the next day it's light-blue ones, etc. So you see this and you tell yourself: "Okay, they've got a job, and I think that's a matter for celebration." But let's be honest for a second – forty years sewing dog leashes? Is that what workers and their trade unions are fighting for? Could we possibly spend some time rethinking the question of whether there's something out there that's a bit more interesting? And could we leave the dog leashes to the machines? But when I have to submit constantly to rules set by other people, and the union says sewing dog leashes is better, then I don't even waste any thought on whether there might possibly be something better. After all, we don't even know all the jobs that could possibly exist.

How quickly do you think this will become a topic of discussion?
Lau: The security that the old structures provided is already disappearing. And security was precisely the big bonus of that system: It's what the system was created to provide. That security will have disappeared by 2017 in any case. In its place new structures will form, but they're more likely to be networks of people who come together in new kinds of groups: sometimes small, sometimes big, sometimes huge. But that won't happen within a predetermined system. Rather, it'll be completely self-determined by the people themselves.

Fischer: I think it'll happen more quickly than we can imagine right now, because the old system is losing its sway more quickly than we thought even five or ten years ago. I recently took part in a "think-it-over" project of a large German corporation. In this process they asked the participants what they feared most. They wrote it down on little cards, and as it turned out there was a little pile for "unemployment" – and a really big pile for "loss of meaning."

We're nevertheless trying to combat unemployment …
Fischer: Sometimes people are just farther along than the politicians …

Lau: People have long since changed. But the beauty of such an exponentially ascending curve of change is, in the final analysis, that for a long time it's assumed that things will always stay like they are, and then suddenly the process goes very quickly. It might take fifteen years till something changes, but the current system won't survive. Because it's a game without a winner. If the system survives, we won't.

Fischer: A few years ago I was part of a panel discussion on how the world will change for women. Somebody from Telekom was there, and for an hour the discussion centered on the fact that they have mixed teams, and the same wages for men and women, and that fathers sometimes go on parental leave, and how quickly this change is taking hold. And then at some point I said that I thought these were the wrong topics: In five years the question isn't going to be whether they'll be working in mixed teams, but whether there's still going to be a Telekom.

And what's next, after the old world's gone?
Lau: Complexity theory offers us a very good explanation. Complex organizations, complex systems always find their way autonomously to their own, new system of organization. So it's safe to assume that our society, which is continually becoming more complex, will not sink into chaos – we'll simply organize ourselves anew.

Fischer: I think it'll still be a few years until, for example, fewer laws are passed and in their stead we get less formal regulations that are subject to revocation. Or the education debate: There are actually people out there who believe that they can say what we'll have to know in five years. That's complete nonsense. I think there are incredibly many ways to learn, so let's try out different models of schooling. Then maybe one will turn out to be really terrible, but that also happens when the attempt is made to control everything.

Back to the topic of self-confidence for a second. If we had an index of self-confident decision-making that was at 100 today, where do you think it will be in 2017?
Fischer: I'm deeply convinced that it will climb. And I think that there are definite indications this is so. Among them, the fact that the system of fully providing for everyone, a system that has so drastically reduced autonomous decision-making, is finished. I hope that by 2017 the index will be at 120, but I'm afraid it'll only be at 104.

Lau: If it's now at 100, by 2017 it'll be at 500 at least. Today, people are still making remote-controlled decisions. But they're currently in the process of emancipating themselves from everything – from advertising, from politics, from role models. Hence 500.

If you had the government's education portfolio for a day, what kinds of things would you introduce?
Fischer: I wouldn't introduce anything. First I'd throw away the curricula and then I'd make sure the teachers were focused on what the children were really interested in. Many years ago we ran a story about a school in Latin America that was structured so that the individual learning units were always introduced when the children were interested in that subject. Math, for example, was on the agenda very early, because even five or six-year old kids played soccer and had to figure out the results. Literature and language in a more refined sense weren't of interest till they were 12 or 13 years old, and they wanted to impress the other sex in some way or other. I think it would be better to open the schools to this kind of experiment. That's going to be really important in any case: making room for experimentation.

And now for something completely different: What are your favorite tonics for reinvigorating yourselves?
Fischer: What I love doing most is having discussions with good people.

Lau: In addition to chocolate and fish? People. Exclusively people. I'd want to live where the people I like live. That's really the most important thing to me. And music.

What could a city contribute there?
Fischer: The first thing a city needs is humility and modesty. A city isn't there to entertain me. It'd be better if the city were sufficiently open to allow me to create my own spaces and thus my home place. I think a city has to have flexible structures. That doesn't mean it should be totally chaotic, but in every city there's quite a lot that's firmly entrenched anyhow.

Lau: I live in the Hamburg district of Ottensen, a one-time blue-collar district with a lot of narrow streets. For a period of ten years, part of this district underwent environmental redevelopment, so that one now finds small businesses and artisans' studios in the rear courtyards that once housed industrial installations. I like the fact that you can go everywhere on foot – and for me this constitutes an incredible quality of life, being able to walk to work. What I've been wishing for for a long time, but which unfortunately doesn't yet exist anywhere, are streets that house shops on upper floors, not at street level. If we moved the apartments down and the shops up, we'd no longer have streets whose character is determined by businesses. Instead, we'd have residential streets. And in addition, this would mean that the people would only enter those stores they really wanted to go to.

Fischer: Today this still sounds bizarre, but in ten years the Internet will be more of the kind of boulevard that could replace the display windows of today. And then what's going on in the shops will be something different than what we understand as "sales" today. The city centers will also look completely different in ten years, because the big chains will be doing a lot more of their business over the Internet and will no longer need outlet stores for quick sales in the form we know them today. Then, there will only be one flagship-store per city that shows people what kind of an enterprise the company is. By virtue of this development, rents will go down and other shops will be opened, shops for specialist clients and specialties. That may sound like a funny idea today – but in ten years? I still remember how fifteen years ago the lateral thinker Edward de Bono had an idea for a Japanese automobile manufacturer of selling cars bundled with a parking spot. Back then it was a totally abstruse thought. But today . . .?

Lau: A friend of mine has a little shop in Ottensen. He's got a twenty-year-plus lease at a fixed, low price. The only reason this shop can exists is that the rent is so low. He couldn't compete head-to-head with the big boys. But the shop is one of these places that create identity, that don't yet look like all the others.

Can one plan that?
Fischer: No. The terrible thing about all forms of city planning is that there are always people who want to tell me what I'm supposed to do somewhere. The pet phrase right now is "furnishing a city." In Germany there was a time in which pedestrian zones were built in every city. If you really want to gross yourself out sometime, go to Darmstadt and have a look at the pedestrian zone.

Lau: Back home in Ottensen we have the Mercado, a shopping center that was originally planned to be far too big. The whole district was against it, and finally a radically scaled-down version was built. Its core is a kind of market hall that houses real individual shops – there's a Japanese restaurant, a spice dealer from Pakistan and so on. Meanwhile, the approach has proven so successful that imitations are springing up everywhere.

What piece of architecture do you love most?
Fischer: That's a hard one. So now I'm going to say something unpopular: I like the feeling that the Hundertwasser-House in Vienna evokes in its residents. Once I went there to get a story, and everyone I spoke to said: "What I'm telling you now isn't generalizable, because I've got the most beautiful apartment in the whole building!" If architecture can engender this feeling, it's good architecture.

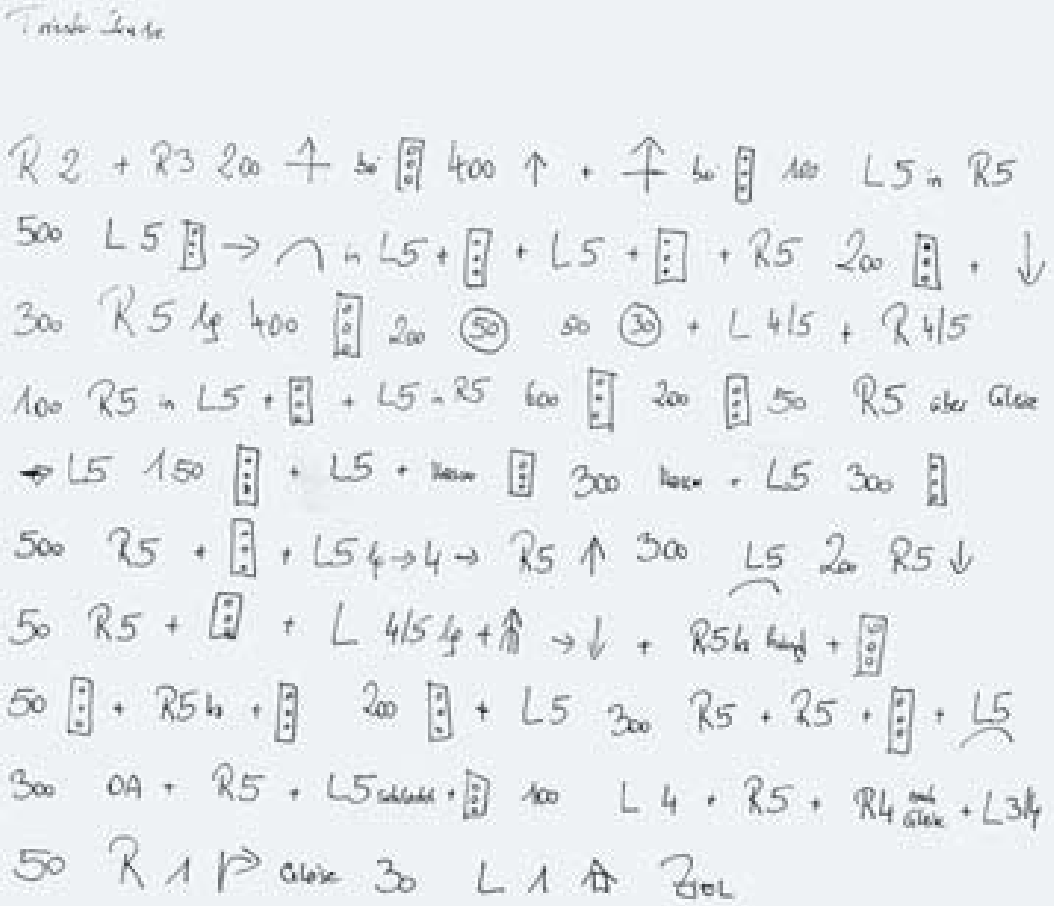
One last exercise. Could you tell us what brand eins will be focusing on in 2017?
Lau: In the December 2017 issue we're doing a preview of the future in which we predict that everything will always be getting better. We do that every year. In the final analysis everything is getting better, and that's somehow nice, isn't it?

Fischer: I haven't got the foggiest notion of what we'll be wanting to do in 2017 – and I don't want to know, either. That would take all the fun out of change. In addition, tomorrow is all too often conceived on the basis of today. Once I had an experience as a member of a Lego Jury that made a deep impression on me. Lego had the neat idea of letting university teams build the year 2020. Twenty models were exhibited – and nineteen of them showed symptoms of serious depression: The world is under water! Or: We're living underground! One single group was the exception. They thought that by 2020 all the major problems would have been solved and the people would only be concerned with making sure things were going well for them. There would be robots to help them in this, and it was these robots that this group had built. There was a robot for spiritual matters – he could be set, for example, to "Buddhism"; he had incense sticks on him, and you could have conversations with him in which he told you everything you wanted to here – a good conversational partner. Then there was a shopping robot, who had, however, fallen in love with the love robot and therefore always came back from shopping with some flowers. It was a happy, cheerful future.

In earlier times people were afraid of such machines …
Fischer: Being afraid is a favorite human occupation. Everything will be changed – for heaven's sake. But we need experiments and ideas, because basically we know nothing about the future. That's why it's important to turn our attention to the future – as a positive dream. What could be in the future is something we can paint for ourselves today in small, jolly thoughts. That's wonderful – if we make sure we stay open to it.

Rush Hour.

What you see below is a route map. The city as illegal rally course? Artists Oliver Hangl and Karin Triendl advocate a hedonism that threads a path between taboo, pace, car and urban celerity. In the process, they raise the question of urbanity and its speed, thereby connecting the referential network of urbanity with the quotidian – from the perspective of the rally driver.




Breakfast
£3.95

Cambridge.

Why go to Cambridge, England, of all places, to see the future of work? "Because," was the "Work" Team's answer, and they provided a supplementary explanation below. Complete with hypotheses, developmental models and the one or other anecdote.

The goal of our team's visit was the subject of heated discussion in the Editorial Board. Is that where the future of work will be taking place? Doesn't the aspect of education divert attention from the actual goal? We decided on Cambridge anyhow. First, because Cambridge has a lot to do with people power, with local heroes. Second, because Cambridge has a lot to do with making things possible; with intentionality, willpower and design. And third, because in Cambridge the economic process has, for the most part, been transformed into something intangible. Into a cerebral economy. If you add up first, second and third, the result will be something close to full employment. Almost devoid of friction, from the high-tech sector to the "high-touch" service industry – from the professor to the proverbial cleaning lady. To gain an understanding of the load-bearing mechanisms operating behind the scenes in Cambridge, it's enough to read up on the relevant publications.

The phenomenon has been described in exquisite detail. But to get a gut-level sense of the phenomenon, we chose the role of participatory observers. That requires sufficient time to be able to reflect. And in Cambridge, that's something one seeks sitting in front of the fireplace. We made good use of both – reflection and fireplaces. The same goes for conversations: with journalists, taxi drivers, entrepreneurs, investors, professors, city administrators, waitstaff, and other enthusiastic purveyors of that which brings the whole world to Cambridge. By the one or other not quite planned step, we managed in quite wonderful ways to avoid falling completely under the spell of the place. Keyword = rush hour. That's exactly what we got stuck in as we followed the enticing calls of the Cambridge Research Park outside the city gates and soon got a look behind the wonderfully beautiful curtain where everything was present – except research. What sticks with us?

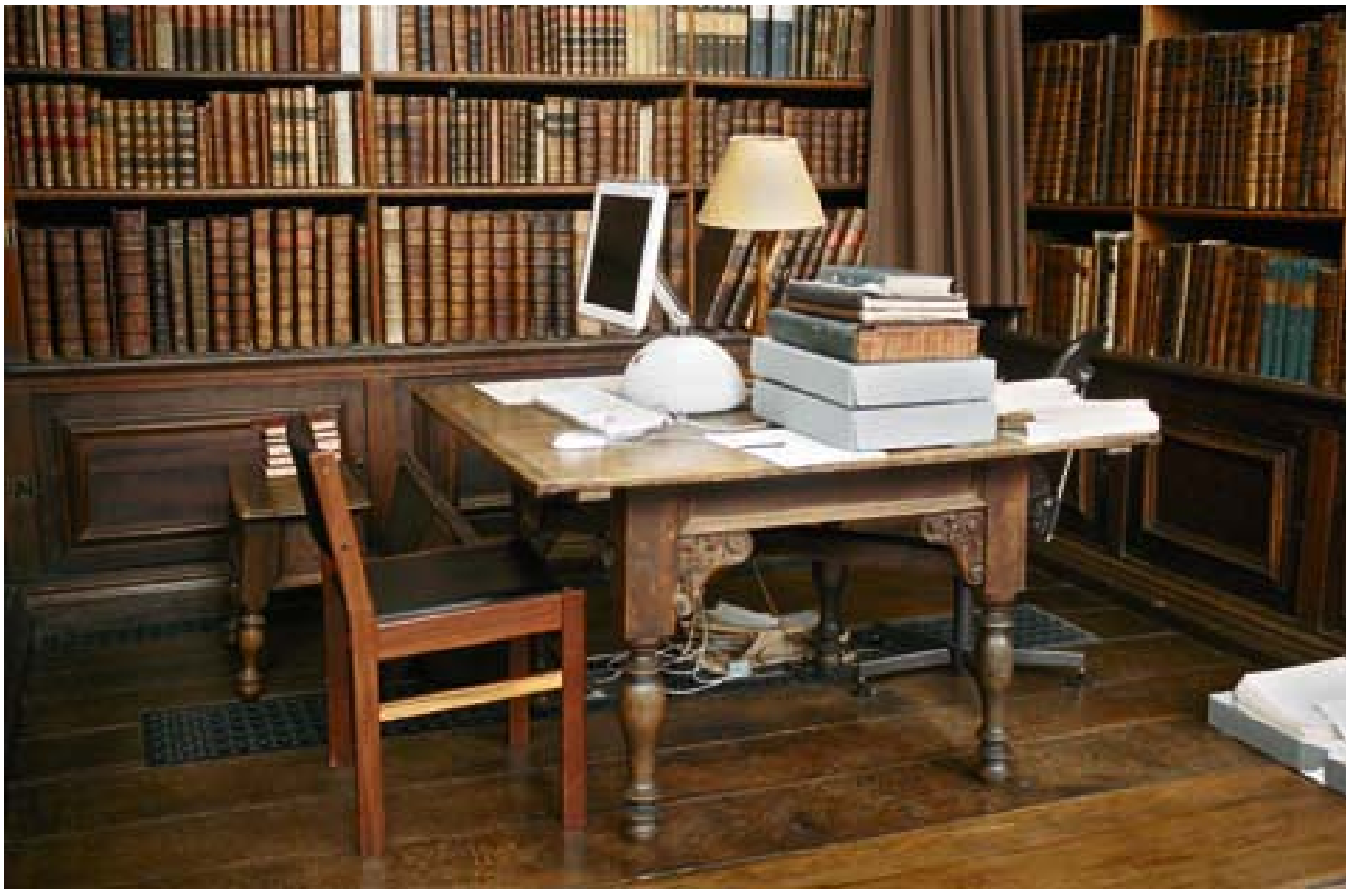
The magnificent imperturbability that resides in one of the most exciting places in the world. That might have its roots in the Enlightenment. And thus in the power of the word that in Cambridge ranks above that of the image. And we learned something else, too: Cambridge differs from other comparable places presumably by virtue of a single circumstance: The people there are firmly convinced that they are Cambridge. And this robust belief in themselves, along with all the rituals and myths that accompany it, has been functioning splendidly for the past 800 years.

On the Geography of Innovation.

Peter Tyler is a professor at the renowned MIT Cambridge Institute and Head of Research at the Institute for Land Economy. His central topic: Why some regions prosper. And why others don't. Since, after all, one place isn't the same as another. Above all not in the entrepreneurial sense. Professor Tyler calls the theory that arises from this fact "Enterprising Places" and the "Geography of Innovation." What, in his estimation, makes one place more successful than another? The right interaction of knowledge, finance, location and policy. And that the one doesn't make sense without the other. And finally, that they have to be available in different mixes and through different instruments according to the stage of development of different enterprises. In this context he's examined world-class regions from Cambridge (England) to Boston and San Diego. *www.cambridge-mit.org*

The Spirit of the Game.

For around twenty years a highly-articulated culture of entrepreneurship has flourished in Cambridge. 3,500 high-tech firms are located here, which is why the region is known ironically not as Silicon Valley, but "Silicon Fen," in reference to the swampy areas around Cambridge. Half of the companies conduct joint research projects with university partners. World-class corporations such as Samsung or Microsoft operate research labs here. And: "Entrepreneurship needs a foundation oriented to values," explains Professor Shai Vyakarnam at the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning. And so: Instruction in ethics from childhood on to provide a solid foundation; and beginning with adulthood, exemplary entrepreneurs as teachers. The result: Successful entrepreneurs teach here on a voluntary, unremunerated basis because they want to pass on their wealth of experience to the next generation. And: Advancing age doesn't dampen the entrepreneurial spirit. Some of the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce whom we meet for dinner are over 50 and still fully involved in business life. Full of ideas and possibilities. None of them is thinking about lying back in the social hammock that society provides. Why is this the case? Probably because membership in the Chamber here is based on one of the most basic principles of liberalism: voluntary association.



Temporal Sequence.

Cambridge is a dual-speed proposition. On the one hand, 800 years of tradition in the educational sector and an enchanted, Sleeping Beauty-like slumber. On the other hand, the pressure of success that the elite has imposed upon itself. At the moment, 12,000 new houses are under construction; by 2020 the city is supposed to grow by 30,000 inhabitants. But speed has its price: Cambridge is already suffering from inflated rents and occlusion of the vehicular arteries. During rush hour, the motorcade in this city of 120,000 residents inches forward at a snail's pace. The city planners are replacing the parking spots in the city center with bicycle garages and have reached an agreement with the city whereby students are forbidden to drive their cars to class. The local residents are resigned to the situation and have developed an unaffected relationship with their bikes. Instead of driving up to a upscale restaurant in their cars, they swing into the parking lot on their bikes. There they exchange their running shoes for high heels and don their ties. Three scrumptious courses and a bottle of wine later, the tie lands back in the bicycle basket for the journey home.

Light and Shadow.

A visit to the Cambridge Science Park, the great granddaddy of all research parks, reveals above all one thing: lots of green space. For every square foot of office space there are five square feet of nature. In the pond between the buildings, of which none is higher than two floors, swims a pair of ducks. Organic growth is a part of the secret of success, we hear. And that China attempted to replicate the entire 150-acre park on a scale of 1:1 and failed. The founder and operator of the Science Park is Trinity College. No surprise, given the fact that the word "scientist" originated there in 1835. In the 1970's, the park's cornerstone was laid; in the meantime 85 companies with 5,000 employees have settled there. And space is getting tight.
As the name suggests, this is the home of brainworkers. A third of the companies is active in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors, followed closely by the IT-branch. The approach works, even though there was, until recently, no common infrastructure. That's when the Trinity Centre, a conference center that also features a cafeteria and a restaurant, was built. The ideal spot to connect socially and professionally. Right next door to the Science Park is the renowned St. John's Innovation Centre. Here, small start-up companies have the opportunity to rent, at a modest price, services as modest as a postal address and a phone connection. The driving force behind St. John's is another local hero: Walter Herriot.

Four miles north of Cambridge, the Research Park awaits. An example of the fact that even in Cambridge, there are projects that don't (yet) function as planned. Private investors had the idea of locating a research park within a nature reserve. The first stage of construction has just been completed; the second phase is extremely ambitious. But already the office space in the most successful economic zone in England is standing empty. What the park lacks is a clear approach. A soul. For although the sign says "Research," on closer inspection there's little research going on. Even glossy marketing brochures that sing the praises of "an unrivalled level of parking," the unique location in a natural setting, and the highly modern conference center can't belie this fact.

The Path to the Knowledge Society.

These days, we move within an economy of ideas, of knowledge. That means that knowledge as such is proclaimed to be the non-material fuel of the economy. That may sound new, but a careful look behind the scenes in Cambridge quickly adds a qualifier to that claim.

The reason: The knowledge society has been leaving its formative traces here for the last 800 years. Presumably because since time immemorial the germ of every revolution must, at the very start, enter the realm of thought. This is the spirit in which Newton, Darwin or Wittgenstein worked away here. And, additionally, the goodly sum of (up to now) 81 Nobel Prize winners – including 29 in physics, 22 in medicine, 19 in chemistry and 7 in the economic sciences.

Even in Cambridge, however, there is one change that has transpired only recently: The speed of translating from theoretical knowledge to practical application began increasing at an above-average rate only in the last 20 years.

Balance for the Mind.

Almost in spite of all the knowledge present here, Cambridge is defined by a second aspect: the work of human hands. Because manufacturing, with its traditional industrial patterns of operation, was never able to put down roots here, the service industry and in particular the skilled trades have remained (next to the high-tech initiative) determinative of the cityscape. Presumably not least because an economy of bright minds would also like to have recourse to an appropriate infrastructure. In the process of the matching and contention of free forces, both sides have pushed forward. With a result that's economically satisfying: full employment.

Hello, Mr. Postman.

Rituals strengthen community and provide security in uncertain times. In Cambridge, rituals keep alive the myth and the centuries-old traditions of the place; and they are maintained and cherished with due gravity and self-assurance. In the spacious Great Court, the grass-covered courtyard of Trinity College, the Clock Tower strikes twelve o'clock. Once each year the students gather at noon for the Great Court Run. The test: To run around Great Court before the final bell has stopped reverberating, 43 seconds after the first bell peals.

It's said that in all these years, only one student has every succeeded. In the film *Chariots of Fire* the ritual was immortalized on the big screen, along with the melodramatic score by Vangelis that became a world-wide hit. And even the negative is celebrated as ritual in Cambridge. The day after final exam results are announced in May is known as "Suicide Sunday." As a precaution, the towers of all the Colleges in Cambridge remain closed.

What Cities Ought to Know about Work.

What will work look like in 2017? We don't have the foggiest notion. Of much greater interest to us was the question: What is required to allow work to actually originate? We didn't want to forecast trends for a certain phenomenon, but to latch onto the phenomenon itself.

Some time ago, a television crew did an experiment. They set up a traffic light along a country road. No junction, no fork in the road, just pavement and meadowland. The light shows red; the waiting line of cars grows. Five minutes, ten minutes, half an hour. What happens is – nothing. Then the reporters questioned the waiting drivers. They were angry and cursed police, politicians and traffic lights. And waited. It didn't occur to any of them just to drive on.

We recently encountered the same attitude among business students in a lecture hall in Graz. In response to the question of who saw their future in entrepreneurship, a total of 15 out of 600 students raised their hand.

The Viennese logotherapist Victor Frankl saw it this way: "In the final analysis we humans shouldn't be asking about the meaning of life. Rather, we should recognize that it's life that is asking the questions – of us."

Entrepreneurship – not as the reciprocal relationship of employer and employee, but rather as a culture of autonomy – increasingly came to dominate our thinking. And our questions. Are we spoiled because everything's there anyway? Is our innate acquisitive impulse being choked off by the impenetrable web of norms? Are our workplaces not demanding too much of us, but too little? Is it permissible for the entrepreneur to undertake something useless or artistic? Do we need, to be able to succeed, a culture of failure? Do our ethical foundations suffice to ensure that those who "undertake" something don't end up simply being "takers"? At what point should we start training for entrepreneurship? Or rather: When do we begin to unlearn entrepreneurship?

The Capacity to Query.

Why don't we simply try a different marketplace? Why are they buying us out, and not the other way around? Why are we still doing it this way? And why are such questions unsettling? Presumably because we are creatures of habit. And because, as a consequence, posing such questions threatens the status quo. Social research has established that societal development limps behind the actual change. First the bicycle, then the bike path. First the factory, then the trade union. But back to the topic of work: The future of work will increasingly depend on allowing new things to happen and seeing change as a chance. Of going consciously into supposed uncertainties. In short: On asking outrageously innovative questions. What's required to be able to do this: To turn our backs on the bourgeois biography. Because that's what cements and immobilizes things. And as a reciprocal move, we need flexible personalities that can thrive without a sense of order engraved in stone, personalities that learn to emancipate themselves from their own pasts. Connected to this, then, is, as in the case of the bicycle and the factory, a configuring of societal consciousness. In concrete terms, a society characterized by the desire to gain insight.
Or – with apologies to Schumpeter – successful innovators recognize that which others simply don't want to see.

Local Heroes.

The prospering of a particular business location, its rise to success, most frequently is connected with personalities. Presumably, because people prefer to gear themselves to other people. A small number of these orientation-providers stands at the epicenter of every economic development. They form the entrepreneurial force field of a place that has a centripetal effect. With time they turn into "local heroes" – models, teachers and investors. For those who crowd after them, they perform a "banister" function, providing a support to hold on to and a staircase to a higher level. And how far out this banister juts is a pure question of imaginative capacity. That's why a business location should ask itself one question: How can one foster this phenomenon?

The Virtual Economy.

In the post-industrial economy, the fruits of one's labor are becoming less and less tangible. What was once an object – the product – morphs into an idea, a design, the consulting process, or another form of "invisible" service. And when things get more virtual on the one hand, on the other hand we always need something solid to hold on to. That's the one thing. The other is that workplace accidents will also be morphing. In earlier times we injured ourselves on machines. Today the injury might come about through a personal conflict. Consider: Someone who throws himself fully into his job with all the strength of his personality is liable to injury that is psychological, not physical. That's the reason why, as the companion piece to increasing virtualization, the demand on the worker's immediate space grows. Increasingly, we are searching for a tangible place of retreat that reinvests us with a sense of something to hold on to. Thus, the quality of the (dwelling) place will more and more be something by which the quality of the (professional) accomplishment is measured. Thus, urban development will also be a crucial part of personal development.

That Which Restores Our Sense of Sense.

The discussion is familiar to us from the media: The middle class. That which is average, mediocre, the multitude. These days, all these things are much better served from other continents. And at lower cost and higher quality. China is taking over manufacturing. And India the service sector. What will be left for us, then, when nothing else is left? To find answers, we have to delve beneath the surface. Get to the core of objects for sale. That's where the question arises: What sense does it make? It's a matter of creating value-added in a society satiated by core benefits. A society that does not succumb to the spell of the inauthentic, the mediocre, seeing as how we have long since seen through and internalized the standard patterns of marketing. In reference to the customer, Umberto Eco sees here "the longing of the masses for exclusivity." It's a matter of creating things the production of which again affords fulfillment. Things that convey to the customer authentic values and meaning. That can only happen when spatial and cultural proximity arises between the two parties. When, for example, production still retains a sense of the client's wishes.

Life
Work
Urbanity
Education

"At every instant, there is more than the eye can see, more than the ear can hear, a setting or view waiting to be explored. Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences."

Kevin Lynch

The “Urbanity” Team.

1 | Marijana Miljkovic
Marijana Miljkovic studied journalism and currently works for the Austrian daily newspaper Der Standard. In her free time, she writes film and theater reviews, and she's also lost no time in offering her services to Radio Helsinki.

2 | Markus Zeiringer | Section Editor
Born in 1981, he studied marketing at Campus 02 in Graz, a college for economic sciences. His field of concentration: strategic positioning. The year 2005 brings him to the Institute for Brand Development in Graz. And incidentally, he's also a drummer.

3 | Martin Behr
Born in 1964, he's a qualified art historian. As an editor and correspondent of the Salzburger Nachrichten daily newspaper, and as one half of the Austrian art group G.R.A.M. (the initials of the first names of the four artists who founded it), he uses words and images to motivate people to see things from a different angle.

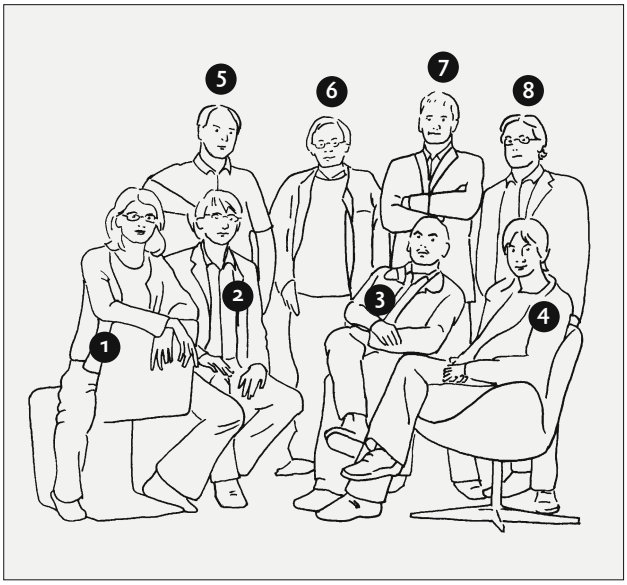
4 | Luise Kloos
Having studied education, psychology, philosophy and sociology, she opted for the artist's life. Her two children also had the chance to find their own perspectives without the help of television. One of her sons is doing research on Tibetan medicine in Berkeley; the other is studying the philosophy of Vedanta in Kerala, India.

5 | Roman Wratschko
Roman Wratschko was born in 1977. After completing his studies at the Joanneum in Graz, the designer founded the firm Edelweiss Industrial Design together with two colleagues. His passion: designing products which give people joy.

6 | Kurt Salamun
Though officially retired, still teaches philosophy at the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz. His intensive research on the existential philosopher Karl Jaspers culminated in the founding of the Austrian Karl Jaspers Society, as whose president he serves.

7 | Heinz Hagenbuchner
The head of the Graz department store Kastner & Öhler is married and has one son. In his eyes, esteem isn't some vague aspiration; it's a philosophy of life. And so, the venerable company has become, since he took over the reins, a genuine service provider.

8 | Ernst Giselbrecht
is an architect who has been practicing out of his offices in Graz since 1985. He's considered one of the main pillars of the Graz School of Architecture and designs buildings that are reminiscent of poems. Because one can somehow recite them.



"We're living in an extreme age, in which individuality is on the rise. By virtue of the multiplicity of possibilities that are at our disposal these days, there has also been a rise in disorientation. At the same time, our ancient rituals have been lost. The question now is: whether and how we can succeed in learning new rituals." Ernst Giselbrecht

"Our artificial world and our concomitant remoteness from nature contribute in the final analysis to our craving for nature. We can't simply divorce ourselves from nature, because we are a part of it." Luise Kloos

"We have to become more open, because there is more and more diversity. That may argue against continuity, but in this way people will get used to new things." Roman Wratschko

"I think that the dynamics of cityscapes will grow increasingly more important in the future." Marijana Miljkovic

“For me, urbanity is the quality of life in a city that admits change from within and innovation from without.” Kurt Salamun

“The advantage of the city center over shopping centers is clear: It’s less hectic. The word ‘flair’ is so difficult to describe, but it’s something of which a city center really partakes. In shopping centers there are no longer any edges and corners – everything has been smoothed out like a river that’s been forced into a man-made bed.” Heinz Hagenbuchner

“I don’t believe that the mission of art is to make the world a better place. But one can, in a small way, stake out a position or go against the grain. For me, art has always been the most important means for comprehending the world and for transmitting a bit of this to other people.” Martin Behr

Leopold Rosenmayr
in Conversation with Kurt Salamun

My Re-Generation.

Leopold Rosenmayr was born in 1925. He is professor emeritus of sociology and social philosophy at the University of Vienna and a member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. In 2002 the gerontologist received the Cardinal Innitzer Prize for Sociology. His research on intergenerational relations continues to make him a highly sought-after interview partner for the media.
His current book is entitled:
Aging Creatively: A Philosophy of Life.

The graying of society gives pause for reflection. The city of the future needs spaces for immediate recreational "first aid" as well as nearby recreational areas on its perimeter. In urban centers there ought to be "slow-down" zones – and not just for cars.

One of your research areas is that of intergenerational relations. How should these relations look in future?
In the past, I often used the phrase "distanced intimacy," but these days I'd prefer to expand on that a bit. There are data for Austria as a whole that indicate only slight changes in the readiness within the family to render assistance. "The grandmother's role," someone said recently, "is like the dessert of life." Often it's the case that the grandparents look to their grandchildren for a close relationship, because it's not easy to preserve a sense of closeness in fifty-year old marriages. The fact that people are living longer yields enormous possibilities for relationships that would not have been possible between a 60-year-old father and a 35-year-old daughter, but can exist between an 80-year-old father and a 55-year-old daughter. But grandparents won't be providing financial support to the grandchildren's generation so frequently. The situation will also arise that there will be many old people living alone who will have scarcely any other contacts than to their contemporaries. That will require a system of cooperation among contemporaries and the stimulation of extra-familial intergenerativity.

With respect to the concept of "urbanity," what are your associations for what's desirable?
I think urbanity is also always a process. That means that there is, basically, no such thing as a state of urbanity. The notion that "everything is in flux" could only have been formulated in an urban setting – namely by Heraclitus in Ephesus in around 500 B.C. Today more than ever, we have to let citizens decide on what should happen, and we must let citizens participate in the design process. There must be a process that includes citizen participation, both in formulating planning ideas and fleshing out the goals. Just take a look out the window towards the Wiedner Hauptstrasse (in Vienna). Do you see that red object masquerading as a semi-circular bench? Right at its center, there's a freshly-planted tree. That used to be a green space that was in pretty poor condition. The green space has disappeared, and they put in a concrete bench that's not used at all and that, three days ago, was painted red. That's the case for the whole street here. All the green space – which was needed, by the way – was eliminated. There was absolutely no dialogue with the residents.

If someone sets out to think a new city, to what kind of dangers does he expose himself?
The challenge is to connect social goals with cultural ones. Only an integrative concept such as this has a chance. This connection is quite crucial, for everything that is seen as being "solely" cultural and "solely" aesthetic won't garner the necessary support and will be in danger of being made into a museum piece. And this musealization is, even though the intention is to preserve something, a process by which something is dissolved and eliminated. It's a process that is increasingly linked with specific economic interests: And these then come to dominate the foreground.

To what extent is, in your opinion, urbanity connected with ecology?
To a very decisive extent, these days increasingly, and for sociological reasons as well. In the city of Vienna, the percentage of people over eighty will double in the next forty to fifty years. It's important to create outlying but easy-to-reach recreational areas, but also places for immediate recreation in the sense of recreational "first aid." Look out the kitchen window! No matter when you come, there's always somebody sitting on this park bench, even in winter. You see how beaten down that grassy area down there is. Now, in May, it shouldn't look so dreary. Because that's where people, city people, come to spend some time and catch their breath. Ecology should be a tool to help give that breath a psychological and physiological boost.

If parents let their kids play on the grass, then the lawn is ruined – that's how it is. And then we'd be back at the topic of intergenerational relations …
… One can and should introduce mixed systems. Because we're moving towards a decisive, culturally transforming growth in the older population. And it's important as well to consider the needs and interests of those in the older and oldest population groups who are living alone. In Austria, the number of "60-year-old-plus" singles will double within forty years. A city has to ensure that there are programs and spaces for bringing people together or allowing them to get together, because more and more people will be living alone. The increase in single-person households really needs to be reflected in urban design.

So that means better organization would be necessary.
You know, it's not really necessary to organize things to the nth degree, but it is important to take changing needs into account. For one thing, that means expanding possibilities for older people to get together, and not arranging park benches solely with the pedestrian thoroughfare and bike path in mind, the way they've done it down there in the park. For me it would be quite important, for example, to have areas that provide a certain calming effect. It's essential for there to be room in a city – spaces – for deceleration and calming. In part they ought to create areas where vehicular traffic is prohibited.
We have to put an end to the tyranny of motor vehicles. Reducing temporal pressure in general appears to me to be the central precept for a humane city. After all, time pressure and stress come about wherever achievement and success dominate so strongly – at the supermarket, at the bank teller's window, in a traffic jam. If they're not totally choked off by what surrounds them, natural enclaves as temporary places of refuge possess the greatest importance for deceleration and as the incarnation of our relationship to the environment. And what's more, they stimulate us – and this is important for all age groups – to undertake physical exercise.

If one puts too much emphasis on the perspective of aging, there might be a risk that investors will say: "That's an incredibly beautiful city, but I'd move there only after I've retired."
The city has to offer a mix. There just has to be very careful consideration of the question whether one wants to attract a particular industry and where it would be located. The proportions of the mix always have to be harmonized with the current state of technology and economic development. The city should be a city for all age groups, in no either way just a "retirement community" or a "consumers' city."

What are the effects of globalization on city development?
Hegel's term for global development was "Weltgeist," the "world-spirit." And it's a matter of encountering this spirit with one's own individual cunning. What's required is the cunning of individual reason that is willing to help mold things. That means not flinging oneself frontally against an irreversible trend, but to shape this trend. I'm the child of a petit-bourgeois family from the Favoriten district of Vienna, born in the third decade of the twentieth century. When my grandmother came to Vienna from Moravia in 1880, Czech was the mother tongue of one third of that Tenth District. If you go to Favoriten today, as I do all the time, a good third of the residents speak Bosnian, Turkish, and to a smaller extent African and East Asian languages as well. There is a globalized enclave in Vienna that no sociologist has yet seen fit to examine. For example, there are lawyers, the sons of immigrants who studied law and became lawyers. And now their clients are foreigners. There's a little bit of the character of the Bronx in New York maybe fifty years ago. But those who immigrate today have totally different notions of integration. Their goal is not necessarily to become integrated. When I was teaching at Fordham University in New York City over fifty years ago, the strong willingness to integrate on the part of various ethnic groups and social strata was palpable every day. In the Tenth District of Vienna this willingness to integrate doesn't exist now, or if it does, then only partially. In Austria or Europe we don't offer immigrants any ideal to identify with, nor even the ideal of identifying with us in general. So what does globalization mean, then? It's an external form of globality that's constituting itself in Europe and part of whose baggage is permanent ghettos.

How might that look in future?
We have to offer those who are immigrating here a lot more help in integrating. Alternatively, we need to woo them, taking pains ourselves not to take any "flight or fight behavior" personally. I've always believed that there are chances for taking common action. I have greatly admired the fact that , both in Africa and here in Europe, European and African children and young people who can scarcely communicate through language, find common ground through sports. Reciprocal initiatives for "finding each other" need to be supported, singled out for praise, introduced to the public in a targeted way, and made attractive to the ghettoizing groups. But naturally what's really required goes far beyond that.

What will change the most for young people in the next fifteen years?
Children and young people are growing up as individuals, mostly as the only child in their family. They're growing up in front of the television screen and later with computer games. These days we are already noticing a deficit in socialization and in social competence in children and young people. The silent consumption of television leads to a socially conditioned speechlessness, to social aphasia. The children can't form complete sentences and speak a kind of reduced language, infused with words they have picked up from television. They grow up in an individually isolated feedback relationship to a mechanized system of entertainment that offers strong emotional stimuli. In school, they have great difficulty in working in groups and teams. That means we need teachers to support and mentor them, a strengthening of our pedagogical offerings. The "one child" system means that the sibling group, too, has been reduced to a marginal phenomenon. In the so-called "beanstalk family" – four generations alive at once, but hardly any brothers or sisters, aunts, uncles, or cousins – the sibling groups are missing at multiple levels. That results in more pressure on the only child. If one doesn't try to compensate for this, the youthful individualist will try to prove himself or herself through competitiveness, and in a very pronounced way. That's already a predisposition to capitalist competitiveness, to a sense of economic survival of the fittest. Some decades back, there still existed – in the family and in the schools and clubs – support and mutual feedback systems that referred to systems of values and norms which may certainly have also had their questionable aspects, but which offered orientation.

Does so-called "event culture" contribute to city life in any way?
"Events," as they are now called even in German, are often nothing more than transposed television shows masquerading as real-life experiences. Here, the virtual world pre-scribes – in the double sense of "writing in advance" and "mandating" – the forms that real life should assume. Nevertheless, the desire and need for authentic cultural productions by real people seem not to have been choked off completely.

Do such events have anything in common with rituals?
Events should also be understood as substitutes for those rituals that are inherent in institutions like churches. Event life won't ever completely recede from our existence. That's because ritualized and coherently structured cultic practices are dropping away. In Germany, twenty or twenty-five percent of the population no longer knows what Easter really means. Event culture is a substitute for traditions with their quite well-defined regularities. For the coming generations, this will be a major challenge. How can people succeed in continually becoming aware of and achieving their values, without having the institutional "backstop" or integration that rituals provide?

So in other words bonding between human beings will continue to decrease?
Spirituality is probably the prerequisite for ongoing bonding, for a fulfilled and fulfilling life of sense and the senses. For this to happen, we probably need to be at home in convictions. As an example, you or I, as a Protestant or Catholic, with our own religious convictions, might try out Yoga or Zen in order to infuse our lives with certain additional avenues of response. On the whole, you know, the tradition these days is to just pick individual elements, more or less arbitrarily, from here or there in order to construct one's spirituality. Arbitrariness would be, in the final analysis, the death-knell of spirituality. There must be links to personal development and with identity anchors that one has acquired at some point. The legitimacy of personal bonds must arise from within us. Such bonds are the prerequisites for a certain amount of continuity. Flexibility alone isn't the source of happiness.

A Senior Manager in the Energy Sector
in Conversation with Roman Wratschko

We Have this Craving for Mobility.

To be a senior manager in the energy industry is possibly not as easy as we might have imagined. We gladly comply with the request to preserve our interviewee's anonymity. This much we can say: He's in his forties and the father of two children, and he's also had the opportunity to see beyond the borders of Austria. And so learned how to sharpen his eye for global developments.

We need our cars so much that price hikes leave us cold. Public transit is mostly a last resort. Instead of relocating, we commute daily. A high-ranking manager in the energy sector warns against such short-sightedness.

What'll be going into your car fifteen years from now?
Diesel. At that point we won't yet be in a position to use alternative forms of energy. That's a result of our ambivalent relationship to alternative energies. Wind-powered generators, for example, have been proven to be uneconomical everywhere except a few coastal areas. Despite this, they receive such enormous financial subsidies that it's a good deal for any entrepreneur to put them up. If we at least developed this technology further, that would be a step in the right direction. But it's not being done. At the moment we're fostering alternative energies with a sprinkling-can approach – a little bit of everything. It's also a matter of the art of saying "No" – of deciding in favor of a single form of energy that will be further developed in a serious way. If we keep on doing what we've been doing, then I don't believe that we'll succeed in finding other forms of energy or better solutions. The lobbying by existing interests is also responsible for this – lobbying that quite consciously creates cravings.

What, in your opinion, should no longer exist in fifteen years?
My profession requires me to be behind the wheel a lot. So, as someone affected by truck traffic, my wish would be that the transportation of freight migrate from the highway to the railway. With respect to the number of individual drivers and the traffic they produce, I'm skeptical that there will be a reduction here. All one has to do is take a look at Eastern Europe. It's already totally insane. According to prognoses, traffic density there will have soon reached our levels. All of Eastern Europe is developing at blinding speed; economic growth there is hitting levels of up to eight percent. That might be good for the country in question, but it's a total mystery to me how they're going to get a handle on the sheer volume of traffic. I hope somebody over there is thinking about the problem.

How could the growing problem of urban traffic be solved?
Cities will keep cars outside city limits – look at the gentle attempts in this direction in London. They have to do this, because otherwise they'll collapse under the weight of traffic. This also impacts the quality of urban life. In both Bolzano and Merano, I've experienced a total prohibition of vehicular traffic due to a smog alert. While the ban was in effect, the air pollution readings doubled and tripled. The reason was that all the cars that weren't allowed inside the city were driving around aimlessly on its outskirts. As a result, Bolzano turned into a giant traffic circle. How can we solve the problem of private automobiles? In my opinion, by hitting the drivers' pocketbooks. Already everybody's moaning about gas prices; everybody knows that to buy and maintain a car costs a fortune, but everybody's got one anyhow. People seem incapable of learning anything here. We'd have to make cars a lot less attractive and double the price of gas; then maybe something would happen. A price hike of ten percent doesn't make a lot of sense as a measure to curb demand. We have this craving for mobility.

Do you think the gas stations of the future will become meeting places, as is the case with shopping malls?
I don't think so, but naturally there's a very fierce discussion going on about the functions of a gas station. Certainly it depends on where it is. On the A1 autobahn in Losdorf there is a gas station right on the highway, but it's not your usual autobahn service area. They have a fantastic shop, so travelers don't just fill up their cars: They also eat and shop there. I know gas stations near Graz where there's hardly any gas sold. They've already taken over the function of convenience stores, especially on Sundays. I think a gas station is more likely to become the regular meeting place of the immobile population that lives in its vicinity. That's a kind of special subculture that's excluded from the increasing general mobility. Eastern Europe looks completely different in this regard, however. There, people like to invite each other for a meal at a gas station, and they even make reservations. Entire wedding receptions are held there. Gas stations are seen as magnificent structures that gleam and glow

by night. The large corporations, naturally enough, see to it that this magical sense is maintained, and they take on the local pubs which then don't have much of a chance. But as Eastern Europe becomes increasingly Westernized, this anomalous perception will also wane.

What do you think you personally can do to make city life positive?
To consciously use what a city offers. It would be absolutely desirable to preserve the city cores, and I can only do this by using the central city myself – no matter whether I'm going to a pub or an outdoor swimming pool, or if I'm shopping in the pedestrian zone or taking a walk or maybe going out to a nearby recreation area. By the way, an active city life also means to me that I leave my car behind and take advantage of public transit. It's not the emissions that bother me so much here, but if I don't use public transit, then someday it won't exist any more. And then the situation will be even worse than it is now.

In your opinion, which countries are pursuing a model policy for the future?
From what I can see, we're talking about a very limited number – in particular those who can afford it most easily. If you divide gross national income by population, Kuwait would certainly be an extreme example.
The financial cares of the average Kuwaiti are over the moment he's born. He has the opportunity for a first-class education, for example in the United States, maybe even at Harvard. It's all financed by the government, because, for one thing, the government has the necessary funds, and for another, domestic harmony is most easily produced through money. And third, Kuwait is looking ahead: Fifty years ago they had a desert, and now they've got money. And they know that fifty years down the road they'll have desert again if they don't do something to prevent it.

So a policy for the future has to do primarily with sustainability?
Yes, and with longevity. I'm saying this on the basis of a personal need: Every two years, I'm forced to learn how to use a new mobile phone that has at least three times the functions of the old one. In my job I'm constantly being forced to orient myself anew. Given the fact there's so much change, I'm happy whenever a certain part of my surroundings remains stable. But that's all relative. We sit here and complain, and at the same time a sixty-year-old somewhere in the U.S. moves to a different city without batting an eyelash. I commute back and forth myself. I could have long since moved to the city in which I'm employed, but I don't waste a moment thinking about it.

Why not?
Large metropolitan areas are too unmanageable and impractical for me. In order to get from A to B, one needs an hour. A lot of people don't get upset about this any more at all. For me it would be something horrible, a loss of quality of life. On the other hand, I don't want to live somewhere out in the country, either. I miss the infrastructure. But I enjoy being out in nature; I like bike-riding. Urban free spaces are important, too. In many cities there are centrally-located free spaces that are used intensively as recreational areas. On the weekend there's a bunch of people there, in the winter you can see excited kids zipping down a hill on skis or sleds. I think there's also a need to have a place where one can sit down and read a book, or play soccer, just be active. I don't mean going to a real soccer pitch, but a meadow where you can bang two wooden stakes into the ground and just play pick-up soccer, like we did when we were kids. In my opinion there's a great demand for open spaces like this.

Living on Holy Turf.

The "Urbanity" Team went looking for identity.
Markus Zeiringer discovered a form of it in London.
In an empty soccer stadium with a past.

What a church is to churchgoers, the soccer stadium is to soccer fans. At a time when churches are looking for members, soccer clubs that are running out of space are building bigger and bigger sites for adulation. As was also the case in London. In the summer of 2006, the venerable Arsenal Football Club moved out of its old home, the august Highbury Stadium, and into the larger Emirates Stadium, scarcely five minutes away on foot. Left behind was an empty stadium full of precious emotions and memories of all those great victories, unforgettable goals, and bitter defeats. To tear down the stadium they had begun using in 1913 would thus have been unthinkable. And so the idea was hatched to play Highbury in a new way, to transform it into a residential area. The walls were left standing and the stands are being rebuilt, turned into luxury apartments and lofts. Where, over the decades, twenty-two players tore after the ball, in future the residents will be able to sit on the benches in the park designed by landscape architect Christopher Bradley-Hole. The lion's share of apartments was sold before the planning phase was even completed. At prices starting at 425,000 Euros. Not only the dyed-in-the-wool Arsenal fans seem to be among the buyers, for the builders are counting on a hefty appreciation in value after the condos are completed. The real estate professionals' prophecies of doom at the supposedly inordinately high prices devoid of rational basis, found, for the most part, absolutely no resonance.

But what does that mean: "rational"? The special thing about "The Stadium – Highbury Square" is its unique history. Elsewhere it takes time for home-buyers to identify with new houses, but here the last 93 years of Arsenal FC engendered such a robust myth that any risk of a failed investment is simply forgotten. What could be more beautiful than to dwell in the "Holy of Holies?" The underground garage and swimming pool are just icing on the cake. But if you think you've found a formula for successful real-estate projects, think again. Just as Arsenal supporters can't be magically transformed into Tottenham fans, these kinds of idiosyncratic construction projects can't just be cloned. The whole, after all, is indeed more than the sum of its parts. Speaking of which: If the price for a condominium seems too high after all, you can console yourself by just buying a piece of the turf: a one-foot-square piece of history goes for the comparatively reasonable price of 37 Euros.

Silvia, a Homeless Person
in Conversation with Heinz Hagenbuchner

A Wealth of Ideas.

For the past two years, Silvia has been living in the Women's Shelter. An upgrading course at the Institute for Career Advancement is supposed to help her get a job. Her previous apprenticeship as a specialist merchandiser in paints didn't bring the hoped-for results in this regard, and wait-staff jobs didn't bring in enough money. In her free time she draws and acts in theater. That gives her the possibility of dealing more productively with her situation. Both her face and her real name remain anonymous.

More nature, more light, more possibilities to withdraw and be by oneself, but also to interact with neighbors. And improved public transportation. Silvia has definite ideas of what quality of life means, and she also knows what it's like to have to do without it.

If you think about the future, what pops into your mind?
I hope that in the future, I'll have work, preferably a full-time job. But those jobs are rarely offered to women. I recently had a job interview, and for one full-time position there were eighty applicants. Because they're not offering full-time positions any more, just apprenticeships. And if the contract employment agency doesn't need you any more and doesn't have any work, it just lets you go.

So that work is an especially important topic to you …
And affordable accommodation. In the last few years I think the cost of living has gone up 200 to 300 percent. In the past, you went grocery shopping with 100 Shillings [around 7.25 Euros at today's rates], and you came back with two bulging bags, including one or two delicacies. Today you pay 50 Euros just to do your wash. Electricity, rent and associated costs are so expensive that as a person living alone, you can't afford them. Wages are so low that you have to go to the Social Benefits Office even though you're working, so you can pay for rent and food.

Where would you like to live if money weren't an issue?
My dream? I'd win big at Lotto and would breed horses at the seashore, where it's sunny and warm all year long.

You wouldn't stay in the city?
No. Because of the air quality I have chronic lung problems. Since I was a girl. If I could, I'd just go to the seashore, where I'd have lot and lots of space, and horses. I'd lead a relaxed life.

And if you had to make do without a Lotto win?
Then I'd like to live on the outskirts of the city, in a nice, roomy apartment. Or in a house, that would be even better. Maybe in an old farmhouse. Nature is important to me. In Graz-Wetzelsdorf, for example, there are buildings that aren't so large and high, and all of them have a little front yard that you can use. There's almost a sense of being part of a family, almost like row houses. They're old buildings, more like single-family houses or duplexes. Not anonymous massive concrete fortresses. Maybe you can get to know your neighbors. I'd like a bit more community. And I'd also need access to public transit. The problem is that I don't have a car or even a driver's license. And I can't get a driver's license, either, on account of my eye problems. On the edge of the city I also have the advantage of still being able to get somewhere on foot. Way out in the country it's a considerable hike, after all.

What would an ideal spot in the city look like, then?
Nice and quiet, without cars and buses thundering past. Maybe a nice yard, lots of green, a peaceful location, good air quality, and with good infrastructure. In other words, with shops nearby. Maybe a few green spots, so you're not completely cut off from nature. It hurts me when I see places that have been just covered with concrete, ugly deserts of concrete. And for the kids there really has to be a place where they're allowed to play and there aren't signs all over saying this is verboten and that is verboten. A place for people and animals.

Did you grow up in the city or the country?
In the city.

Did the place where you grew up have any influence on your current situation?
No, I don't think so. Every human being has his own personal fate, and you can't influence it. Someone who's well-off today can land here (the Women's Shelter) tomorrow. And that has nothing to do with where you grow up. All you have to do is take a look at the situation of the non-Austrians living here in the city. Naturally social tensions can arise there since they're all forced into "their" part of the city. In educational terms, too, there should be a good mixing of social strata etc. In any case we'd need more teachers and smaller classes. It starts with the kids; they're open to everything

What are the criteria you use in picking a place where you can meet friends?
That you can just sit together comfortably and cozily. That you can have a conversation; that the wait-staff are also friendly, so they don't give you a dirty look if you make a joke. That's a really nice thing about the "Roseggercafe." When the owner knows I'm coming with my friends, then he gives us a room at the back where we can put the tables together. If one of us is having a birthday, he makes sure there are sandwiches or a birthday cake. It's all very personal.

So it hinges on being a place that offers a kind of refuge?
That's it. And where we can have a good gossip.

Are young people that communicative any more?
The kids just get parked in front of the television or the computer, and they really don't get taken seriously any more. There's no longer any time really just to talk to each other. Because everybody's got their own stress. The kids or young people go their own ways as they see fit. But a conversation, an exchange of ideas between the generations, no longer takes place.

Is linguistic competence decisive for individual success?
Yes, for sure. And that's also why it's so important to talk a lot with children and encourage them to read. But in order to do this, parents would have to take the time – and have the time – that means not having to work multiple jobs at the same time just to make ends meet.

Let's say you were the mayor of a city. What would be the three most important things that you'd do immediately to create the ideal city?
First of all, everything that's part of the social portfolio. Including housing. I'd facilitate affordable housing and give increased support to low-income people. Secondly, I'd radically expand public transit, make it more attractive and above all more affordable. A subway would be good. And third, I'd create jobs that are in the city and that you can get to easily. Work and child care – they go together, and lots of things need to change there.

You have really nice things to say about children. Is having children among your set of personal wishes?
My health doesn't allow it, but I like to take care of kids whenever someone asks me to.

How do you see the role of women in fifteen years' time?
I fear there will be more mothers bringing up their children alone, if they even have children at all, given the economic situation. And there, I have to say I'm not all that optimistic right now. Because jobs are disappearing, and there are problems with the availability of child care. And above all for women, the job market is bad right now in any case. So there are probably going to be even more atypical employment situations like limited-term or project-specific contracts, trivial jobs or, in the best case, part-time work. As a part-time employee you can't really live, you know, because you don't even see your income any more. You just pass it on to pay for rent and utilities. But that's not yet making a living; you don't have a crust of bread, you've got nothing. And if you have kids, there's nothing at all left over for them.

How important is art to you?
I'm active in theater. Through the process of acting, you come across of a lot of things. If you're at all a part of the artistic scene, or if you're at all interested in culture, you're more open, you're more likely to listen to people, to approach others.

What's your favorite spot and why?
My meditation spot, the Jakob-Lorber-Spring in the North of Graz. Almost nobody knows it. It's really a place where peace and love are present. You go down a winding path, and even in the process of going down there, lots of burdens simply slip off you. It's as if you're going into a different world. There's water there, very energizing, you can really meditate in peace. I've had some incredible experiences there. Once I was there just meditating, and someone comes along and gives me a pyramid made of rock crystal, just gives it to me as a present.

What's your sense of the color of the present and the future?
The future is green in any case: the hope that things will get better. The present is red, the color of the earth. The chakras say that red characterizes the root chakra. That's where you're standing, where you happen to be. And green is the heart chakra, that which you hope for, whatever your wishes happen to be.

Shared Space – An Appeal to Reason.

The Dutch transportation planner Hans Monderman writes about an approach to transportation he has developed that views the street, drivers and riders – and their responsibility for themselves – as part of a total constellation. And the whole thing without traffic signs.

During the last few decades, the politics and policies of public spaces were defined, for the most part, in terms of traffic, including related goals such as facilitating traffic flow and increasing traffic safety. Too frequently this happened at the cost of the quality of our environment and living space. The concept of "Shared Space" is a plea to shape public space so as to create an equilibrium among traffic, opportunities to stop and linger, and all the other spatial functions. Public space is the mirror and window of our society. Here we experience and demonstrate who we are, how we treat each other, and what is important to us. People should find an environment within which they can move freely. Places that invite one to tarry should not be configured as traffic spaces, but rather as spaces for people, in which living and experiencing – in German "Leben und Erleben" – have first priority.

The "Shared Space" is a "people space" in which traffic and infrastructure are integrated into the spatial concept and thus reflect and conform to the local or regional context. We have to assume that human behavior, including behavior in the context of traffic, is influenced much more by the ambience of a place or region – in other words by the human world – than it is by prescriptions and proscriptions. There is a widely-held view that we're well advised to segregate people and traffic from each other. But the very cities that have done this have the biggest problems with traffic safety, because those who are not actually supposed to "run into" each other on the street in fact repeatedly do just that.

A highly visible school with kids playing out front has a much stronger effect on the behavior and speed of drivers than a traffic sign that indicates "children crossing" when there are no kids in sight. That's why everything that takes place in our shared lives should also be visible. Our streets mustn't be anonymous places devoid of meaning, but on the contrary, places that we all use and for which we are all responsible. There is no need for traffic signs. The only things that remain in the "Shared Space" are the rules to drive on the right side of the road and that cars coming from the right have the right of way. Where the traffic signs would normally be, we rely on interpersonal forms of communication. In place of traffic rules, we have social rules. That, too, is a bit strange at first, but people quickly sense that they feel much better in an environment without traffic signs, stop lights and traffic islands. People make eye contact with each other and give each other signals. Drivers then automatically drive more slowly. The success of this approach lies in the details. Just by the choice of materials – for example the kind and color of the pavement – one can emphasize the qualities of the environment. Even the street lighting plays a role.

A plethora of rules has infantilized citizens and taken away their ability to make their own decisions. In the praxis of "Shared Space," it becomes evident that participants are again empowered to make their own ethical decisions. What one needs to make people aware of their own responsibilities again is a feeling of risk. With the "Shared Space" approach, we consciously appeal to a certain sense of insecurity that increases the actual security. We're more alert and communicate more with each other.

Franz Happ
in Conversation with Luise Kloos

From Edible to Enjoyable.

After many years as lead chef at Do & Co, Franz Happ decided to go it alone. If, in the past, he had cooked for thousands of air travelers and "event" guests, now it's for a limited number of cafeteria-phobic lunch-eaters who have opted for conscious nourishment at their workplace. Each day, in a small kitchen in the heart of Vienna, Franz Happ creates new menus that reflect his ideas of what desirable food should be and do.

Franz Happ is a proponent of high-quality food. Educating people to eat healthily has to start as early as kindergarten and can't be restricted to the parental home. The reason: Cooking is more than just food preparation. His vision: a vegetable garden for every household.

How has your profession changed since you were trained?
Since my training, a lot has changed. One central point is the range of available ingredients. These days you can get everything all year round. When I began my apprenticeship in 1979, one had to take the season into account. If you wanted to do asparagus, then it had to be April or May. These days it's just as easy to buy asparagus in December, the only thing is, then it's coming from Chile. And the training for chefs has itself changed. Back then we did our own deboning. Almost nobody does that any more. Today one gets one's schnitzel pre-sliced. And pre-weighed. These days, the apprentice chef no longer even knows that leg of pork comes from a pig. That may sound like an exaggeration, but a lot of them really don't know that it's part of a whole animal and is then deboned. Young people are used to opening a can and then further processing its contents.

How will it look in twenty years, then?
I'm an optimist and tell myself that people have to relearn how to recognize quality. People have to start eating right again and stop just consuming junk food. I go to McDonald's, too, and eat pizza, but I don't live off it. I'm a proponent of quality. These days everything has to get done more quickly and easily. Out of the package, into the microwave, and done!

Will customers be more insistent about this kind of quality in the future?
I'm convinced they will. Many of my customers are mothers, and they say that the food that's served in their children's schools isn't good at all.

Can one educate people to eat healthily?
I think it's very important that the whole process begin at a very young age. In the kindergartens the children get their lunches packed in plastic. A lady with two children in kindergarten told me that her kids regularly complain about the food there. Naturally every child knows what tastes good and what doesn't. Food should be prepared in a more natural way again, and not as part of an industrial process. It's often the case these days that both parents work. So who's going to come home in the evening and do the cooking? So they order in pizza, or take something out of the deep freeze, and the whole family is taken care of. For a time I did a self-experiment with industrially-prepared foods. I bought them and tried them out. There are things that are okay and things one can't eat.

You also taught for a time.
True – one year in a first-class hotel school, so I was teaching young people fifteen or sixteen years old. Based on my own experience, including internationally, I tried to tackle things a bit differently. I slowly brought them in the direction of international cuisine so that they could taste certain characteristic things: spices, herbs and the like. Young people have to really "grasp" the ingredients they're working with. It wasn't just a quick fry-up, but conscious cooking. And I think we need to use the same method to bring children and young people back to eating right.

Do you think organic foods will be the only things sold in future?
I'm pretty sure that will be the case. The question is only where something comes from. Everybody puts "organic" on the label, but if you read the reports about the amounts of artificial fertilizer that are being used, then I have to ask myself what "organic" is supposed to mean.

What will a kitchen look like twenty years from now?
We won't do without kitchens entirely, but they'll be smaller. Maybe a microwave, a hotplate to fry something up on, a bit of cutlery, and that's it. And a big fridge – that'll be required. It's often the case today, by the way, that for men, cooking is more fun than it is for women.

What kinds of culinary offerings does a city absolutely need, in your opinion?
I miss traditional Austrian cooking somewhat. For the last little while, many people have been of a mind that if they have Wok & Co. on their menu, then they're "in." These days everything has to happen as quickly as possible. That means I take a piece of meat, fry it, slap it on a plate, and pour a sauce over it. But that's not cooking, it's just basic food preparation. There's a pizzeria or a kebab-stand on every corner, but a place you can go to and get good food – that's something you don't see as frequently.

You're saying that in twenty years typical Austrian cuisine will cease to exist?
No, I think we'll still have Austrian cuisine. Thank God there are individualists who will ensure that the tradition doesn't die out. But the "multi-culty" trend doesn't extend just to food, you know. Different cultures blend in other areas as well, because today everybody can be anywhere and everywhere in a flash.

You grew up in the country and now live in Vienna. Do you miss anything?
By now I've lived longer in Vienna than I did in the Tyrol. And I've also been out and about worldwide, and basically there's no place I'd rather live than Vienna. For me Vienna is an incredibly wonderful city. At the moment I can't think of anything I'm lacking. Another reason why I feel so good here in Vienna is the fact that it's big, but still manageable. There are all kinds of entertainment possibilities and also a lot of green space. And the beautiful thing is, if you really want to get out of the city, then you're out in the country relatively quickly.

What kinds of things would a neighborhood or district have to offer for you to want to live there?
If you start with residential buildings, then it would have to be a place in which people feel good. Because they also have their little garden or yard there, their roof-top terrace, or a balcony. Everyone should have their little piece of green space, their garden, somewhere. Otherwise, I think, a good infrastructure is very important, so that the most important things are available at a reasonable distance. A post office, a drug store, a dry cleaner's, a grocery store and so forth. Not a giant shopping center where you have to trot through the halls for hours on end, but a place where I can buy everything I need for my daily requirements. And then naturally something for one's physical well-being. A nice little restaurant where I can go in the evening, eat and drink well, and talk with friends in a pleasant setting.

Building for the Arts Section.

Must one be able to put (good) architecture to (good) use? A feature by journalist Karin Tschavgova, editor of the jumpsite Architekturportals.gat.st.

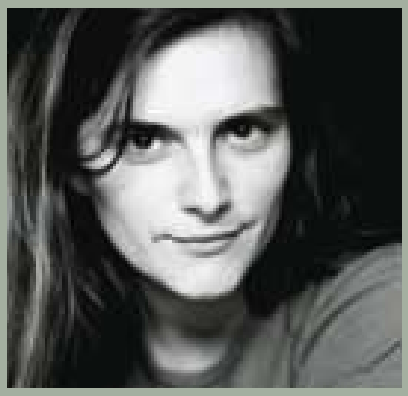
When you meet the owner of the extraordinary house whose picture filled the architecture pages, the first thing you do is congratulate the lucky guy. And when asked if you know this highly-praised work first-hand, you give the obvious answer: No. But, you say, you know it from publications; and you find the prize-winning edifice fantastic. And sometimes you add that you admire the man's audacity. Those who commission such works, who are aware of their role as preservers and defenders of architecture, especially in the boonies, are far too rare, you continue admiringly. The recipient of such praise smiles a constrained smile – he knows better than anyone and all too well where his openness to contemporary architecture and his confidence in an unproven architectural team has led.

What has happened? Mr. X has had a spot of bad luck. He fell into the hands of architects who responded to his wish for extraordinary quality with a piece of architecture that was picture perfect – in the hope that they would thereby land in the architectural Hall of Fame. That would have been legitimate, if Mr. X had also gotten what he wanted: a house that was both unique in appearance and fully functional. The media's perception and evaluation of the project on the one hand, and its "actual value" to the owner and user on the other hand, diverge widely. Mr. X's disappointment is an individual matter, but it's not an isolated example, as architectural history shows. Mies van der Rohe's "Farnsworth House" met with global acclaim as the most radical glass house ever built and thus became the most famous icon of modernity. His client, however, complained out loud as well as in court, claiming that the house, by virtue of its transparency, was uninhabitable, couldn't be heated, and just didn't work. The head office of the Hypo-Alpe-Adria Bank in Klagenfurt, designed by Thom Mayne, is an edifice that oscillates between sculpture and a moving spatial envelope, lending clear expression to the corporation's dynamic of expansion. What was scarcely mentioned, however, was the fact that the north-facing offices don't get enough light, which diminishes the quality of their workplace. In an age of icons and brands, the image counts for more than does the thing behind it. Buildings are constructed with a view to their visual effect, and they are sold with virtual diagrams that depict an ideal. Not infrequently, houses designed by architects lead a double life. On the one hand, they have an actual, function-dependent "daily life" with weaknesses and deficiencies; and they get occupied and changed – not always in keeping with their inventor's wishes. And on the other hand, publications highlight them as immaculate and fresh cultural icons, devoid of any trace of daily use and aging, often even without furniture. Anything troublesome in their ambit is masked out of the picture – and that also goes for anything that didn't work out.

Nothing harmonizes less well with such selective slices of reality than critical tones. That's one reason why a critical engagement with architecture is so rare in the specialty and general press. Moreover, the public discussion of errors and miscalculations is seen as fouling one's own nest. But articles that gloss over mistakes, making a building look better than it is, represent as great a disservice to the profession as do superficially instantiated "landmarks" of built works. Both prevent us from seeing those things that take architecture beyond mere fashionable ephemerality to true quality: spatial effect, materiality, attention to detail, and – unimpeded, individually defined habitability.

Barbara Albert
in Conversation with Marijana Miljkovic

We are All Designer Engineers.



Barbara Albert was born in Vienna in 1970. She took courses in German literature, journalism, and theater before turning to the study of directing and scriptwriting at the Film Academy of Vienna. As early as 1996, her short feature The Fruit of Your Womb won numerous prizes. In 1999 she established the film production company Coop 99. In the same year she completed her first full-length feature film Nordrand (English Title: *Northern Skirts*), which achieved international success.

Many people, sensing a void within, retreat to artificial worlds. They find many things there. But not the meaning that fills the void. Barbara Albert fears that as a result, creativity and imaginativeness are on the way out.

Barbara, when I tried to get an appointment with you, I was told you had withdrawn to a hermit's life.
Yes, that's when I was on the island of Rügen, in the Baltic, among the so-called "yellow swans" – the ones with yellow tracking collars.

What took you there, of all places?
A friend and I are working on a story set on Rügen. It's true that in the meantime that's changed, but that's why we had to go there at the time. If it had been left up to me, I would have gone to Brittany or the South of England. Brittany is my favorite place – that's where I wrote the screen play for Böse Zellen (English title: *Free Radicals*). And I don't yet know the South of England and have heard it can be very beautiful there. Because it's simply a wonderful landscape. And I love rough seas. My wish would have been to be a seafarer.

Where's the future going to happen?
Since I have so much to do with people through my job, I don't have a need to move to some huge metropolis – I'm drawn more to empty spaces. To that extent I'd probably connect the future with "nature," with escaping to the countryside. But when I think of the future, I also think fundamentally of lots of people. In my imagination, however, landscape and broad expanses are also there, probably as a wish-dream.

What do you connect with the concepts of "single-family dwelling," "social housing," and "Kärntnerstrasse"?
The single-family dwelling is the longing, felt by many people, for their own home. For me, though, it's also sealing myself off from the outside. It's also loneliness. To have "a place of one's own." And often the longing to be happy and the one's dream of happiness is fulfilled. The concept of social housing isn't that negative in my eyes because I grew up in a neighborhood like that. I actually have positive memories of it. The summer evenings in the building's courtyard were very vibrant for me. Naturally, this vibrancy can sometimes also be violent, full of conflict. But vibrancy also really means being able to have things out, sometimes a bit of tristesse, but in the final analysis that's also what life is for me. The Kärntnerstrasse, Vienna's main shopping street – for me, it's tourism. But I like it anyhow; funnily enough. I like the central "First District" of Vienna quite a lot, because it's sometimes edgy in ways that are different than elsewhere.

What occurs to you when you hear the English words "Shopping Mall" used as a German noun?
Artificiality. It's an artificially created world to which human beings have to conform. And they do it, too, because human beings are insanely adaptable – and humans have only gotten to where they are now because they are so adaptable. If you insert them into a shopping mall and tell them: "Now you have to meet with other people," then they'll meet with them there, make the mall the site of their leisure activities, maybe even work in the mall. There is nothing organic about a shopping center, nothing that has grown naturally. But for me the shopping mall is nevertheless the form of a new marketplace where people can make contact with each other. It's not a creative place. It oppresses you and forces you to be a consumer – one has no other choice but to consume. And that's not necessarily what a marketplace is, since the marketplace affords one more freedom. For me, the shopping mall is a modern place of communication, which, however, doesn't live up to its billing, since true communication doesn't take place.

Are we still aware that we are entering an artificial world there?
I think people perceive these places in very different ways. If the shopping center is architecturally extremely interesting, challenging, or new, or if it appears utopian, then we most certainly still perceive it as an artificial world. Otherwise it's already become, in the meantime, "normal."

Is that desirable?
No, not for me. That might be very conservative, I don't know. I mean, that has to do with this self-conscious watchfulness, namely, that sometimes I also have to just stop and ask myself how I'm living my private life. Am I going to subject myself to something like that and enter spaces that are prescribed for me, or am I perhaps rather going to go somewhere where I feel happier?

Do these unencumbered spaces still exist?
When I was in St. Pölten for Free Radicals, the city core was almost dead on Saturday, because everybody was at the shopping center. That's very sad. I'm not so conservative about everything, but in this particular case I think that by virtue of the fact that it's something that's determined externally, it kills every form of creativity and imaginativeness. That's the actual tragedy within capitalism, that it destroys creative and imaginative potential, and, in the process, also the wish for something different. That's why I find it more desirable to be in places that one can also have a hand in shaping. One can smear paint on an empty wall, but in a shopping center one doesn't even have a wall to smear on. Because everything's chock full of products. To that extent I'd find it more desirable to have other and different public spaces.

Are we "filled to overflowing" with the daily flood of information?
I think people fundamentally and repeatedly sense a void within themselves. That's not a problem in itself. But in response, one tries to hold on somewhere, one produces something in order to attain immortality. One builds up something in order to have something to grab onto, like one's own house. It's the proof that one's alive. Or you just try to distract yourself. And distracting yourself is naturally something you can do very well by going shopping. Shopping as a kind of substitute satisfaction. That, too, is not something fundamentally evil, but I think this distraction can be more constructive than just letting oneself be inundated by a constant stream of stimuli. But letting oneself be inundated just happens to prevail because for one thing it's simpler. It's a question of "full-fillment." If you feel completely empty, then you have to "fully fill" yourself with something. It might be some kind of contents; it might be emotions; it could be that you just feel good when you're together with others. It's interesting that human beings, when they have all the freedom in the world, become anxious. It's like you've got a blank piece of paper lying in front of you and you say: "And now write something." That's harder than if you say: "And now write a story about a man, a dog and a house."

But where are the things we can still cling to?
Religion can certainly provide a safety net; but more often, unfortunately, it's work we cling to. One defines oneself exclusively through that which one does and can afford – through money. Money is the feeling of self-worth, so to speak. These days one is surrounded by values like money and defined by work or by what one does. It's my belief that our value system no longer fits the times. We have to try to re-think our values because the ones we've still got in our heads no longer offer a solution. Take the family for example: That's still a value, but people can no longer live this value or don't want to and get married anyhow, have kids, are frustrated, and get divorced. Why don't we just simply say that family almost never works these days the way it did before, but rather: "People, get used to the fact that you're probably going to get divorced again. Or remember that when you two have kids, it might possibly be simpler to join up with friends and form a group larger than the nuclear family." Or people in the city say: "Let's build houses for families, let's build apartment house communities that administer themselves and where the kids can also be 'administered' communally." If you look at it this way, I would find a restructuring of society extremely interesting. A project where in one house, for example, handicapped people also live and then people provide mutual assistance to each other. I don't think that's naïve, because there are people who have the same wish. It has to make it into people's consciousness that one can live differently than we do now.

What would your ideal urban district look like?
Well, there are a lot of things it would need. It would have to have water. A space where people like to spend time. Green spaces and also a touch of something wild. Wild meadows with wild trees, the whole thing not too neatly ordered. I also find concrete surfaces fascinating, and maybe I'd also construct a giant open plaza out of concrete. Nature has to be in the equation, too. And heterogeneous spaces. I like the interplay of public and other space. For example, that schools and kindergartens aren't hidden away too much and can also intermingle with life next door. Or there's some kind of center, a counseling center, and maybe next door to it is something completely different, I don't know, maybe a boxing club.

How important is it that spaces undergo change?
It's very important that everything not be predetermined. Whether a house is tall or low-to-the-ground, whether a public square is broad or narrow, that always influences a mood. The so-called "Museum Quarter" in Vienna, for example, didn't really begin to work until the living room suites were put on display – the ones that are painted a different color every year. You had the feeling that the thing was changed individually by a human hand and you could do whatever you wanted on it. Yes, you had a bit of free space. And that changed incredibly many things. What had previously just been concrete, suddenly was infused with life. Before that, nobody wanted to go in there. There you see that all of us, including adults, really love to have building blocks. And to that extent all of us have a bit of the design engineer in us.

What's your understanding of urbanity?
The opposite of tiny and limited, including in the intellectual sense – so in other words, openness. The urban space has something metropolitan about it, something that wants to develop further. A place within which there are various different islands which, however, are also connected with one another.

Do you have a favorite big city?
I really like London. Because for me, London has something spacious about it.

What would you like to import from London to Vienna?
The Thames. I think it's a total shame that the Danube isn't as full of life. Along the Thames there's always life. You're standing on a bridge, you look over the city and you sense something very alive and spacious in and through the river that is in motion but nevertheless has something calming about it. In Vienna, you can't be directly on the Danube. In Graz it's the same thing, except for the artificial "Mur Island" with its amphitheater, café, and spots for sunbathing.

What's your favorite piece of architecture?
Tate Modern in London is really a space in which I've felt totally happy and together. When the four round structures of the former Gasworks – the so-called "Gasometers" – were still under construction in Vienna, I found them quite interesting. Now that they're done, however, people know that their interiors aren't functional.

Is there some dream you'd really like to make come true?
There are a lot of dreams I really want to make come true. To travel to Iceland, and then go by icebreaker as near to the North Pole as possible; to do an extended trek through the desert; to live in a lighthouse; to write a novel and to own a fishing cutter. Naturally, these dreams change again and again. But I think we also really need precisely those dreams that we can't make come true.

Tex Rubinowitz
in Conversation with Martin Behr

Without Words.

Tex Rubinowitz. Born in 1964. Or 1955. Or also 1961. Or 1971. Allegedly as Dirk Wesenberg in Lüneburg, Germany. 1974 first role in the film adaptation of Walter Kempowski's book *Tadellöser und Wolff*, together with Karl Lieffen, Edda Seipel, Martin Semmelrogge und other actors whose names contain double consonants. Has lived in Vienna since 3 October 1984, having moved from Worms, Germany. On reflection, we think it's too bad that Kempowski's name hasn't yet achieved double consonantal status.

The copywriter, illustrator, cartoonist, painter, author, musician and much, much more lives in the present, seeing as how thoughts of the future aren't his thing. Why? "Because my life hasn't ever been linear anyhow." Epilogue: "Thank God."

His cartoon advertisements quickly propelled the Viennese canapé-supplier "Trzesniewski" (motto: "inexpressibly good") to a surprisingly high recognition level. Every week they provide for astonished amusement in the local Vienna paper the Falter, and his insights into well-known personalities in radio, film and television in the daily Standard are among the crudest columns perpetrated on the Austrian reading public. The man whose eyes and ears are always tuned to the present refuses to attempt prognoses for the future. Whether he has the feeling that his life in 2017 will be easier or more difficult than it is now? Tex Rubinowitz: "I don't have any feeling. And if I did, it would be a bad one, since I'll be going downhill even faster than I am now" Certainly: The future is uncertain. And things can happen. In his book And for people who can't read, the cigarette has a line through it – some 213 jokes and 3 short novels on 160 pages – Tex Rubinowitz draws a human face that is emerging from a tube and is connected to a thought balloon: "Reborn as a salve named Ulrich – but on the other hand I became a Hindu." Life after death is hard to plan. But life before death? Question to Tex Rubinowitz: "Let's say you're saving to set up a supplemental pension: Would you have the whole thing paid out as a lump sum when you reach 60, or would you prefer a monthly pay-out for as long as you live?" The answer is immediate and compact: "Monthly pay-outs."

Automobiles that take off into the air, weekend excursions to Mare Crisium on the moon. Machines that react to verbal signals and can prepare any cuisine in the world within seconds. Cleaning robots. In the case of many kids' dreams from way back when, there have been problems making them come true up to now. Except maybe the mobile phone as hinted at in the TV series *Star Trek* and global networking through the World Wide Web. "Aside from the fact that as a child I didn't have any notions of the future, except maybe some vague childish dream of traveling a lot, I can say: 'Yes, my dreams have come true,'" says Tex Rubinowitz, who loves to go places like Finland. Or to Moldavia by bus. Or who takes off for week-long round-trips by ferry.

For Tex Rubinowitz alias Dirk Wesenberg (44,600 Google hits in 0.3 seconds, after all), it makes no difference which city he's living in. His art isn't at all influenced by his local surroundings, he says. Wilbur the Snowman, Manfred the Duck, little Tobias or Herr Koback could have just as well seen the light of the comic-world day in Bludenz, Grossenzersdorf, Oxford, Feldkirchen, Ulm or Madrid. But in principle, early drop-out from a visual arts degree in Vienna has more affinity to the big cities than to the idyllic green countryside far removed from the metropolis. He finds the Mega-Cities described by the Austrian filmmaker Michael Glawogger "extremely exciting." And: "What I find threatening is being isolated in the boonies." The former editor-in-chief of the American Hospital Newsletter (which appeared simultaneously with the somewhat better-known Berlin gossip rag My Vacuum Cleaner and Me) isn't inclined to serve up fully-formulated societal visions or other sublime goals for humanity. Question to Tex Rubinowitz: "What would have to change in the next decade for you to be able to talk retrospectively about a beautiful period of time?" While the possible answers regarding the Good, Rich and Beautiful of this world are knocking around in the questioner's head – "Good health for my family," "medications to combat aids and cancer," "an end to famine in Africa," or "a starring role in The Da Vinci Code 2" – Tex Rubinowitz proves to be both personal and terse: "Drink less."

Drawing as a passion, as a way of letting off creative steam, as a form of coming to terms with everyday life – and yet, for Tex Rubinowitz, the act of drawing is a kind of sideline. "Drawing is always something that takes place on the side; mostly while I'm doing something else like watching TV or listening to the radio. Extracts of what I'm seeing, hearing and feeling at the time flow directly into the drawing paper," says the 29-year-old German, who in the meantime can point to having triple citizenship (Germany, Austria, Finland). For the moment he's still more of an occasional guest in the "white cube" halls of the art-biz world, but anyone who can fill a cartoon bubbles with texts like "You don't wave good-bye to your mother with toilet paper when she enters a zwieback store" and who can paint dogs in the style of naïve empathy, has all the world's doors open to him.

Which leads to the question: "Herr Rubinowitz, do you foresee being invited to show your work at the Documenta in Kassel or to Biennale in Venice?" The addressee waves us off: "No, never. In part because I've never aimed for something like that, and because it's of no interest to me, even as a visitor." What he's more interested in is a musical come-back. In any case, now it's time for the sixty-four dollar question, which is: What might be the thirty-eight-year-old artist's favorite town? Hint number one: It numbers 490,000 inhabitants, is also the seat of the Imperial Diet, the federal government, as well as numerous administrative and cultural institutions, the national library, national archives and national museum. Hint number two: Among its modern buildings are the Main Railroad Station (1910–1914) by E. Saarinen, the auditorium maximum of the Technical University (1962–1964), and the "Finlandia" concert hall and convention center by A. Aalto (1971). Right you are: It's Helsinki.

Not only as a co-founder of the Internet forum "Polite Paparazzi" is Rubinowitz used to dealing with illustrious persons. But whom would he someday like to meet secretly and interact with – without being pushy, but with judicious restraint? "Franz Kafka maybe, and Italo Svevo and Knut Hamsun, the Norwegian Nobel prizewinning author – if possible with all three sitting together at one table," he declares. How the four of them would get on? What topics their conversation might cover? Whether the result would be a scandalous explosion or reciprocal protestations of brotherly love? Whether Tex Rubinowitz, the "jokester par excellence" (Copyright: Der Falter), would read his short story "The Spider" out loud to his table companions? Not likely. Rubinowitz would observe. Ask questions. And doodle on his napkin. As they sip their digestifs, a toast might pop into his head: "Hey, people, I'm serious, too."

Tex Rubinowitz would consider moving to Graz only if this city of clock towers housed more Finns and Japanese. The odds of this happening are not very good. What kind of architecture is most important to him? "White stone interior walls, wooden floors, brightness, access to water, simple and unassuming." And his reasons: "Those are the conditions under which I am most likely to think clearly." Rubinowitz and color symbolism. For the 49-year-old high-school graduate, the color blue is associated with both the present and the past. From the mouth of the short-story inventor comes the following elucidation: "But not blue as in the German expression for being drunk, more like water and sky." Someone who's famous plays down this fact. "I don't want to be famous at all," says Tex Rubinowitz, "that's just a burden; so if I become famous, then preferably anonymously, for something that would help humankind – like abolishing the orgasm." Back to the future. With whom would he like to have a discussion on the future? "Nobody, because the future doesn't interest me; because what's happening today is much more interesting. " A typical response from the optimistic thirty-eight-year-old immigrant from Germany.

There's No Such Thing as a Perfect City.

At a time in which cities are competing for investors, residents and visitors, the end seems to justify the means. Perfection outranks sustainability, sensationalism trumps reality. That this approach can also be dangerous is documented by the journalist Doris Gappmaier. Her case in point: Todi, Italy.

The founding of Todi is the stuff of many legends. According to one of them, Hercules founded the Umbrian city after having killed Cacus, the son of the god Vulcan, on this hill. In any case it's certain that the small town of 17,000 inhabitants in the Umbrian hills was, until the late 1980's, an insider tip for tourists. The reason: The medieval community with its small, winding laneways and magical public plazas had preserved its original flair; and on the surrounding hillsides, the expensively restored castles of more or less well-known artists were the objects of admiring stares.

Among those who kept coming back to Todi was Professor Richard Levine, an expert on sustainability at the University of Kentucky, who in 1983 began studying how the city was structured and how it functioned. He had his architecture students carry out studies of the advantages and disadvantages of medieval cities. And on the basis of his longitudinal research, in 1991 he was invited to be the keynote speaker at a conference in Todi, where he spoke to a large audience of journalists. What he didn't know was that a crafty PR man, who was interested less in Levine's research than in marketing Todi, had prepared a publicity package that included the surprising conclusion of a study purportedly carried out by Levine: "Todi is the world's most desirable city to live in." While the professor from Kentucky was still in the process of enlightening the journalists as to his research, the news went out to the whole world. And the world rushed to Todi. Thousands of investors infiltrated the tourists and wanted to analyze, survey and evaluate the city in order to buy it up one piece at a time. What looked like a blessing soon turned out to be a curse. Within a very brief interval, the price of real estate in the city's ancient core shot up to dizzying heights; many native Tuderti left. The city, bursting with historical ambience, threatened to become estranged from itself. And since the narrow laneways of Todi soon got too crowded for the upper-class types who had flocked there, by the beginning of the new millennium the boom was over.

Dr. Heidi Dumreicher of "Oikodrom" (the Vienna Institute for Urban Sustainability) comes to the following conclusion: "What happened here could have also happened in one of the many other Italian hillside villages." For Dumreicher, cities must possess seven qualities in order to be worth living in. Their scale must be manageable and at the same time offer anonymity. They must have assured access to local infrastructure, make possible shared participation in public space, serve as a place of self-representation, create points of orientation, and stake out their footprint sensibly. And they must facilitate the reciprocal give-and-take of near and far: "People need something in their immediate vicinity that they can claim as their own, like a pharmacy or the pub around the corner, but in addition they need fairly large cities within reach." For Dumreicher there's no such thing as a perfect city in any case. And Levine adds: "Even if perfection existed, it wouldn't be desirable." That the city has undergone upwards revaluation by virtue of all the events, remains undisputed. Modern infrastructure and jobs were created; houses threatened by decay were renovated. It remains an open question, however, whether that by itself will assure Todi's future, since it had been assumed up to now that this future was to be found in its past and in sustainability. But perhaps Todi has actually attained that which Hercules could achieve only with the help of the gods: immortality.

Rainer Münz
in Conversation with Ernst Giselbrecht and Gertraud Monsberger

No Time to Slow Down.

Born in Basel in 1954, Rainer Münz studied sociology in Vienna, specializing in demographics. After receiving his doctorate, the expert on population structures and migration taught in, among others, Bamberg, Frankfurt, Berlin, Klagenfurt, Vienna and Zurich. Visiting professorships led him as far afield as the University of California at Berkeley. Since 2003 he has been a Senior Fellow at Hamburg's World Economic Institute *(Weltwirtschaftsinstitut)*, and since 2005 Head of R&D at *Erste Bank*.

Rainer Münz views urbanity as a reciprocal relationship between anonymity and public self-staging. "See and be seen" must be the motto of cities. The city is a stage, an ideal place for enactment. And yet, it's only the right "meeting point" that separates the city from the country.

What makes city life, what makes country life attractive?
Basically, what people would most like to have is a single-family dwelling with a pool, surrounded by nature, but in the heart of the city. That, however, is scarcely attainable for the majority. One consequence of this is the large number of loft conversions. But you can't have a dense urban infrastructure and at a the same time live surrounded by nature. The former requires multiple-storey apartment houses. The latter leads to an extended "in-between" city of row houses and free-standing single-family-dwellings. That's the explanation for the active population exchange between the core city and the surrounding countryside. Economically, Graz could exist without the rural region around it; but without Graz, this surrounding countryside could scarcely assert itself on its own as an attractive place to live. The functioning labor market in the adjacent metropolis is what opens up the opportunity to live in the country. The incomes earned in the metropolis make it possible for those who are fleeing the city first to set up a registered home buyer's savings plan and then to secure mortgage interest rate support from the state. Despite leaving Graz, they can still make use of the Sporgasse in Graz, the city's Main Square, and all advantages of the urban job market.
It's more of a problem for Graz. After all, the shops and cafes in the Sporgasse, after all, are accessible to users from inside and outside Graz at no extra cost, but those who come in from outside don't pay taxes in Graz.

People simply like moving to the urban peripheries. But isn't the generation that grows up there unhappy?
That's an important point. Beginning at a certain age, the kids out there get bored. They're not quite really in the country. Animals, agriculture and so forth don't exist there. And yet they can't make use of urban life because it's too far away. Until they get their driver's license and buy their first car, it's boring for them in the "in-between" city. At that point many young adults move into a larger city in any case. People don't tend to move out to the periphery again until they establish their own family.

One advantage of the city would probably be the possibility for "enactment" – the key-word here would be the "oblique-glance-society," wouldn't it? Is the city the perfect stage for such a thing?
"Seeing and being seen" can take place in the city. But it can also happen in other, smaller settings, for example in Kitzbühel, Lech, or Pörtschach. It's not absolutely tied to cities, but it's easier in cities in the sense that it can be achieved with less additional effort. To see and be seen means, however, that there have to be other people who are relevant for me, in other words "significant others." It's an enlargement of the Stammtisch – the pub table reserved for the regulars – and it requires a meeting point. It's not something you can readily do in Los Angeles, because that's a "placeless" agglomeration. Hollywood Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, Laguna Beach, Pacific Palisades, Venice Beach – not that many meeting places for an agglomeration of ten million people. In Graz, on the other hand, the locals can stroll down the Sporgasse to the Main Square and there's a certain probability of meeting people they know. That's precisely the kind of thing that's easier in Graz than in Berlin or London, where the city is much more "polycentric"; where it has, in other words, more than just one center. In cities more or less the size of Graz, it's much easier for us to keep track of the people who are relevant to us – and their lives.

In Europe it's still possible to get right into all the cities. Right now everybody has free access to the main squares, except perhaps in London …
That's why it's possible to have "enactment" without living there oneself. Think of Kitzbühel. Usually people don't have their principal residence there, but during the winter and summer tourist seasons, or even on normal

weekends, one can be part of the crowd that wants to see and be seen. To a certain degree, cities offer anonymity, but at the same time many people want to be able, when they feel the need, to discard this anonymity and bump into "significant others." In a tiny village of 3,000 like Unterpremstätten, you're only anonymous if you've just arrived and don't know anybody.

But over time, this is changing. Maybe it's a characteristic of urbanity that people aren't on a first-name basis. In German, they use the "polite" and distanced form Sie when addressing others. And in places where the majority of people still know each quite well and use the more intimate form Du for "you," it's possible that urbanity cannot arise.

You've also lived in the U.S. Does the possibility of exuding a kind of aura, as Los Angeles does through Hollywood, make a city attractive?
Simply by virtue of its film and television production facilities, Los Angeles attracts a high degree of attention. But the same can be said, though in a different way, of San Francisco. There, it's the elite universities Berkeley and Stanford, along with Silicon Valley, that play a role. Shareholders' meetings tend to take place in San Francisco rather than L.A. Many Americans have their dream place totally elsewhere. If you ask around, you hear mention of Santa Fe, for example; Loudon County, Virginia; or small towns in Connecticut. These places offer suburban life against the backdrop of an attractive countryside. The wish of the majority for a miniature "countryside" of their own can also be fulfilled in an agglomeration like Los Angeles, by the way. That's why you see a chain of one back yard after another there.

What would be your ideal place to live?
I myself prefer to live in core cities, so more in the center of town than on the periphery of an urban agglomeration.

What advantages does this give you that you'd never want to give up?
First and foremost there's the economic advantage. Here, there are well-developed job markets and well-paid jobs. Second, you've got urbanity more or less at your front door. A further advantage from my perspective is that I can be at my office within ten to fifteen minutes, or back home again in the same amount of time. Compared with commuters, I gain two hours a day in which I'm neither sitting in public transport nor caught in a traffic jam. That's time that has been restored to me as a kind of gift.

Do you think that family structures will change? Will the extended family make a come-back, with the grandparents taking over responsibility for looking after the children?
Extended family is a generic concept that's historically imprecise. Peasant households consisted, after all, of both relatives and non-relatives. It wasn't so much the blood relationship but the common economic interest that was decisive. You can see this also in the fact that in large parts of the Alpine region, people were referred to by the name of the household they inhabited or the parcel of agricultural land they worked, and not by their family name. The latest research on modern social history sees the so-called "extended family" as a retrospective myth of nineteenth-century patriarchal literature. The trigger for invoking this myth is the moment that a certain pre-industrial way of life begins to disappear.

What are your wishes for the next ten to fifteen years? On your own behalf, and for society?
For me personally, it's quite simple: An interesting job about whose design I have some say. That's why I'm personally in favor of abolishing mandatory retirement at a certain age. I'd like to decide for myself how long I work and when to retire. That's not something legislators should be deciding for me or others. At the same time, I don't think it's socially and fiscally responsible vis-à-vis our society that increasing numbers of people between 55 and 57 are taking early retirement. We're living in a society of early retirees.

Will the topic of making the world of work more flexible be the subject of such controversial discussion in ten or fifteen years, or will it be something that's generally accepted by then?
It's not obvious this is going to change, for the very reason that in ten to fifteen years more or less the same workforce will still be on the job as is there today. Nowadays, many people hear the word "flexibility" as a threat.

What, then, will have changed in fifteen years?
From the perspective of demographics, it's clear what's going to happen: In 15 years our population will be generally older than it is now, but for the most part it will consist of the same people that are already living here now. Economically we don't have any exact knowledge, but the assumption is that the Eastern extension of the EU will still be bringing substantial economic advantages to us Austrians for quite a while. For this reason it's a bit unfair that precisely this process of opening the EU, which is securing jobs and incomes in Austria, is, on balance, unpopular in these parts.

What else will be going on economically in the next little while?
The center of the world's economy will shift from North America to Asia; that much is clear.

Because of demographic trends or because Asia has such a pronounced need to make up ground?
The economy is growing in Southern and Eastern Asia – especially in China and India – more rapidly than is the case in Western Europe and North America. And more people are living there already than in Europe and North America. In addition, the people there are much more highly motivated. This process of catching up will lead to a decline in the relative weights of the EU and the U.S. in the world economy.

What does the concept of "slowing down" mean to you? Does it represent something of special value in a rapid, dynamic age?
If we take seriously the trend we've just diagnosed, and if at the very least we don't want to be left behind, then we have to become more productive and in a certain way also faster. If we capitulate in the face of this challenge, parts of Europe will be transformed into museum-like leisure parks.

Will there be a growing need to get out into nature and to flee the stress of everyday life?
We've never had workdays that were so short, and we've never had as much vacation time as we do now. I think the high-water mark of the trend to shorter working times has passed. And here in Europe, in view of the present competition with Shanghai, Bangalore, but also Bratislava, there's a tendency to move slowly but surely back towards longer work hours, from 35 or 37 hours a week. That's not just another way of saying: more low-wage production sites in Western Europe, but it does mean: "Speed up, don't slow down." Think of Barcelona. It's living off a niche economy providing a high degree of specialization, quality of life and favorable general conditions. In the final analysis, if we want to keep up, all of Europe should be working based on models like that of Barcelona. One consequence will be that stress is more likely to increase than to decrease. Whether "wild nature" will then become more of an escape, I can't say.

Barcelona.

The goal of the "Urbanity" Team was to find a city that allowed them to observe both the advantages and disadvantages of urban development. Barcelona got the nod, since the capital of Catalonia is considered the teacher's pet of Europe on account of its exemplary city planning. But is it not possible that all too rapid changes in the cityscape will also bring about poor decisions? The Mecca of architects, designers and artists thus came under the close scrutiny of the "Urbanity" Team, with particular attention paid to those things that haven't worked out so well.

The Sunny Side of Barcelona.
The former harbor has been completely redone and is now the convention area with a marina, gastronomic promenade, and more. Where ships used to dock, the pedestrian promenade now presents itself in dimensions reminiscent of an *autobahn*. These urban precincts do not engender a void; they function rather as stage-settings for urban life: On display is the confidently masterful handling of magnanimity, of urbanity. One of Barcelona's grand qualities is its opening to the sea. With a surfboard under one's arm, from home to the beach. Next to a building resembling a huge fish, a creation of star architect Frank Gehry, the first large building site of Barcelona presents itself: In front of the Forum, a huge area is under construction, the site of the new zoo. The dimensions are enormous. The Cultural Forum occupies a prominent spot on the sea. It's still not getting the positive reception that was foreseen. Inside, an exhibition documents the development of the city of Barcelona. Models and modern media inform visitors; one model of the city fascinates the observer by virtue of its dimensions: 60 by 40 feet, some four tons, built in 20,000 hours of work. It's as if Gaudí projected the thought behind the *Sagrada Familia* onto all of Barcelona: Construction without end.

Precedence for Pedestrians.
A very broad boulevard with rows of shade trees, kiosks, benches and opportunities for mimes and other street performers to present themselves; a place where people, individually and in groups, can promenade without constraint and unhindered by traffic, is flanked left and right by one-way streets for automobiles: The La Rambla approach is eminently worthy of imitation. And yet, formally designated bike paths are still rare in Barcelona. On the other hand, even the untrained observer immediately notices the generously apportioned public plazas. Barcelona's residents offer their aesthetically appealing palm plantings to the world. That even makes up for the fact that almost every available spot is covered with concrete slabs. Remarkable: There are no dog droppings on the streets, sidewalks, squares, or beaches.

More than architecture: The "Forum" and above all the "Torre Agbar" are conspicuous and striking architectonic features that facilitate orientation and identification in a way that any city would find desirable. Structures like this contribute to the demarcation of territories, simultaneously strengthening identification with one's own "life space."

The Supposed Down-Side.
"La Mina": A run-down district just outside the Barcelona city limits, a place better avoided, a hotbed of criminality. Heavy influx of new-comers from underdeveloped regions, low quality of life. "La Mina" doesn't appear in any tourist guides; one looks in vain for boutiques or shopping centers. Many Barcelonians have yet to set foot in this supposed "Gypsy district." Tourists with cameras are alien to the streetscape. Long, multi-storey apartment complexes with a strong resemblance to the concrete-slab "residential factories" of communist Europe constitute the district's pulsing core.

The courtyards between the buildings are places for meeting and gathering. The magic word is

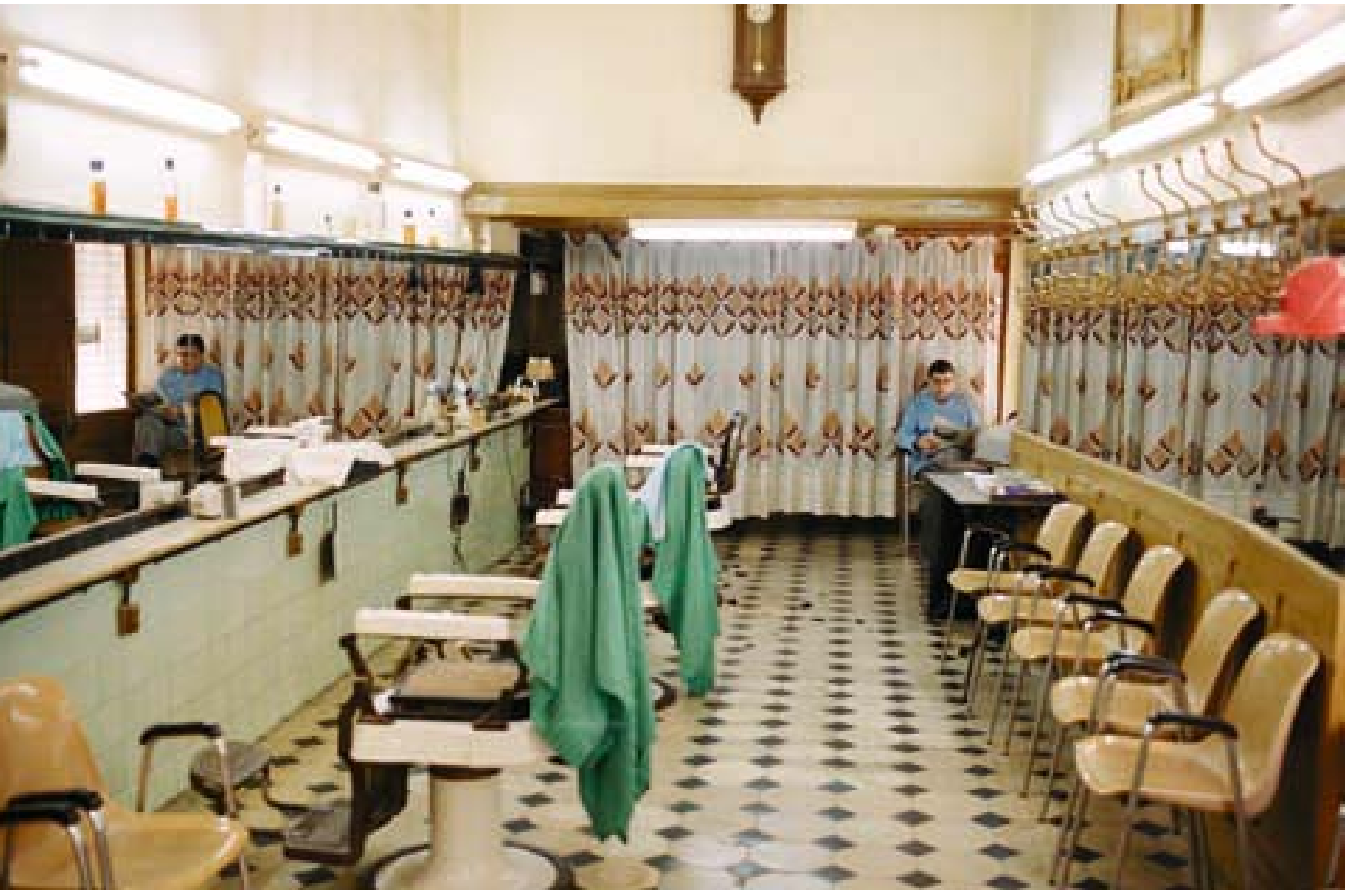
"restructuring": By 2010, a large-scale university campus is to emerge here. And countless new residences for lease or purchase. Further plans? A medical center, soccer fields, parks, kindergartens, schools. And at the heart of the district, a new La Rambla, a promenade leading to the sea. Will those segments of society currently living there be able to afford life in a revitalized district? Some will. And: Current residents are to be actively engaged in the rebuilding of the area, will receive part-time employment. Nevertheless, conflicts are pre-programmed. There is the threat of eviction, of re-settlement to other districts. In order to defuse this societal time-bomb, city planners are counting on an image campaign. "La Mina": from nightmare to dream space?

Change of Scene – to the Tourist Magnet.

One's first look? Upwards. At a very steep angle. Passengers disembarking from busses and taxis automatically direct their gaze to the church-in-progress named *Sagrada Familia* (Holy Family). The gaze falls on angels making music, multi-colored windows, the multiplicity of forms that make up this "sermon in stone" created by Antonio Gaudi (1852–1926). House of God or monumental sculpture? After the first moments of amazement, the typical tourist goes for his digital camera. Those with wide-angle lenses are in luck. Once this top tourist attraction has been captured on the chip, the subjective sense of happiness is enlarged. Documented, checked-off. And now? Enter this church of expiation? Count the steps up the curving staircase? Or just a quick visit to the souvenir stands where snowmen in glass balls cost only five Euros? German tourists promenade on the boulevard of kitsch. "I like churches," says a visitor in comfy shoes as he photographs the Portal of the Passion. The man standing next to him nods in agreement: "How many pixels does your camera have?"

Projection.
A rain-drop's journey. With gentle braking action provided by a palm frond, I finally land more or less gently in a wide river bed that leads, via a gradual incline, to the mighty ocean. A quick decision is called for. Left or right? I decide in favor of the stream that is narrowing but carrying me straight ahead. It's a *rambla*. There's a comfortable sense of hustle and bustle here. On the banks, brightly-colored insects pursue their sun-drenched games and compete for attention. The *rambla's* character is shaped by a multiplicity of tiny bays and small rocks resting in the river bed. In the meantime, the surroundings of my river-run resemble an irregular network of small, intertwined veins. I'd really like to get to know them better, but the *rambla* has taken me captive; its flow carries me slowly but surely oceanwards. I have an inner desire to evaporate quickly into steam, but I'd also like to repeat the journey again tomorrow. The warm evening sun has enough strength to transform me into invisible vapor and transport me to the skies. From my high perch, I spy a landing place that seems congenial. A green hill with a giant palace on top: the Montjuic, a princely elevation. Soon enough I splatter down on a meadow covered with leaves. I look around and spy a giant structure decorated with five intertwined rings. In front, a broad space which, though offering a magnificent view out over the city that lies below, nevertheless feels empty and lacking in animation. I decide to flow quickly to the palace, turn aside and enter a gentle bustling that's filled with the babble of different languages, bright and variegated colors, and a combination of various aromas. Together with my fellow rain-drops, the North Wind carries me towards the sea. I obey the laws of nature.

That Lively Feeling.
Dynamic, lively, restless, fun-loving, cosmopolitan, off-putting, loud, interesting, variegated, young. Old and new architecture, lots of design,



lots of traffic, incredibly many cranes, construction sites, bulldozers, beach life, water, sun, narrow lanes and strikingly many children, young people, old people on the benches, different cultures and very broad streets. Nothing is more important than color. It is an element of design. The intersections have the character of public plazas. In the Old City there are all the shops people need to provide them with the necessities of life: The baker, pharmacist and grocer are right around the corner. Some of the new architecture is anything but attractive, exudes a sense of coldness. Some, on the other hand, is very beautiful, having been reduced to the essentials. My favorites: The pavilion by Mies van der Rohe as well as a renovated former brick factory that now houses a job-training center. In other cities, they blow up the old smokestacks; in Barcelona they allow them to continue standing tall and proud. They mark the place where industry once stood and now are part of an environment of sophisticated structures.

The countless museums and cultural centers that are to be found in every district make an important contribution to the mood, the feeling of vitality here; nightlife is an integral part of the life of the city. The city's soundtrack – traffic, construction noise, horns with various sequences of notes, human voices. At the beach, the wind plays with the masts and rigging of the boats in the various yacht harbors and marinas: rhythmical tones and delicate tintinnabulations.

Austria Day.

We meet up with the Austrian Trade Commissioner, Heinz Walter; the designer Erwin Himmel; the architect Eberhard Schmidl and young Austrian expat Julia Grani. Four quite different stories. Larger and smaller episodes from everyday life. One strand: Julia Grani left Graz to live in her dream city by the sea. "As a foreigner, it's not easy to put down roots here," she says. "It starts with looking for a place to live. Landlords

pick their tenants very carefully." That's probably the reason that 90% of Barcelonians own where they live. Despite the fact they're often small, the apartments must usually be financed over the span of several generations. Thus, it's understandable that most people transfer their "living room" to one of the 11,000 pubs. "The social benefits are a bit slim," Grani laments. "They only pay for three months parental leave." That's why, in the long run, Julia would like to move back to Graz. "Seen from a distance, Graz can't be compared with any other city in the world," she opines. "Peaceful, a good network of social benefits, small enough to be manageable, sun, snow – in other words, a little bit of everything."

Madrid vs. Barcelona.
Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is hungry for victory. Live: the soccer duel of the giants – FC Barcelona versus Real Madrid. A legendary match-up, no matter whether it's taking place for the hundredth time or for the first time in a given year. Thus, a common evening spent eating pan-fried fish with potatoes and vegetables and drinking excellent wine turns into an unforgettable sports event. The signs were evident days in advance. The sea became more turbulent, the Barcelonians started to look nervous. The waiters' hands trembled when they served food, and the mood soared to unknown heights. The best odds for winning the duel between Barcelona and Madrid were with the Catalan government: In early 2006 it got the Autonomy Statute through the Parliament in Madrid. The equivalent of a regional constitution, the statute guarantees Catalonia greater financial and political autonomy than heretofore. Catalonia is considered the cash-cow of Spain, and the Catalans are trying with all their might to make sure their money stays home, in their region. But unlike the Basques, they aren't resorting to terrorism to force independence. Instead, in the effort to resist what they see as exploitation by outsiders, they put their regional pride to work in the parliamentary process.

Given the build-up of emotions, there remains no alternative but to take refuge in nature. Preferably in one of the parks that have been distributed throughout the city, for example on former factory sites. The city's approach has been to tear down old buildings and replant the empty lots to create miniature green oases. In this, Barcelona, with its population of 1.6 million people (3 million if one includes the entire catchment area), again shows that it's among the leaders in advancing the cause of creative city planning and vibrant urbanity. By the way: The game ended in a one-all draw.

"22@Barcelona – The Innovation District".

Barcelona as Viewed by Ernst Giselbrecht.

Innovation. Dynamism. Sustainability. Catch phrases we've heard so often that their meaning seems to have receded into the background. Too many cities have claimed them for themselves in order to keep pace in the global competition for investors, tourists and city rankings. And all too often the words were not followed by deeds.

In Barcelona, it's different. The Catalans have long since recognized that the changes leading to a service society are also bringing fundamental changes to the cityscape. A master plan from 1976 that had provided for industrial space, especially on the eastern side of Barcelona, was succeeded in 2000 by a new plan called 22@Barcelona. The goal – the transformation of just under 500 acres of industrial area into an innovation district with an exemplary infrastructure. By the time the project is completed, over 32 million square feet of commercial space of all kinds will be available. An ambitious goal. But Barcelona is showing that those who are serious about innovation must entertain the idea of permanently transforming their city. "22@Barcelona" pitches itself as the ideal location for innovative entrepreneurial undertakings. In order to make resettlement to Barcelona palatable, the city is offering ready-to-go infrastructure. Even the existing sewage system is being adapted and equipped for all eventualities.

At the heart of this urban restructuring is a concept of astonishing simplicity. An example: Investors may develop properties only up to the maximum allowable roof area of some 65,000 square feet, and may increase the site density to 2.8 only if they put at least 20 percent of their invested funds at the service of the "22@Barcelona" program: These funds flow to projects under the rubrics of "media", "information and communication technology", "biosciences", "knowledge spaces", "corporate founders", "technology transfer", and social projects. In return, the investors are guaranteed quick processing of permit applications. Ten percent of the total area of "22@Barcelona" is reserved for public facilities. Moreover, only construction rights are granted, so the city retains ownership of the real properties. Since the development costs of the buildings can approach 550 Euros per square foot, many residences will be supported.

The effects on the city of repositioning entire urban districts require sophisticated consideration, since the "genuine dynamic", once underway, creates continually developing network connections and/or new characteristics that must be taken into account. That investing in the culture of planning, and communicating with the public, brings real results is proven by the far-reaching innovations achieved since the beginning of the project. The discussion of urban development initiated by the city has kept the populace informed.. It's impossible in any case to get away from the fact that the city is being rebuilt, since there are major construction sites almost everywhere. Not only does it appear that this example of urban development is running smoothly; the Barcelonians are also demonstrating their enthusiasm for the changes and are conveying this to the rest of the world. Especially remarkable is the single-mindedly goal-oriented implementation of the many-layered planning process. Even intrusions upon urban structure involving large plots of land are carried out within an extremely short time frame. That the process also creates losers, such as the many inhabitants of Barcelona who will have to be relocated, is beyond question. Nevertheless, "22@Barcelona" is a model project which could soon be a precedent throughout Europe. Not despite, but precisely because of its innovative concept of urban development.

What Cities Ought to Know about Urbanity.

Urbanity – as a way of life and the feeling of being alive – was and is a distinguishing feature of our cities. Unbridled. Intellectual. Distanced. Immediate. Contradictory. Critical. Almost all the great developments of humankind were born and developed in the nodal networks of human urban life. Urbanity not only as the utopia of a better life, but also as its instantiation.

Today this quality of urbanity is either ignored or distorted by romantic glorification. Both occur at the expense of quality of life.

In our search for a desirable conception of urbanity, one thing quickly became clear: It's not possible to get to the heart of this phenomenon by applying generalities and traditional scripts. Just as in the case of urbanity itself, its conceptualization can only be grasped through the distinctive approach of individuals. Urbanity and its conceptualization offer multi-layered platforms of engagement which the individual can log onto. The platform one invokes represents the distinctive intellectual home of the actor. In the same way, the essence of urbanity is characterized by a plethora of possibilities from which each of us can configure and construct our own urbanity.

Urbanity is a process of dynamic network-building and thereby a mirror of endeavors to make the future possible. After all, our imagined images of the future are also various and multifaceted – the trajectory of the resulting forces changes by the hour.

These days, anyone who "thinks urbanity" must be willing to engage with a dynamic model. The future is repositioned daily. This permanent repositioning is the foundation for our capacity to innovate and instantiate the future, and a guarantee for the sustainability of our development.

Allow Counter-Proposals.

In the city, we require contrary conceptions, so that dynamic urban development can take place on the peripheries of the "mainstream". We need "maximal difference", a multiplicity of contrary propositions and even contradictions, the recognition of and opening up to subcultures and peripheral groups, and finally a continual contending for primacy by all those involved. The simultaneous demand for sustainability does not constitute, in this connection, a contradiction to the model of a dynamic city. Sustainability can be attained through involving the populace in the process of urban development as early as possible and as honestly as possible. And only if these contrary approaches are painful and engender conflict is progress in the sense of dynamic urban development guaranteed. The Innovative, Unforeseen, Unexpected – those are qualities that determine the direction of the cities of the future.

Everything's Possible.

Our creed: The sum of possibilities that a city offers is its potential: Loneliness or sociability, natural space or constructed environment, acceleration or deceleration – the perceptible "both … and …" constitutes the real difference to rural life. That doesn't mean that there should be a theater in every district. But people should, in any case, have the possibility of getting to the theater within a very short time and by public transit. In the city, everyone finds their corresponding values and offers. The multiplicity of models of living that are possible within the urban realm is uncontainable and uncontrollable. Everyone can configure their own urbanity.

The Magic of Non-Standardization.

An authentic city needs errors. "To err is human," so the saying goes, and this means that through our (small) foibles we actually become human. A similar thing applies to cities. Cities that do everything right would resemble each other incredibly closely. The tendency of cities to iron out their errors, to attempt to straighten everything out completely and identically, even to standardize everything, stands in contradiction to the authenticity and liveliness of a city. One should always have the chance of improving on something, of being able to see something differently. For: If everything were perfect, then it would be impermissible to change anything. May something also be outside the norm? A city lives from its intended and unintended contradictions, and from the discussions and conflicts that result from them.

Just Do It.

Urbanites aren't consciously aware of their city. As a result, they aren't able to articulate its effect on them in many areas of their lives. And in the life of cities, too, many things are guided subconsciously. For this reason, our contributions to the future of urbanity must be understood as operations delving into the subconscious. That of the city, and also that of its residents. And: Whether cities succeed in experiencing urbanity does not become evident in the proclamation or declaration of intentions by some committee, but above all in the reality that is implemented. So much has already been initiated in thought, and yet how little has actually been put into practice. Urban development also requires authority. In Barcelona, for example, the large-scale reconfiguration of the city would not have been possible without the persistence of those responsible, who were not daunted even by having to resettle some residents.

Wanted: Individual Initiative.

When it comes to urban development, a city's residents also always bear some of the responsibility. They must be ready and able to help configure their city. They have to use the city and thus play their part in allowing urbanity to come about. At a time where people are increasingly allergic to joining causes and clubs, there is a need to develop new models for how people organize and interact with each other. A touch of "entrepreneurial spirit" (already noted by the "Work" Team) would be advantageous in any case.

In the Beginning Was Identity.

Despite – or perhaps precisely because of – the diversity that contributes so decisively to urbanity, there needs to be identity in the city. By and large, that identity reflects both the history and the functions of the city: Las Vegas as a gambling paradise or Hamburg as a Hanseatic city, for example. But at the micro-level, the residents also need points of intersection and relationship in their immediate vicinity. By virtue of its size, a city can be threatening. The human scale of one's own familiar neighborhood thus provides security. People find identity and something to hang on to by participating actively in societal life. Even city-folk need village structures. By no means, however, must identity be understood as a rigid construct – it changes over time. In order to find identity, urbanity thus requires the search for commonalities, and as a consequence the conscious demarcation from other urbanities and the nurturing of its own rituals.

Life
Work
Urbanity
Education

These days, when talk turns to "education", what's usually meant is training. In contradistinction to the humanistic idea of education as the formation of human beings, however, training is not future-oriented. Rather, it consumes itself in responding to the needs of the present. A central concern for the members of the "Education" Team, then, was to find out in which kinds of places learning for the future can come about.

The “Education” Team.

1 | Judith Schwentner
The editor-in-chief of the non-profit street paper *Megaphon* is also a museum curator, gastronomic critic, and DJ. Her two children are among the fourteen of the members of the "Education" Team.

2 | Sylvia Müller-Trenk
She is the COO and partner of Catro Human Resources Consulting, with a special feel for people, businesses and their needs. She's married with one son.

3 | Silvia Schober
Her degree in journalism and entrepreneurial communication is as good as completed. But this twenty-five-year-old has long since begun her career with the Austrian Press Agency APA.

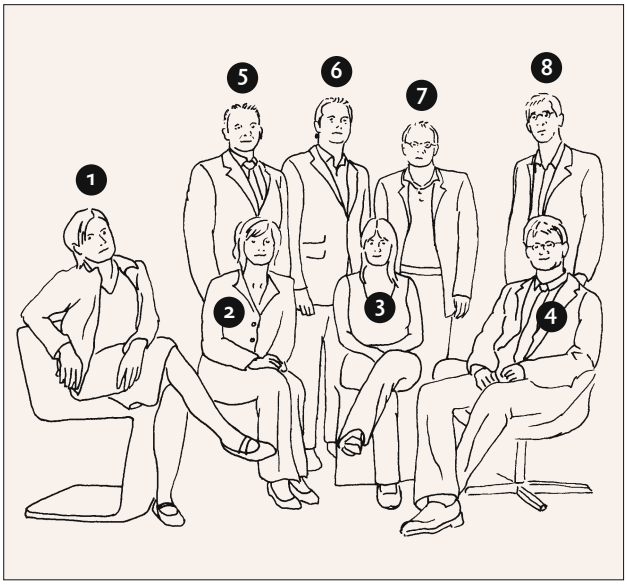
4 | Matthias Hartmann
The forty-five-year-old industrialist, whose tool forge employs 270 men and women, is living proof that manufacturing can take place here, too. He is married and has five children who are quite free to do an apprenticeship when the time comes.

5 | Ulrich Kanter
The partner in Roche Diagnostics in Graz does his best to combine the newest techniques of production with a creative human resources policy to create a win-win situation. Born in 1963, he is married with two children.

6 | Markus Tomaschitz
Born in 1970, has two children. As Executive Director of the Joanneum in Graz, he heads up one of Austria's largest universities of applied sciences. That gives him the opportunity to put his visions into practice.

7 | Michael Redik
Since 2005 he has been the head of the Graz Office of City Planning and working to create distinctive profiles for the city. Born in 1959, he is married and has two daughters.

8 | Martin Anton Müller | Section Editor
Born in 1977, studied art education and German in Vienna. His interest in education was most recently demonstrated through his doctoral dissertation – on the rights of children to beat their parents. Since then, professionally active as a brand developer.



"In Austria the 'Not-Invented-Here' syndrome still holds sway. We have wonderful engineers and wonderful forward-thinkers. But they say: 'I want to start from scratch; I'm not prepared to use solutions that exist in the marketplace.' "

Ulrich Kanter

"We've moved far away from our basic strengths. These are the quite simple values like family, like taking a stand on things that don't immediately bring in money, et cetera. And now we're experiencing symptoms of societal dissolution because we no longer need each other any more."

Matthias Hartmann

"Schools have to be green – not concrete bunkers. One can't measure children by the square feet they're supposed to occupy. There's money to do what's needed; what's missing is the political will." Sylvia Müller-Trenk

"Our educational system is good, to be sure, but it's not excellent. That's because people think that being 'good' suffices." Markus Tomaschitz

"Through my children I've experienced that schools have fundamentally rethought things; nowadays they're more positive. I'd like the schools to keep rethinking things. I'd like people to stop saying: 'We have to educate,' and start expressing it positively. Education something people should be looking forward to." Michael Redik

"We'd already been thinking of sending our children to an alternative school. But the danger I see in these private schools is that only the affluent go there. We didn't want this kind of isolation chamber for our children. They ought to come into contact with other children who are growing up in different circumstances." Judith Schwentner

"I don't think there's a country in this world where education is going especially well." Silvia Schober

Paul O'Leary

in Conversation with Matthias Hartmann

Life Can't Be Faked.

An Irishman who's ended up in Austria. He heads up the Institute for Automation at the Montanuniversität (Mining and Technical University) in Leoben, north-west of Graz, and develops robotic systems that can carry out quality control processes.

He doesn't care to have pictures of himself published.

Paul O'Leary has shown himself to be flexible and mobile. The only thing is, he doesn't consider these to be values per se. If he'd studied less, he would have learned more. After all, in becoming educated, one tries to measure up to life, not only to work.

What are the problems we'll have to solve in the next little while?
Systematic unemployment can't be conquered completely. Here's why: A certain percentage of our society is intellectually less suited to acquiring knowledge by and for itself. And the quite simple jobs, positions that used to be filled by workers trained on the job and for which high-level intellectual performance is not required, they're increasingly disappearing. I draw the following conclusion: If we want to change our society, then we have to start with the kindergartens and not with some "elite" university. Because if we want to change these systemic societal problems, we have to change the fundamental regard in which education is held.

Where in the course of your own education was the most time wasted?
I have to say my education was extremely efficient. I actually did it too efficiently; it would have been smarter if I'd taken another year for each of my degrees. I blame it on the Jesuits. I was with them for a long time, and they used to say to me: "O'Leary, if you go home and you've got homework assignments to do, then do them: Get them done. Or go outside and play. The worst thing you can do is to sit at your desk as if you were doing your homework, but you're not doing it. Then you've got neither the recreation from playing nor have you done your homework. All you'll have is stress." But that didn't mean just to be a "grind," but also: "If you can't get it done, then go play a bit and get some recreation." That's stayed with me till today. When I'm working, I'm working. But I also love my free time – when I'm off duty, I'm off duty. If I had taken a year's time after my first degree, had taken the time to have a look at life and to become a bit more mature, I would have gone into my profession and into relationships as a more well-rounded person. I think I was too young, too focused on achievement, and blind to other things in life. It took some life crises until I was able to integrate these things differently.

Handling emotions – is that something that's missing from our educational system?
Our society is totally unprepared to deal with them. Children who experience the divorce or separation of their parents have their emotional problems with the situation. And in school there's nothing in place to help them to deal with it. As a professor I've learned to say: "I'm not in the best emotional shape today. Let's see how we can make the most of this class anyhow." It's the emotional things that we're not taught at all.

If one wants to have a successful career these days, does that mean having to be flexible?
I did two degrees in Ireland, studied in the Netherlands, and did my doctorate in Italy. I lived in Germany for three years, and now I live in Austria. From time to time I'm held up as the poster boy for how you're supposed to do it. I think that's crazy. There is absolutely no societal model. Because our society needs coherence. That happens by way of friendships – and friendships need time; they have to grow. Increasing mobility is nevertheless necessary. Here in Austria there's hardly any. For me, moving from Graz to Vienna isn't a big deal. I'm talking about mobility and movement from the local level up to the European level.

How will businesses change in future in order to react to education?
Imagine a business with a low degree of automation. If it wants to make it through to 2017, it will have to have undergone fundamental change. The jobs will change. If this works, then the company will probably have the same number of people working for it, but a much larger manufacturing operation. The employees' level of education will have to be completely different. At the university, I've observed that most corporations devote hardly any thought to the long-term training of their employees. When we were restructuring the master's level program in Mining and Metallurgical Machinery, we did a lot of talking with people in the business. The only things the companies shared with me were their daily output requirements. But then I asked: "What kind

of education should new employees have had ten years from now?" If we change the degree requirements today, we can start training the new generation of employees, but the first ones won't have completed their degrees for five or six years. So they won't really be of use to the companies for ten years. And that's a topic the companies aren't ever capable of dealing with. The only thing they serve up are clichés: "More social competence, more languages, more autonomy – but without increasing the time students study, and without any loss in the quality of the degree." It's an urgent requirement for them to start engaging this subject seriously.

What role does specialization play?
I think we're going to need broader knowledge – from the ground up. There will always be specialists; we can't prevent that. But if we really want to ratchet the entire system up a notch, we need more generalists, people who can get their heads around many different things.

Nor will we succeed in producing more specialists, because we don't have the human potential for many more specialists. Sure, if we have an elite university, we can add another 100 people, but in percentage terms 100 people are a negligible quantity. The need for specialists will also climb much more quickly than we'll be able to cover it. I studied at Trinity College. No matter whether you were studying physics, chemistry or engineering – you had three years of training in the natural sciences. In the third year there, you got your B.A., and in fourth year you specialized in your actual major. The message was: You'll never be able to get the basics of natural science if you don't do it now. The specialized knowledge you need to do a job you'll get in and on the job.

What would you want in the way of basic education?
I can only refer back to my own experience. In Ireland, school is the same for all pupils until a child turns sixteen. Then there's the so-called Intermediate Certificate. It's only then that there's a parting of the ways – from then on there are divisions according to achievement. But there's a pool of subjects that is regarded as essential and is the same for everybody. And the "fluff" outside the core: You can choose what you want to take. The entrance requirements for Irish universities were the following: One had to present "A levels" in English, Gaelic, and one other so-called "Modern Continental Language." That was very difficult for me. But at least I went out into life with the notion that there are different languages that have their own grammars. One has to have mathematics. And of the natural sciences, either environmental studies, biology, chemistry or physics. That's for starters. And if one is more scientifically inclined, one takes more of these subjects, and if one's more humanistically inclined, more of those. I think it's a more solid foundation. One could also hypothesize that it's the foundation for Ireland's economic success.

Will esoteric subjects with no visible application continue to exist in future?
I think this kind of knowledge has its own value. Somebody who tells me that it's useless knowledge simply doesn't understand the value of knowledge. This is the point I'd like to emphasize above everything else: That we have to value teaching and knowledge. Because we then fundamentally value learning itself.

Which elements of your own training would you miss the most if you didn't have them?
There's one person, my mathematics professor at the university. If I hadn't had him, my career would have looked totally different and I would be a poorer human being in essential ways. This man has an enormous capacity for getting knowledge across through very simple questions asked at the crucial moment. One day, we were steering model ships in a tank with him, calculating their degree of list et cetera. And he asked me:

"We've scaled everything down. How do we scale water down?" And with such a simple question he made me aware of how one approaches physical things in general. I'm very grateful for this. Without him, this interest in my life would never have been kindled. I assume that there's a lot more inside most students than we'll ever succeed in awakening.

How should teachers change?
Right now I'm helping my partner's son in math. And it's apparent that his math teacher has only a superficial understanding of her subject. She learned math: step 1, step 2, step 3. But the boy has found a very unusual way of calculating the Rule of Three, in other words of solving proportions. The method works perfectly well, but it's not the way he was taught in school. He failed the assignment. We talked with the teacher because the approach is unusual, but it works perfectly well. And the teacher said: "Yes, but I taught him to do it differently." That can't be what education aims to do. That's the inflexible teaching of rote recipes. But the old recipes won't help any longer; we need new ones. And I really believe that teacher training should be such that the teachers really understand what they're teaching and are able to get it across.

Should education be freely accessible to everyone?
We have a societal problem that we're not yet ready to deal with: It's the contradiction arising from the fact that we need a higher level of education that will take longer to attain. And we have a pension system that demands longer working lives. But if education takes longer, it will be impossible ever to work the number of years that are required to qualify for a pension. We're about to find ourselves in the contradictory situation that we question the value of advanced education because it stands in opposition to enjoying life. Education is increasingly becoming a luxury article. There are really good students who say: "I'd rather work here because I need the money." Here's where the great divide is. Our pension system will be coming under ever-increasing pressure. On the other hand we aren't opening the possibility for those who say, "I'd like to work till I'm 70," to do just that. They're not allowed to. So we have a forced retirement system. I'm not saying that people should be forced to work till they're 70, but they should at least be offered the possibility of doing this.

What color is the future?
It's more a question of musical notes than of colors. Gregorian chant, inclining to simplicity. A group sound that together does something simple but very enriching. I think what I really want for myself from the future is a life of greater simplicity.

Eugen Lendl

in Conversation with Sylvia Müller-Trenk

Our Raw Material Is Creativity.

He forsook Vienna for Graz twenty years ago, and since then, he and his gallery have succeeded in affording the inhabitants of his adopted city the opportunity to encounter contemporary art. At one-month intervals, he alternates Austrian and international perspectives. And in doing so, he also demonstrates that ambitious galleries can make a go of it outside of Vienna. As a member of the Board of the Association of Austrian Galleries of Modern Art, he represents the galleries of all the Austrian federal states.

As far as Eugen Lendl is concerned, there's a need for more art academies. After all, creativity is the only capital on which we can build. Artists who are serious about their art rarely decide to go to cultural backwaters. For himself, he's rediscovering the salon.

In the future, will artists be more important?
Artists have always been important, but that's something people just didn't always notice. These days we're perhaps doing more precise thinking and research about where something comes from. In earlier times that wasn't the case – people just reacted. If you think of the turn of the last century, every half-way well-off entrepreneur had a group of artists who sat around his table; or his wife hosted a salon. Naturally, that's where visionary thoughts were advanced, and the visionary entrepreneur got a piece of the pie for himself. Not for nothing are many entrepreneurs, especially of the higher kind, quite at home in the arts. Think for a second of the number of chief physicians who play in string quartets for some mysterious reason. If you take a look at the people who inhabit the executive floors of big banks, the bosses are mostly creative thinkers, and three levels down we have interchangeable types whose job is confined to performing calculations.

Is that going to get more important?
The awareness on the increase, but not necessarily creativity itself. Naturally it has to be said straight out that we are living exclusively from creativity – there's nothing else we have as an input factor.

Do we have enough artists?
Artists we have enough of. The question is whether we can keep the potential alive. That'll only succeed if we arouse that potential and nurture it.

How could one go about that?
It's something you have to train. Creativity is fundamentally a question of training. Talent alone doesn't do the trick – people must be well trained; the best professors have to be brought in. Here, too, there needs to be stiff competition; there's nothing wrong with that. The contestation has to go on continuously. It's a fact that here in Graz we have only a half or three quarters of a cultural "scene". You can study almost everything in Graz – except fine arts. That means that if a nineteen-year-old wants to pursue the study of an artistic subject at the post-secondary level, she or he has to leave Graz. Then the question presents itself: Why would they return afterwards? A cynic would say: Either to take up a job as a middle-school teacher, or because she or he can move into a vacant apartment owned by Mama. Both reasons are fatal to an artistic career – it's a write-off. That fact that someone would have to leave Graz to study art means that artistic discussion isn't taking place here because there aren't the students here who would need to be debating these topics with each other.

Are you taking another run at establishing a university of the arts?
Yes! We've already got a lot of the elements needed to constitute an art academy. We have a technical university with a department of art history as well as training in artistic production, and we have a university whose curriculum includes art history. And we have universities of applied sciences. There are some elements we don't need, because they've outlived themselves. I see founding such an institution as a necessity for the future of Graz in the field of the fine arts.

That's a training course for artists. What's needed to make society as a whole more artistic?
From my perspective, that's the really thorny question. As we see, making a living demands so much of people that they really don't have much time for art. So we're talking about achieving some exemplary effect. Education takes place through role models. The way a mother interacts with a father – that's the way a son or daughter will later behave with his or her partner.

How's the mood for such role models?
The large-scale social difficulties are evident: The common enemy evaporates and so do the common goals. Everything falls apart and goes to wrack and ruin. Why are there so many divorces? Because these people no longer arrive at a common way of thinking, because their

parents don't model married life, and then the next generation's marriage doesn't make it either. I'm a member of the parent generation too, and I'm asking myself what we've done wrong.

In the 1960's there was an artistic renaissance in Graz. Who were the pace-setters then?
It's really always a question of those individuals who both set and advance the agenda, who have the self-confidence to risk something on their own. The real pace-setters – they're few and far between. Every institution is only as good as the person leading it. If a gallery owner is crazy enough, he'll be able to carry off something path-breaking. If he just wants to earn some money, he'll do some sort of thing or other. If there are just a few such figures, then that's a striking percentage of those who are doing things. The only thing that surprises me is how many there are, in the final analysis.

Back then it was architecture that really stood out in Graz. That's where you studied architecture. What significance did the people have who were involved back then?
We had a few teachers from the Bauhaus. To get into the first lecture by Hubert Hoffmann we all had to bring a flute, and then we all played flute together. Those were totally different kinds of lessons. These days the study of architecture is more structured, almost like being in school. But back then people were open. And then the demand grew. Out of what were once a few good architects there grew the Graz School of Architecture.

Are those coincidences?
No, in this context there are no coincidences. There has to be something in the air, or the time must be ripe for something like that. It has to be "timely," as they say. The person who triggers it is then often not really personally "at fault".

What's "ripe" now? Is there something that's clearly in the offing right now?
As far as I'm concerned, a city like Graz has only one chance. And that is, if it really uses its resources. 42,000 students represent a considerable capital, only a fraction of which is being utilized. The amount of brain power that we have on hand here constitutes an extremely rich resource. Cast your thoughts back to 2003, when Graz was the Cultural Capital. There were two things that were absent then, with or without leave: the Joanneum and the university. Neither of them played a role in 2003. That's actually quite unimaginable.

What does that mean for the future?
Our raw material is brains, and our export product is creativity. We'll never be the masters of mass production. A company can establish its research institute anywhere in the world because it has the money to do so. It needs people who were trained here, so it goes fishing at the university. The professor is sitting there and says: "Listen up, I've got a live one for you." Or: "Do you need somebody for a job, maybe between semesters?"

Does humanistic education get left in the dust, then?
Things certainly will not operate quite according to the old formulas. Humanistic education is the formation of the human being, of character, but that doesn't mean that everything depends on knowing Latin at all costs. It should distinguish us from the pure calculators, however. It's clear that the next revolution is going to be an educational revolution. Because those who have been downgraded to pure servants are going to get back on top.

At the beginning of the interview you spoke of the fact that a hundred years ago businessmen exchanged ideas with artists and in this way arrived at their own vision. Does anything like that exist today?
My wife doesn't spend her whole day at work any more. For the last three years we've had a lovely, spacious apartment in which we also have a dining room in the classical, late bourgeois style. We have a table with eight chairs, where nothing takes place except dining. The room is large, a classical dining room. My wife likes to cook, and she cooks well. It's thus the case that business also transpires at our house. A lot takes place via the social aspect. It happens that artists are our guests, and they end up staying over, spending the night. If you have a guest bedroom, you don't send the artists to a hotel, you know. Suddenly something arises that's something like a salon. We certainly have guests over at least twice a week. Then you have to start thinking about what's going to happen and how. Inside that thought are hidden quite different qualities.

Blue Sky Thinking.

Karl Heinz Gruber is a professor of education at Oxford. He writes letters that are published in the Austrian newspaper Der Standard. In them, he draws attention to what needs to be done and how to do it.

In many countries it's usual to subject the education system to a "routine check-up" from time to time. Some countries took the 2K millennial switch as an occasion to establish such a balance-sheet and to set courageous goals for educational policy. In part it was a question of identifying and eliminating shortcomings and weak points, but frequently more of "proactive" measures for anticipating predictable challenges like the global expansion of the knowledge-intensive "high-skills" job sector. Thus, in 2000 the Blair government in England took the decision that by the year 2020, fifty percent of 18-year-olds should be embarking upon postsecondary studies. Sweden, a model of forward-looking political rationality, developed its own educational policy strategies a decade earlier. And as early as the 1980's, François Mitterand had already declared, in a sweeping gesture, that by 2000 80% of French school-leavers should have a secondary school certificate that entitled them to study at a university, a measure designed to mobilize the intellectual reserves of the "Grande Nation". They "only" attained 70%, but Mitterand's vision accomplished a massive increase in educational participation in the senior high-school grades, and an "explosion universitaire".

If educational policy wants to escape the reproach of "automaticity and lack of planning", and wants as well to avoid the self-satisfied perpetuation of the status quo, it will be well-advised to ensure that its current activities and any intended reforms meet the following four quality criteria established by the OECD for democratic educational systems, or to have itself evaluated by an international team of experts from the OECD: (1) Equity: Does the educational system guarantee equal opportunity and does it function fairly? (2) Quality: Does it ensure quality learning processes and relevant learning results? (3) Efficiency: Does it expend scarce public funds thriftily and efficiently? (4) Liberty: Does it ensure the highest possible level of self-determination?

No country can avoid formulating an educational master plan that lays out, among other things, how large the postsecondary sector should be and what percentage of 18-year-olds should go to a college or university. Without a binding financial plan, such a declaration of intentions would, however, be merely a pile of morally-uplifting political waste-paper. After all: The expansion of the French senior high schools and the English colleges and universities was possible only because those governments made available the funds for new construction and the requisite personnel Is the injection of a billion or so dollars into a country's postsecondary institutions to be regarded as farsighted generosity or as inadequate tightfistedness? The answer depends completely on which assumptions about the future size of the post-secondary sector are represented in this amount.

Educational research, which tends to don administrative blinders, must have the courage to do what the English call "blue sky thinking". That means that interdisciplinary teams of experts investigate (1) which action scenarios are conceivable for a societal sub-sector like education; (2) under which conditions this can be accomplished; and (3) what is desirable in societal terms, reflects the current standard of knowledge, and is economically affordable and politically responsible. And that in doing this, they act without regard to the answers they think a government might like to hear and without premature compromises, but with creativity, fantasy and social sensitivity.

Denise Patricia Barlow

in Conversation with Markus Tomaschitz

Bring Along Your Passion.

Her research on the genome made her an international authority. Since then, this Englishwoman has also conducted research on the Continent: in Germany, the Netherlands and now in Austria. She is Honorary Professor of Genetics at the University of Vienna and heads up a team at the Austrian Academy of Sciences' Centre for Molecular Medicine. The research objective is to explain the interplay of illness and genetic predisposition.

Denise Barlow is certain: If you want to play in science's premier league, you can't compete solely against minor-league opponents. You need, among other things, money and the continuous monitoring of performance. Each country must engender its own enthusiasm for research.

Will your field of study be more important in ten years' time?
I would say "Yes". Because it deals with research that will give science the possibility of understanding chromosomes. This information will help physicians in diagnosing and treating diseases.

Will the curtain on chromosomal knowledge be lifted by then?
Naturally. We've already made tremendous progress. Epigenetics looks at genetic phenomena that aren't directly coded in the DNA sequence. Our five-person team is working to establish maps of all chromosomes, in order to capture these epigenetic phenomena. That's the next step in the process. We can house the entire mouse genome on 19 chips. That's 700,000 points on these little microscope slides. We should soon have the entire map and then we can look into the connections between epigenetics and both illness and the aging process. It's the second code that we need.

Where do the big challenges for future science lie?
Well, here there's a difference between Austria and the rest of Europe. In the course of my career I've worked in various European countries. I think Austria has to stop being Austria and nothing but Austria. But in this respect, one probably has to be a scientist to understand this. Maybe it's helpful to compare the situation with soccer. After all, it's not good if all you have is local teams playing against each other. Only when one plays against higher-level teams can one improve.

Do Austrians know this?
At least they know that competition makes sense. But in Austria and Germany this often consists of knowing Professor So-and-so, so that he and his colleagues then supervise your thesis; but it doesn't mean knowing how good one is. Austria can naturally keep on doing what it's doing and maintain its level of success, but I don't think that's how one takes things up a notch. There are so many famous Austrians who work abroad because they simply feel that here at home, their work is being held back.

But Austria is trying to get some of these people back – right now through plans for an elite university. Do you think this approach can be successful?
In the final analysis, it's a question of money. Money attracts scientists. That means that to be able to do their research, they'd go to the ends of the earth. So the question is whether by creating an elite university one would provide the money for good researchers. The second question is: Will it have a convincing advisory committee that includes more than the usual collection of Austrian alpha males?

If you were Minister of Education, what would you try to accomplish?
I'd probably need a long-term plan. The problem with the Austrian educational system is that high-school graduates can study a subject at a university without being properly prepared. That means that the first two years are spent acquiring basic knowledge. And in order to provide that knowledge, they call on the best people. In England, for example, one has to decide on a field much earlier. Austrian students arrive a university with much less preparation. As a result, Austrian students can't enter professional life until they're older. On the other hand, Austrian pupils have a better general education. But that doesn't make them more competitive.
I think it's a philosophical question for Austrian educational policy. Let's take for example the matter of supplemental oral exams that student can take if they failed the written exam. That's a big investment in time for the teaching staff. In England, for example, that second chance doesn't exist unless there are exigent personal reasons like illness, for example.

What educational prerequisites will success demand?
Enthusiasm, passion for something in your life, something that urges you on. Personality and communicative competence. France and the U.S. are very good in these respects. If you're a professor in the States, people have a positive image of you. I don't know how that is here. France even names streets after famous people of today. In Boston there's a subway station in which one can read a list of the discoveries Nobel Prize winners have made. I think in this respect, the arts come away better in Austria.

How will people in the future deal with the growing complexity of life?
I don't especially like the question. I think that life in the Middle Ages was also pretty complicated. I don't think that in the future we'll have, say, 100 possibilities where there are only ten today. The possibility of really being able to choose is there only if one is very rich and also has a lot of time. If you've got a family and a job, then you also have a different take on so-called possibilities.

In what kinds of places will people want to live? Will the big cities continue to grow; will Asia be more important than the U.S. or Europe?
People are so different. I live in Klosterneuburg, northwest of Vienna, and most of my colleagues think I'm crazy because I have a one-hour commute each direction every day. If one sees more advantages in city life, then one lives in a city. In Austria commuting isn't exactly an easy matter. Let's take Holland as an example. Between Rotterdam and Amsterdam direct trains go back and forth the whole day and late into the night. In other words, if public transit functioned better here, then more people would live outside the cities.

Will multiculturalism play a bigger role in future?
In the world of science it's always been important – no, actually essential – to have worked abroad. I think Austria is much more multicultural than might seem to be the case at first glance. There's simply this European mix, even if Austria gives the impression of not being multicultural. In London, for example, multicultural tolerance exists only at certain levels. It was always the case there that certain ethnic groups arrived who at first simply weren't tolerated, but this situation changed in time for the group in question. When I was growing up, that was the case for immigrants from India. My parents come from India, and I was born in England. Today Indians are accepted. In Austria's case, that's not so obvious. I also think that people here are more tolerant of people with different skin colors than they are of people who come from Turkey. In London that's different.

Which values will be important?
There I can only speak for myself and also just voice a wish. I would be happy if nobody were excluded from society any more. Naturally we're also talking about access to education here. Everybody should have a place in society. When I came to Austria for the first time in 1988, I noticed there were very many elderly people on the street. In London that's not the case, not even during the day. That means, then, that older people in Austria have a higher status. That's how it should be.

Is there anything you wish for yourself in future?
I like living and working in Austria. So I bought this house in Klosterneuburg, and in the process I made a big mistake. It's too close to a very loud road. The road wasn't loud when I saw the house and purchased it. The question I'd like to pose is: "Why aren't there any anti-noise technologies that can eliminate, for example, road noise?" If I won the EuroMillions Lottery, I'd endow an "Anti-Noise-Thingamajig" Prize. It can't be that tough to invent something like that.

The Project 400 Rule List.

Each month, the magazine Game Developer publishes rules that are meant ultimately to provide a kind of rule book for the programmers of quality computer games. Here is a selection of the rules for creating games that treat children well:

1 Fight player fatigue.
2 Maximize expressive potential.
3 Maintain level of abstraction.
4 Concretize ideas: All game ideas must find expression in playable elements.
5 Build in subgames.
6 Provide clear, short-term goals.
7 Let the player turn the game off or pause it.
8 Be aware of the possibilities and limits of your concept.

10 Be careful not to become implausible; avoid elements that disturb the experience of playing.
11 Emphasize exploration and discovery.
12 Provide implicit aids that allow different solutions for different types of games.
13 Give variables precedence over constants.
14 Connect the intermediate tasks of the story with the whole.

19 Make the game fun for the player, not for the designer or computer.

21 Use real-world sequences and minimize the opportunities for cheating.
22 Insert a small does of randomness into Artificial Intelligence calculations.

24 Never penalize a player – however one spins it, it takes away the fun.
25 Provide an enticing long-term goal.

27 Keep the interface consistent and require the player to make the minimum possible effort to learn the game.
28 Ask yourself what the player would do.

35 Address the needs of instructors, teachers and trainers.
36 Make even serious games fun.
37 Design to the game's strengths instead of orienting yourself to its limitations.

46 Raise the emotional stakes for maximum player involvement.

48 Some players would like to have the game demonstrated to them before they play themselves; some players would just like to try it out. Make both possible.
49 Not everyone values head-to-head competition resulting in a clear winner. Enable indirect competition.
50 Everything should be as simple as possible, but no simpler.

56 Don't force people to learn something, but increase the entertainment value of doing so.

65 Do, don't show.

68 Make failure spectacular, varied, and cool.

Dirk Stermann

in Conversation with Silvia Schober

A Farewell to Thoughtlessness.

At the age of 22 he left Duisburg and came to Vienna to study. That was in 1987, and he still hasn't finished his degree. That might be one reason he's still there. Other reasons: A daughter and a host of awards. He's earned them as "The German" in what is arguably the Austrian Radio Service's best hosting team and a gifted two-man cabaret whose fame extends between here and Duisburg.

Those who party in fish-like silence don't get it. Interest, after all, is more important than math, and family life provides greater satisfaction than Viagra. What counts for Dirk Stermann in the final analysis is that one finds that what one is doing is good.

Can a person be said, at some point, to be fully educated?
I fear that at some point we're more or less saturated and can't absorb anything more. I think it's great when I see colleagues who are 50 or 60 years old and are still interested in various things. But this enthusiasm is something one can't learn – one has to cultivate it. The popular FM4 broadcaster and DJ Fritz Ostermayer, for example, is a case in point. He's fifty and is incredibly interested in pop music, architecture and literature. Because of this, he makes a totally young impression. And there are quite a few twenty-year-olds who stand there in front of me at FM4-parties without saying a word and who give me the feeling that there's absolutely nothing that really interests them. They exude a feeling that's much older than fifty-year-old Fritz.

What causes that?
We shouldn't underestimate the fact that enthusiasm takes an effort, too. And if one doesn't cultivate enthusiasm, it dries up and ceases to exist. For certain things, one simply has to make the effort.

What's your personal definition of education?
Education is fundamentally something good. I think it's weird that education has such a dumb reputation. But I think people will soon start having children again and they'll then rediscover the joy of learning something in school. I think the balance is in the process of shifting, so that things that are now considered boring and conservative will once again become more interesting. A short time ago I was at a palliative care clinic in Germany, and I saw that it's quite devastating when people die alone. I think that everyone I know will die impoverished and alone, and also at a relatively young age, because medical services will no longer be provided; and because they're all free-lancers in such professions as journalism, they aren't making much money. Many of them don't have children, and many are single – and that has some really cool aspects, too. None of my acquaintance and friends will get a pension because pensions won't exist any more. But they haven't made other arrangements because that would look so incredibly bourgeois. And then they sit all alone in a clinic where they don't receive any treatment because they can't afford it. But they also don't have an extended family who could fill the void. And that's why I believe that the "decades of the family" will be making a comeback, because people will get sick of their own loneliness. So at the age of 80 they'll probably still be gulping Viagra in the attempt to quickly start a new family.

How essential are education and knowledge?
I think they're critically important! Knowledge is good. If you didn't know anything, then you couldn't establish any connection between what you experience and something else; you wouldn't be able to put it into context. Education gives security and can also make you curious. Curiosity is the decisive thing – along with pleasure.
I think there are also certain things that one doesn't have to know. I think that skin conditions and allergies are connected to the fact that we're being bombarded with too much information and that our bodies are resisting. I think Googling is horrible. I hardly Google any more because it drives me crazy to read: page 1 of 17,500. There's too much information and too little contextualization so that one might know what of it is important.

How can one help oneself there?
By making choices. You have to set your own limits. I've always known that there are certain things I can't do. And I can't allow that to make me sad. Then I just have to say it doesn't make any sense to worry about it. I have to be above it, so that I'm able to do other things.

What isn't good about the educational system?
I think it's really dumb that at the age of 14 or 15 people already have to decide what type of school secondary school they want to attend. In a couple of schools in Vienna and in one in Graz there's now a new principle called "modular senior high." That's more like it was in my days in school, and it's cool because students can drop subjects, too. It's more like a course system. The kids can work on all kinds of topics and then get credit

for it through all kinds of different courses. They can't fail a grade, which I think is also good. And they can set up their own schedules. They also have a right to free periods, but only within a certain limit. They can also bank free periods so that their vacation starts two weeks earlier.

Do you think marks are important?
I think they're dumb. I have no clue what they're supposed to do. Because all marks do is make kids afraid and lead to discord, envy and panic. And learning is actually supposed to be pleasurable. In my daughter's case there was a big poster at the entrance of the Freinet Public School that proclaimed that every child has the right to have learning be fun. I think that has to be the basic principle, because that's the only way one can use what one learns.

What's special about the Freinet School?
The principle is that it's not the teacher who decides – everybody decides. So my daughter was in a peace class. There was always a peace corner, and whenever there was a disagreement, the teacher left the room and the students had to take care of the situation themselves. Democracy was the decisive factor here.

Do you have any sense of what your daughter should do for a living?
The only sense I have is that she should do what she wants to do. I can only wish for her that she take pleasure in various things, that she have the good fortune to meet nice people who support her in her endeavors. In any case I would advise her not to decide too early, and to try out as many things as possible, and when she finds what fits, that she also be aware of it.

How come you never completed your degree?
I already had the topic for my master's thesis, something I wanted to do because it interested me. And then I called up a professor and told him that I was going to write my thesis. And he said, "Yes, go ahead." And then I read everything there was on that topic and found it interesting, too. But then I called up the professor again and told him that I thought it was stupid, when you get right down to it, to prove now that I'd read it. I had read it, after all, so why should I have to write anything about it?

Why did you actually become a cabaret artist?
Just like everything else, it was a coincidence. It was never my goal; it just happened. There are so many advantages of being in radio. You have a lot more freedom. When you're on the stage it's the case that, just in order to survive the evening psychologically, you do a bunch of fairly crude things. The goal is to get through the evening without injuries.

So it's a dangerous profession?
A bit dangerous psychologically. And also because one travels around a lot and doesn't take good care of oneself. My cabaret partner Christoph Grissemann is better at that than I am. He maintains contact with real life. I maintain only minimal contact. For example, I hate to use the telephone. That's not a good thing when one's traveling. People don't like it if you never call them. And when they call, then I try to get it over with quickly. That doesn't exactly strengthen the ties that bind.

Where would you want to invest a lot of future effort?
I'd really like to do something sometime that I think is good. Grissemann and I actually never think that what we're doing is good. I'd at least like to get closer to that good feeling. And then, I imagine becoming more social, taking care of the people around me. And maybe in this way to build up a kind of second life, to do something completely different. I could combine that quite well with my profession; I could do the one thing for half a year and the other thing for the other half.

So six months as a cabaret artist and six months as a baker?
Probably not a baker because I don't get a lot of pleasure out of baking, but cooking is something I could imagine doing.

Meaning you'd like to learn how to cook?
Yes, I think that'd really be good. I have an acquaintance who's a cook, and I told her I'd like to do an internship with her because I'd like to learn how to do banalities – in other words more simple things – again.

Bechamel sauce?
No, I hate that. But there are a couple of things I'd really like to learn how to cook and about which I'd like to know why that's the case.

There's Never Been More Beginning than Now.

In Friedrichshafen, Germany, there's a new university for the contrary spirit. Martin Anton Müller had a look around.

"Society is undisciplined. So are we!" That's the motto on the sprawling building of the "Zeppelin University" – named after the airship factory once located there – that looks out from the northern shore of Lake Constance. The university's founding president, 34-year-old Stephan A. Jansen, takes the motto as a goal to be achieved through educating his students as creative generalists in the fields of culture, politics and business.

The university has existed since 2003, engendered by the enthusiasm of a small group of teachers and students from the ambit of the previously most renowned of German private universities at Witten/Herdecke. "At a public university," says Karen van den Berg, Chair of Cultural Management and Curatorial Praxis, "a professor can loudly proclaim he doesn't want to have anything to do with the university. That's permissible, and both he and the university can go their separate ways. With us, something like that isn't possible. We're a private institution. And because everything we do is crucial to our continuing existence, we have to contest everything. At the same time, we are constantly assuring each other that we know why we're teaching what we teach."

Distributed over the face of the building one finds further epigram-like admonitions that advocate thinking against the grain: "Just as many things can take on various meanings, so many things can mean the same thing". "There's never been more beginning than now". They are meant to demonstrate that here, one doesn't learn how to apply rules, but how to think. In terms of its theoretical approach, the university isn't anything new. It focuses on that which is known about modern education by those who dare to think for themselves. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, stimulating interests, practice-oriented.

At the moment, 200 students are enrolled in a three-year Bachelor's or two-year Master's program. They can choose from among three programs of study. If they were intending to qualify for a single profession, then some would become commerce graduates with expertise in culture, others would become civil servants in an up-to-date administrative setting, and still others would end up heading concert houses or theaters. By the time the university hits full stride, it will be accepting four times as many students paying tuition to the tune of 4,000 Euros per semester. In return they get limited-enrolment seminars and extensive individual mentoring instead of large lecture courses.

The instructors' pleasure in teaching carries over to the students. At any moment they have to be able to explain why they are studying a particular subject, how it benefits them, and what they're not learning in the process. Tammo Schülke, beginning his third year of studies, says: "The hardest thing here is that the faculty has a lot more practice in creative and critical thinking. The president wants us to stand up more often and be able to take contrary positions." The students exercise corresponding influence on the university – it was they, in the final analysis, who brought about the switch to the British and North American semester schedule that allows four months' time in the summer for the mandatory internships.

So far, the university has been living up to its mottos. But the path to inconsequential hype is paved with good intentions. The planned growth will require a lot more work, challenge and contradictoriness. And Karen van den Berg would also like to put the saying about unfettered thinking on the agenda for more discussion. After all, she's not aware of any other university where students and faculty work in such a disciplined way.

Erentrud Friedl

in Conversation with Michael Redik

Making Recurring Patterns Recurringly Interesting.

Born in 1948, this native of Styria followed her calling as a teacher. Since entering the profession, she has been working at the Graz Model School (for teacher candidates), each day opening windows on the world. Teaching with heart, she transforms children's inexperience into cosmopolitanism. She helps teacher candidates complement their theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Her trick: She herself is the one who learns the most from those she's teaching.

Erentrud Friedl knows quite precisely what should be happening in and with schools. She pleads passionately for openings to the world of the arts and creativity; but these, unfortunately, are increasingly falling victim to cuts. Through education she wants to get people out of shopping malls.

Late afternoon. Graz-Eggenberg Model Primary School. Even after a long school day that began at 6:00 a.m. with preparations for the day, Erentrud Friedl is bursting with energy. She receives us cordially in a neat little classroom and offers us a seat on one of the little chairs that are normally reserved for her pupils in a preschool class. Out on the playground, children are playing: "It sometimes happens that a child will look in on us. But that's entirely appropriate." A school idyll, which will soon come to an end, as Friedl tells us not without touch of wistfulness. For financial reasons, the Catholic Church, which operates the school, will have to give it up and is trying to find other uses for the building.

Increasingly, education is being distributed over a person's entire life. Your current pupils may also have to attend continuing education classes thirty years from now. Does that mean primary school is declining in importance?
Absolutely not. In earlier times, primary school had the basic task of transmitting classical cultural techniques such as reading, writing and arithmetic. But nowadays a lot more has been added. And that's why I'd like to argue against the proposition that primary school is no longer that important just because it's followed by several subsequent phases of education. Quite the contrary: Primary school is where children should learn how to learn. Through a whole variety of experiences. It's a real shame that at the intermediate and advanced levels of the academic stream, certain forms of learning aren't being followed up on any more.

How did primary schools react to extending length of time pupils have to be in school?
By continually rethinking their pedagogy; in other words, what they teach. And by ensuring it's appropriate to where we are now. If I think back to the beginnings of my teaching career, there's a huge difference between what I did then and what I do now. The forms of teaching and learning have changed; "discovery-based learning" is now the order of the day: Children are supposed to explore on their own. Of course, there are things that have to be shown to the children, but the most important thing is the active experiencing of things, so that the children actually "grasp" things and work with them. That's something they have to do themselves. Naturally, only up to the point where it might be dangerous. Then I have to intercede. Or, when I think back to gym class in my own school days – that was terrible, really horrible. Physical education these days is holistic; the whole body is involved. In other areas, too, there have been many changes in relation to holistic education. One has to like something oneself; then it's effective.

What further changes should be undertaken in schools? What would be your wishes for the medium term here?
For the children I wish for a school that doesn't exclude artistic and creative aspects. That's really, really important. Unfortunately things are happening in this regard right now that aren't advantageous for the children. I'd like to have more offerings, more possibilities, including the spatial environment. I'd want there to be studios, music rooms, the possibility for students to encounter artists, to make their own music, put on their own plays, maybe in collaborative projects with older children. I'd have a few ideas in this regard. Education shouldn't just hit a few high spots; it should be thorough and well-grounded. Naturally, that would require teachers who are prepared to roll up their sleeves and do well-grounded work. And by "well-grounded," I mean they are themselves well grounded and capable of giving students the tools they need so they can handle the things they're going to confront. That's the school of life.

There's general agreement that it's important to preserve curiosity. How does one do this, with both school children and adults?
That's part of the teacher's stock-in-trade, having to think about the methodological-didactic approach. How can I arrange it so things that keep recurring remain permanently and recurringly interesting?
That's a kind of secret knowledge that demands both a wealth of ideas and sufficient curiosity on the part of the

teacher to track things down. There are sufficient stimuli, really – we're almost overwhelmed. And in this regard it's quite important not to overwhelm the children with too many stimuli, but rather to make the everyday into something special. And when that's successful, then one has done a good job. That's basically it.

Turning to the people that you deal with every day: What would you wish for your pupils?
That the children are at home in really good families and that they aren't exposed to the pressure of being yanked back and forth between spouses. That's the worst thing for children. I want kids to enjoy an untroubled childhood, not in some overblown, artificial sense of the "high life events", or however these things are called, but of valuable childhood experiences that penetrate deeper than the surface. Things they take pleasure in recalling. And I also wish that they will some day be capable of sharing good experiences with other people, to find good friends, good partners with whom to share their life, with whom they have the possibility of creating a social network, a network in which someone feels really "at home". In other words, I wish them a good family, so that they can pass this on. And I also wish that they'll have a solid economic foundation so that they can continue to live well, because that's important, too – without this foundation it's not possible.

And in which kinds of places could life transpire in the future – where will people enjoy being?
I worry that people – and that's naturally a function of their respective social status – will increasingly flee into a world in which they can participate superficially, but of which they are nevertheless not really part. Because they don't have the opportunity to participate. I am an advocate of an urban fabric that doesn't allow the city to be pushed out up against the countryside. I know that there are many people who spend a lot of time in shopping centers in order to "be part of things", yet without being able to afford anything, to be a consumer. I know of some people who spend their free afternoons there.
We should be using education to motivate people so that they no longer see it as necessary to take refuge in such places. So that they undertake something meaningful with their children instead.

This school is about to be closed. What will change at this location when there's no longer a school here? What's the importance of your school for the local community?
I think it's going to leave behind a gap. In the first years that gap will be very evident; and as is the case with such gaps, gradually it will disappear. And maybe someone will say: "Yes, it's a shame there's no longer a school there," but then that will be it. The location is important; but on the other hand, parents increasingly consciously select a particular school. And here it's gradually become less important how close the school is to home; it's rather the quality of the school that determines the choice. But naturally distance also plays a role – whether the children's route to school is compatible with the parents' daily routes.

Is there something like identity formation that comes about through having an educational institution here on site? If so, what would that identity look like?
There would have to be – but that's something that's increasing now – a certain spirit present in a school, what's now referred to as the "guiding image", that's also perceptible. Here, people have spoken of the "Eggenberg climate", and that's something that wasn't always perceptible to the same extent. But this school is really carried by a spirit that a majority of the people help to support; and then others who can't contribute to this support can still be borne up by it.

How strongly can educational institutions and educational standards affect the development of a district in the planning phase?
When you set up an educational institution that's conceived such that it's an all-inclusive institution leading from day care to kindergarten to preschool and then to primary school. That could then be a consistent principle that flows all the way through. If you initiated something like that there, and then brought in the creative arts as specialties, then I could image that graduates of that school would become special people who radiate something special. It's not for nothing that people say: "He went to Harvard." There are certain expectations bound up with that. And then it could well be the case that someone says: "He went to this or that school." In our case people said: "Attended the Model School."

Mama, I Wanna Go to Boarding School!

In the venerable, tradition-laden boarding school Salem overlooking Lake Constance, there is an ongoing effort to create a place where children want to grow up with their contemporaries. A short memo from the long-time Headmaster, Bernhard Bueb.

Those who accompany the process of children's growing up, whether as parents, teachers or observers, experience the power of the age cohort. The influence of parents on fifteen-year-olds verges on zero. If we want to mould young people's characters, we have to create an environment that uses the "age cohort" factor to strengthen their personalities.

The response of reform pedagogues of the past retains its validity today: Communities must be established, communities of teachers and learners, in which, under the aegis of adults, young people receive values through which they can develop their self-confidence.

In addition to education and instruction we have the process of experiencing one's own personhood within the community. Using Salem College as an example, I want to show how the pedagogical response to the disintegration of public morality might look in practice. The central principle is educating youngsters to responsibility. To take on responsibility within a community conveys the feeling of being needed. To transfer responsibility to young people requires in turn that we have high degree of confidence in these youngsters.

There are many official duties and functions through which young people can prove themselves: As assistants to a group, by helping out in a factory, by assisting guests. . . . Through these assignments, young people learn to think and act in a political context. The virtue of community feeling and the value of helping those who are less strong than oneself are experienced through service. For this reason every student must devote one afternoon a week to other people. It is important to liberate these youngsters from their passive posture of having fun. For they grow up in a world in which they are bombarded by many external stimuli and allures. The opportunity to find one's own way in chaotic circumstances is, on the other hand, almost non-existent. The founder of the boarding school, Kurt Hahn, wanted to abolish the traditional school for young people between 14 and 16, and to help them go through challenges in which they learn to experience being needed. In Salem, our ninth-graders are sent into the mountains or to the sea for two weeks, where they must provide for themselves without a roof over their heads. The more challenging such days are, the more contented the students are when they return. For they have experienced fun as a consequence of their own activity and not in consequence of direction or prompting by third parties.

A boarding school community requires strict, external discipline. Discipline means subordination. Obedience does not contradict the development into a free, critical personality. English, American and French pupils in the elite schools of these countries grow up under the strict dictates of subordination, discipline and obedience; they come out as free, critical citizens. Young people must be alert if they are to find their own way. At the same time they must learn to represent their own interests, to defend themselves against egoism or patronizing behavior by others, as well as against discrimination and being ganged up on. They have to learn that self-pity and playing the victim are the wrong way to go. For the school's leadership, it is often equally important to reinforce the self-esteem of victims of mass bullying as it is to correct the perpetrators. The best correction of perpetrators comes, after all, from victims who are imbued with the courage to leave the victim's role behind.

Berlant Nazhueva

in Conversation with Judith Schwentner

The Naturalization of Emotions.

Born in 1985. Spent her childhood in Chechnya and Russia, where she completed her schooling with distinction. In 2002 she fled to Austria with her family. For the first few months, she lived in a home for those seeking political asylum; since then, she's been living in Graz. Berlant, who prefers to be called Bella, is currently preparing to study business and is much in demand as a translator to and from Chechen.

Berlant knows the difference between emotions and the need for security. A passport is good only for the latter. In order to learn integration, one needs, above all, openness. The way to welcome a fellow human being is something that guests often know better than hosts.

Bella, how are you approaching the future?
I'm an optimist.

Do you often wonder about what the future holds for you?
I naturally ask myself what I'll be doing in the future. I'm not an Austrian and didn't grow up in this country. I think that my future will take place in Austria. In Chechnya right now there is nothing, and in the next twenty years there will certainly be nothing there, either.

You're now 21. How would your life look if there hadn't been a war in Chechnya?
Then my only worry would be my university studies. I wouldn't spend so much time thinking about Chechnya, about the people there. It would be better. The people would have a future, would have what I have here: They could sleep in peace, go shopping, meet friends, party, work and study. But in Austria I'm always two persons. I have to answer questions such as yours twice – as a person and as a Chechen.

What would you like to have accomplished ten years from now?
I can't tell you all that concretely now. But in any case I want to study business administration. In ten years, maybe I'll already be married. Maybe I'll already have children. I hope to be done with my studies and working. Maybe as a translator. Right now I'm also working as a translator.

Why business administration?
I was still in school. I was fifteen and certainly the only one in my class who wanted to do that (she laughs).

How come a fifteen-year-old wants to study business administration?
It was during the war that I made up my mind. In such a setting, art isn't that important. I can't stand the sight of blood, so medicine wasn't in the cards. And I don't like law either. I thought by the time I was 17 the war would be over. Then everything would have to be rebuilt, so I wanted to combine business administration with agriculture.

What is it you especially wish for yourself in the future?
I wish that integration functioned better. That people who come here would try to integrate, and that Austrians would try to understand immigrants. In my case it was always quite easy; that's just how I am. Maybe because I always wanted to learn and sought to link up with people. I quickly found friends and learned the language. That's the most important thing in any case for a foreigner. Once you know the language, everything happens by itself. It's harder for older people. Moreover, there are many more Chechens in Austria right now, and they visit each other and speak Chechen and as a result don't get integrated as well. I don't think they need more external help; rather, they themselves have to be more open. Some need support because they can't work. They want to work, you know, but they simply can't find a job.

Do you remember your first impression in coming to Austria?
It was night. So many woods. I couldn't think. People paid me absolutely no attention. You've just arrived; you constantly have to ask questions. But for the locals it was enough that you were there. We were given something to eat; that was it. Necessities like knowing where the department store is or where one can buy books – these things we had to find out by asking questions. There was nothing else provided, nothing. At the beginning nobody spoke with us.

How did things go for you after your arrival in Austria?
Back then I didn't want to just sit around in our first accommodations in the village Schäffern, between Graz and Vienna. My mother and my little brother were sick, and as a result I had to do a lot. At the same time, we wanted to go to school and already had the Chechen equivalent of the Austrian high-school leaving certificate, but the only school in Schäffern was a junior high school.

For my mother and father it was very hard to learn German, whereas I simply learned it. I wasn't in school for the first four months, you know.

And you started to learn it on your own?
Yes. I just found some children's books somewhere. That's why I can write well now. I didn't understand what was in them. I simply started reading them. Naturally you also just start speaking somehow at the beginning.

What would you and your family have needed?
It would have been good if the people who worked there had explained the various possibilities to us. Not somebody to tell us what we have to do, but people who would show us what we can do.

And then your family came to Graz …
Yes, and exactly one month later I went into the seventh grade of the Keplergymnasium. In Russia I had completed my high school diploma with distinction, meaning that I had A's in all subjects and that I was really good. But because our residence permits were still pending and I didn't have a passport, I wasn't allowed to start university. The first two weeks were crazy. There was so much stress I had real headaches. It was hard to learn Styrian dialect. I had to do remedial French. In February 2004 I finally got my Refugee Passport, but I kept on attending the Keplergymnasium. It wasn't until October that I began the bridging course for university.

Are there differences in the educational system?
Sure. Back home there's simply middle school from the first to the eleventh grade. That's an advantage. It means we have real friends and grow very close to each other, help each other, and understand and know each other better. And one also always has the same teachers.

The methods are the same?
That's been my experience, yes. But here the students are perhaps left more to themselves and have to learn more independently. Naturally the education is better here. There's access to the Internet and computers. In Chechnya we also have computer courses, but no access to the Internet. Also, here one learns more languages. And the topics more often touch on the future – report topics include things like fashion and health.

Is there something you're missing in Austria in comparison to what you had in the Chechen school system?
Maybe the relationship to the teachers. It's more open back home than here in Austria. There, teachers are often like friends. Here, the teachers do their teaching, and then they leave.

You're one of the first Chechens to study in Austria. Do you feel like a pioneer? Do others envy you?
Yes, we're the first. But I'm not the first woman; there are two of us. Two girls and three guys. People do envy me because I help on the side. And also, I translate and speak good German. There are parents who are naturally worried that their children haven't yet learned German. But there are also children who have learned a lot and are now in high school. So I'm not the only one, you know.

Do you have the feeling that you've settled into Austria?
Yes, I do after all. About 60% worth, and that's a lot.

Does the question of where you come from bother you?
No, not at all. But there are questions I don't like very much: for example, about the war. Above all when the questions aren't serious.

How much does your religion make you what you are?
I'm a bad Muslim (laughs). For some time now I haven't been saying my prayers, and I think I need to start again now. We are certainly adherents of Islam, but it's of lesser importance to us than Adat, the unwritten system of traditional laws governing customs – so tradition and culture.

What will change for you when you get your Austrian passport?
You know, it's not the passport that determines what kind of feelings you have. That depends on you yourself, on what's inside you. The passport changes things only in the sense that you then have more security.

But it doesn't change anything in terms of your cultural self-understanding?
No. With time, I'll certainly understand more about life here, but I still need a bit of time – I've been here only four years.

What Children Ought to Learn, If Teachers Had Their Way.

How to play – at school and on the stage. It's important to be able to slip into other roles, change perspectives, and express feelings. It's not enough just to act within one's own world. *Petra Schneeberger, Graz*

Critical consciousness. For this, you'd actually need a special room in which the only topic is why learning takes place. So that the children actually get a sense of the importance of being earnest. They should always set up the room themselves. *Janina Stenzel, Lüneburg*

That in classes that integrate special-needs children, the stronger kids take responsibility for the weaker ones. Right now I'm having the following experience: A pupil who "acts out" a lot has been demonstrating quite a bit of engagement in caring for a schoolmate in a wheelchair. That teaches responsibility and leadership qualities. *Elgrid Messner, Graz*

How to repair bicycles. Those are skilled mechanical competencies that stand one in good stead for one's whole life. *Helene Achatz, Zirl*

How to critique the media. For their democratic consciousness, children need to develop resistance to being manipulated, not least by school itself. *Gernot Nigg, Göfis*

Conflict management. Parents no longer have the time to argue with the kids, and the kids no longer have a chance to try out their emotions. But a culture of argument is the prerequisite for being able to compete in the world at large. *Jeannette Chakkal, Wien*

Pupils are often physically pushed to the psychological limits of their ability. All too often one sees that they no longer have the motor skills to move properly. To counter this, they have to learn how to deal with being inundated by information. *Barbara Dobesberger, Leoben*

The capacity for successful conversation. One has to learn how to be able to state one's own opinion. And not only in one's first language. *Barbara Jungwirth, Graz*

The art of love. Marriage must be learned, even if one doesn't intend to marry. *Hans Wörtl, Wien*

The choreography of the barn, and how to slaughter pigs. Kids need to be taught life on the farm. That improves their knowledge of the food chain and allows them to develop good taste apart from fast food. *Georg Sutterlüty, Bregenz*

In earlier times one sat around the campfire with one's friends in the Scouts or Catholic Youth. Today kids sit alone in front of the Playstation. Hence, friendship needs to be in the curriculum. *Mone Denninger, Wien*

Travel. It forms personality more than anything else and explains global connections locally. *Martin Sankofi, Wien*

Understanding rules. In school, children have to obey the rules. But they often don't know why. Understanding this creates a consciousness that lets them live their life instead of being driven by it. *Andreas Kleindl, Graz*

Class time for social learning. Many kids talk to their peers exclusively over their cell phones. As a result, the competence to deal with each other in direct conversation is lost. They're overwhelmed if they can't simply hang up. *Jasmin Jaritz, St. Stefan ob Stainz*

Bernd Schilcher

in Conversation with Ulrich Kanter

A Refreshing Cold Shower of Pragmatism.

To think without blinders and to prove one's backbone in the face of opposition: These are his most shining qualities. His students, who experience him as a professor of civil law, learn how to understand legislation. Among his fellow politicians, it's the man's reliability that provides a welcome sense of stability. And in his seven years as Minister of Education for the Austrian federal state of Styria, he demonstrated successfully what one can achieve if one's actions are based on values and not on ideology.

Put an end to the widespread fear of strong convictions about education. That's Bernd Schilcher's view. The most urgent thing for children to learn is how to be with others. For this to succeed, teachers must lose their ideals and start teaching classes of individuals only.

There are people who fight the same demons for years on end without succumbing to boredom. For years, Bernd Schilcher has been countering the rigidity blanketing the educational sector through well-aimed spear-thrusts and well-founded observations. We've set up a lunch meeting during which I want to put some questions to him. The subject: Things that would have long since caused other people, after years in the swamp, to lose their orientation. The pub lies on one of Graz's hills, with a large picture window offering a view over the frozen city. I was prepared, had formulated questions, only to find that this was unnecessary. Bernd Schilcher knows what education should look like. I don't have to use questions to pry him free of the fetters of detail and lead him to a more general view. Instead, from the first minute an, he begins a tour de force to conjure up before my eyes, in a few very simple steps, the wretched state of education; and at the end, having returned to the beginning, shows me how short the path to a better educational system can be.

A Foolish Consistency …

I think we're suffering from a very basic error. We can't be accused of being inconsistent – we're very good at pursuing our goal. Our problem is: It's the wrong goal. We're pursuing the transmission of knowledge at all levels, from primary or pre-school up to the university and postgraduate level. That's wrong because knowledge thereby becomes "subject matter". The pile of "matter" grows, and the completion time to first degree gets longer and longer. That's a grave mistake because then nobody dares to make choices. What, then, should be excluded? Each and every subject matter is important.

Connecting to Reality.

What I admire is the way the British and North Americans do it – their model of connecting to reality. My objection to the German educational system, including the Austrian one, is this tendency to abstraction that derives from the German philosophical tradition of idealism. We're constantly talking about the grand ideas, but nobody's interested in reality. I'm a fan of pragmatism. I think this grand flight into abstraction is creating a divided society: Those who proclaim the grand ideas; and the others, who, completely independently, do things. Neither is interested in the other.

Comprehensive Schools for Living Together.

The decisive thing would be – that's my contention – to learn how to live together. We've now finally accepted the fact that we're living in a pluralistic society. Where different cultures – different approaches, different basic attitudes, religions – encounter each other, I have to learn how to live together with others. To accept what's "foreign" or different. And this has consequences. Our ideology of special schools is wrong. I place the really bright kids in a special school for the severely gifted; the slower ones go to a special school for the less gifted; the disabled have their own school: dyslexic kids, the visually or hearing impaired. Everyone. The newcomers to Austria, everybody goes to their special school; nobody learns how to live with each other. I have to do mainstreaming – that's the first order of the day. In school as in real life, I have to include everybody. If I want to be able to get along with disparate people, if I want the unskilled worker to be able to get along with the CEO, then I have to practice this in good time. I can't suddenly demand: "Now you're 18, now you're a pluralist. Up to now we've hived you off, isolated and marginalized you, but from now on, you're a pluralist."

Teaching in Integrated Classes.

I founded the so-called "School Network," a coming together of four "non-academic" schools with an academic-stream high-school, to form a kind of comprehensive school. My wife was a teacher, she was in one of the non-academic schools, and she asked me if I was out of my mind. That's where the integration of foreigners actually happens. After some time, in the last class, she had only one lone Austrian in the class, otherwise nothing but foreigners, five of them severely disabled. And she said: "Bernd, it was really fun to teach; I've finally caught on to what it means to give individual instruction." In other words, not to invent some bell-curved level on the assumption that there will be some golden mean corresponding to the scheme: Ten percent are very good, ten percent bad, but the middle is basically average. Typically Austrian. A school made for mediocrity. Above, nothing special; below, nothing special.

Not Yet.

And in the process of integration – we happened to discover – individual instruction becomes feasible. What usually takes place is leveling instruction, with a level that the teacher has fashioned for herself or himself. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy. The right approach, in contrast, is to say individually: "Listen my friend, you're in a position to move forward from A to B." My impressions from trips to the U.S. and England were always, when I was in schools, that they said: "Not yet." He's not quite there, but we'll get there. As the headmaster of a high school in England told me: "Look, even if he's weak in math, he's certainly a good pianist or maybe he's a good soccer player. We also need good pianists and athletes." So that seems to me to be one of the two important aspects. The other, which we've already mentioned, is the capacity to solve problems instead of just conveying material. That's something I learned from Karl Popper. He says that problem-solving includes the material, but material targeted to my problem, my project. Material becomes part of my tool-kit. It doesn't get inflated into the be-all and end-all, but rather it becomes an instrument, and associated with this instrument is organizational competence. I have to figure out how I'm going to get to and at this material.

Reflective Practitioner.

My goal was always to be the "reflective practitioner." I fell in love with vocational schools, because in such schools the work is very concrete. The Americans took us as the models for vocational education, because in our "dual system" of formal schooling and apprenticeship, theory and practice are really linked to each other. Someone who completes an apprenticeship will engage less in reflection, they'll simply accept certain things and say: "Yes, that's the way it is." Someone in a university of applied science will give it a bit more thought: "How come we did it that way, and are there alternatives, and if so which ones?" And a university student should really approach things even more fundamentally, at least if they're a doctoral candidate. The balance will vary according to the relationship of reflection and practice, but I have to do both.

Selection Criteria.

A friend of mine was put in charge of selecting students for admission to the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. So there are maybe 800 applicants who want to be admitted, and they only take 80 or 100. I asked him, "What are your criteria?" And then he says: "What the applicant has done academically up to now, but even more what he or she has done in life. Were they interested in something? Were they active in extra-curricular activities? Were they in the scouts, if so in what capacity. Were they leaders? They checked leadership qualities. What about foreign languages? Just the first language, or another, and if so which one? What about stays abroad? If so, where? Was that a long-standing interest? So: What kind of person is the applicant overall, what can I expect from him or her – and not whether the grades in Latin were good or not." Not that that's totally irrelevant, they certainly took into account which school and what kinds of grades. I got a sense of the culture of Harvard as a place to study.

Values.

But to do this, one needs to develop such local admissions criteria. To stick with this example, I was totally surprised to see what they do in the final semesters at the Harvard Law School. They're done at the age of 22, at the latest at 23, as a result of the shorter time needed for the Bachelor's degree and by virtue of an ongoing regime of professional development. So for their last two semesters they have to go into Boston proper, to the African American parts of town, and work there for free, I think for three months, doing legal aid. First, so they get a sense of how people live and the problems they bring to lawyers; and second, it's considered patently obvious that one doesn't demand money for everything, but that one also has to do pro bono work. That's as normal as breathing there. The dean told me: Anybody who's good can study here. It's not a question of money. And the tuition fees are now at 35,000 Euros per semester.

Those who don't have the money get a scholarship. They have more scholarships at Harvard than we have in all of Austria, and higher-paying ones, too. Or the students can work to earn their tuition fees. You see on the bulletin board: "For a project I'm looking for someone for six months with such and such training." Students who have paying jobs are held in high regard; they're integrated into the academic community; and they also get both experience and money. So: There are various modalities; they don't rely exclusively loans that have to be repaid. Admission doesn't depend on money: If someone is really good and well-suited, they're admitted.

Careers.

And now I'm just focusing on careers. In Switzerland my colleagues all have their own law practices parallel to their teaching responsibilities, or they're high court judges or ministers of justice. A good friend of mine, Arnold Koller, was a long-term Minister of Justice and Federal President of Switzerland. He's from Appenzell, an experienced legal professional, and he says: "Naturally I do that parallel to my teaching, because my students get something from it." In Austria what you'd hear is: He simply can't get enough, he wants two incomes. Terrible: a lawyer and a professor! Both in England or America you can do things sequentially. First he's in practice, then he goes to the university for a time, and maybe he then returns to his practice, no problem at all. And here I'm a teaching assistant, and then an assistant professor, then I do my second book and then I wait for a "call" as a professor, and then I'll tell the students about a legal practice (according to the law I have to be preparing students academically to practice law) of which I don't have the foggiest notion. Those are our problems. And I've followed this up and was delighted to read in Kant that it's beyond question that all of our insights begin with practice. He was still like that. And then comes old Hegel and says the exact opposite: I don't need practice, all I need is ideas. Of course, he himself was a practitioner, too. But he excluded it for the coming generations. And then along came these high school teachers whose notions of greatness were confined to ideas in line with Plato and Aristotle. That's the perspective from which they looked at reality. For them, politics appeared as something horrible. They turned up their noses at nasty politics. It's all of a piece. It doesn't matter if I want to convey material or knowledge, or if I want to learn how to get along with others or want to solve problems collaboratively. If I choose the wrong approach, everything else follows logically – but also wrongly.

London.

First, the chain of cause and effect. Assuming one knows what education is, then one knows what of the present will also have a future. With this result in mind, it's easy to make a visit to a place in which one can already experience the education of tomorrow. But the first piece of the puzzle remains inaccessible.
A useable definition of education? There are many of them, all of them non-binding, tentative. In many places one can find approaches, small projects and miniatures. But these usually derive their energy from individuals, from these individuals' own unique approach, and from any number of imponderables. Up close, their radiance usually appears already to have dimmed. Is it an expression of our plight that excellence in education doesn't multiply like an epidemic?

The "Education" Team's first conclusion from all this? The necessity of examining the prevailing Zeitgeist. If everyone claims that the best education is in Finland, then one has to have a look. But the PISA test triggered a virtual avalanche of tourism by teachers and educational policy makers to Finland. As a result, Finnish schools no longer receive visitors because their numbers wouldn't allow normal teaching to continue. So now we looked for a place to visit that has a variety of things to offer. The decision is taken to spend 72 hours on the Thames, in order to find out how societal and personal potential can be achieved. There are three good reasons why London seems well-suited in this regard. First, it's a city that is already having to deal with problems that are only beginning to appear on the horizon elsewhere. Immigration, diversity and poverty. To reconfigure these into strengths is quite an accomplishment. Mayor Ken Livingstone explains: "Diversity is our strength." The second reason is the resulting energy: In the last few years London has again become the "first city" of Europe. Third, the English school system has been in a process of upheaval at least since Tony Blair made educational reform a key mandate of his last term in office

Pictures at an Exhibition
We tried to imagine those places in which the most exclusive and most modern training is taking place right now. All the more surprising that in London it's the museums in which the past and the present can be experienced. And for free.

British Museum and the Reading Room of the British Library
In the course of the quarter millennium during which the oldest museum in the world has been around, there has been sufficient time to bring together what is arguably the best collection in the world. At its center: the largest roofed public plaza in Europe. And that center's center: the Reading Room of the British Library.

March 26, 2:00 p. m.
I walk along Brick Lane; enjoy the sleepy atmosphere in the small, narrow cafes; get a bit of the "small town" feeling between the low brick buildings; but then I forget the small town and breathe in metropolis, which is Indian, Pakistani, Jewish, English, Ethiopian . . . all completely devoid of multicultural pathos, just the way it is. By no means do I leave out the area around Spitalfields. Stroll among young designer shops, snack-bars and mini-merchants and look, smell, taste, listen, try and discover. A learning process, and all without a teacher's raised index finger.

6:50 p. m.
Conversation with a man in his early 30's, employed in the film industry. He explains that nowhere else is the density of post-secondary institutions as high as in London. We're talking about a regular educational industry. But that has led in the meantime to England's being over-academicized: No matter what the prospective profession, there's a corresponding Bachelor's degree. He explains the multiplicity of schools and the competitive atmosphere as follows: The English state, he claims, has never been interested in caring for its citizens and has never been a "nanny-state." So a "public school" (Note: British for "private school") can easily cost 7,000 Euros per year. But he wasn't able to establish a connection between the tuition fees and the zeal with which students pursue their studies. He's spent time as an exchange student in Berlin and finds English students just as poorly motivated as their German counterparts.

9:00 p. m.
Zapping quickly through the TV channels, my eye seizes on a new series: "The Trouble with Old People." As a newcomer to the city, one tries to understand everything as symptomatic. In this case, symptomatic of the increased attention paid to older people in a superannuated society, and the lack of attention to young people. The latter impression is erroneous. A glance at the Observer, whose major headline promises that the number of national curriculum tests to which English schoolchildren are subjected will be reduced. In the article, the head of the national testing commission argues that one should not only scrap tests, but should also introduce new grades in order to motivate the best pupils to even higher achievement: A+ and A++.

Science Museum
A museum need not have that dusty look. Especially if every visitor touches, tries and checks out almost everything. No dust remains, but the objects have to be constantly mended, repaired and renewed. After all, inventors all over the world are doing their best to develop new techniques in the hope that their product will someday be on display here.

March 27, 9:30 a. m.
The kindergarten on the Coram Community Campus is situated in a good neighborhood in central London. Here they try to conceive of the child and its education in a more comprehensive way and to integrate the social environment into the learning process. A total of 120 children of all ages are cared for here. The operating language is English – precisely because of the multiplicity of first languages the children speak. The current record: 97 different languages. Portfolios – for each child, a file folder with photographs and short notes on her or his development – testify to each child's abilities (instead of measuring what they can't do). The facility's possibilities appear to be almost unlimited. A total of 50 social agencies are present on campus. In addition to kindergarten spaces for children who are present either all day, every day, or only on certain days of the week, there are day rooms that can be used by parents for joint games and for getting to know each other. On the upper floor there are seminar rooms for parenting education. Here, among other things, it is young fathers especially who learn how to build up a relationship with their child. The kindergarten itself makes an ambivalent impression: On the one hand the facility, thanks to an overabundance of possibilities and its size, doesn't seem exactly "homey." Despite this, the portfolios and photos prove that the staff builds up a personal relationship with each individual child. The entire campus integrates all the important possibilities of education, support and spaces for children and parents, and thus forms the social core of this urban district.

2:00 p. m.
The "SmartLab Centre" is an interdisciplinary and transnational research facility mediating art, technology and science. By virtue of a doctoral program, it's affiliated with St. Martin's College of Art and Design. The most fascinating aspect of the Centre's work: A four-person core-team develops projects. They then bring together teams of people whom they do not know to solve the problems. The most prestigious project so far is the Haptic Chair, or rather its connection to a network similar to the Internet, allowing severely handicapped people to communicate with each other in a virtual world. It occurs to me that even in London, there is a need for institutions that offer flexible, project-related space with the appropriate infrastructure.

9:15 p. m.
Jamie Oliver, the itinerant preacher in matters of pleasurable cooking, has long since become a cult figure. And in England, of all places, whose cuisine is not exactly known for its subtlety. Whatever. Jamie Oliver has revolutionized English cuisine and opened new horizons for his compatriots, horizons far removed from baked potatoes and minced lamb. In the context of culinary standards one must admit, after a visit to his restaurant "Fifteen" in London: When it comes to boiling eggs, Jamie Oliver, too, has only water at his disposal. But to good effect and with great PR. But the main thing is not how fancy his restaurants are, but the process of changing consciousness: "I want to put the passion back into the kitchen and only the best into my stomach." With this motto in mind Jamie Oliver went to work, and that's why he deserves the distinction (along with his MBE) of having reformed the school kitchens of England. His dark premonition that today's children – nourished on junk food – could be the first generation to die before their parents, stirred things up and initiated a complete rethinking of school menus.

His second educational idea also resonates positively. Jamie Oliver takes young people off the street and brings them into his kitchen, where he trains them to be insiders in the world of superior gastronomy. All the proceeds from this project are reinvested: New restaurants are currently coming into being in Cornwall, Amsterdam and Melbourne.

Natural History Museum
If the dinosaurs had sensed the need for a mausoleum, this building would have been the answer to their prayers. That they have to share it with an artificial volcano and millions of other mortal remains probably doesn't bother them in the meantime.

Tate Modern
For an artist perhaps the most difficult task in the world: To come up with something worthy of hanging in the huge turbine halls of this rebuilt power plant. And the prominent works of art in the adjoining rooms don't make it any easier.

March 28, 5:00 a. m.
In England, the task of educating people falls to television. Just think of the fabulous BBC documentaries. Unable to sleep in the pre-dawn morning, I read a headline in the Observer: "Pregnant panda learns childcare from watching wildlife documentary." But what England still has, is a dedicated TV channel for teachers, Teachers' TV. It's broadcast via satellite and is also accessible over the Internet. One program slot is especially unusual: "Career planning for teachers." The program's goal is to show teachers new career perspectives. In England, professional and financial advancement is possible for teachers and can be achieved above all through a readiness to change one's school and hometown more often.

8:00 a. m.
Greater London is hit by a strike. The Evening Standard's headline proclaims: "Schools Shut by Strikers. 500,000 Pupils Are Turned Away." The reason: cuts in pension entitlements. As a consequence, our visit to the "school of the future" is cancelled. Had we been there, we would have seen what occurs to teachers when, after years of teaching, they get the chance to rethink school from the ground up. The foundation is weekly individual coaching for all pupils and the promise that, at each moment of their schooling, they'll have the opportunity to design their own learning path.

9:30 a. m.
Time-travel back to the 1980's. Terence Conran taught Britons what Ikea showed the world: Stylish living is quite affordable. With his own money, the architect acquired warehouses along the Thames near the Tower Bridge. His intention: to build modern living. The design museum situated there is certainly a special jewel and an outstanding place to convey the nature of applied art. In the case of the apartments he built, it's a different story. If Yuppies were "in" in the '80's, today Butler's Wharf is their current outdated vision of the future. Popular lofts for the wealthy. No thought was given to children and young people – the lack of a playground and the deficits in local infrastructure illustrate this take on life.

1:00 p. m.
A visit to the Science Museum effectively illustrates that the approach science takes is decisive for its success with young people. Here, everyone can experience scientific processes, from the simplest to the most complicated, in theory and practice; and can have a hands-on adventure with a wide variety of objects. Here, science isn't scienced-up; here, visitors are accorded effective access to science regardless of their origin or level of education. Here, passion is projected, the results of which in turn are pleasure in and the desire for science. What strikes us especially positively is the exhibition's pedagogy which forgoes the attempt to present material, focusing instead on the experiential dimension, and only afterwards on providing an explanation of what has happened from a scientific-theoretical perspective.

Design Museum
With this structure, the Pope of design, Terence Conran, built the world's first museum for design. If he weren't so modest, he would have to grant himself a permanent exhibit in it.

A Souvenir
Some of the photos could well be from London, but they're a present from the "Life" Team's visit to Copenhagen. In the Danish capital – so our colleagues claim – education is such a self-evident good that nobody would even dream of freeing up a wall for this kind of clever sentiment.


TANK
DESIGN MUSEUM


be best,
not in,
but for
the world

What Cities Ought to Know about Education

If we had to boil down our findings on the topic of desirable education into two words, then they would be: (1) passion, and (2) cluelessness. And we would apply these words to both the content and the process of our explorations. Or to put it another way: We've gone about as far as we could go. And so, we accurately reflect public discourse on the subject. We suspect that it's a function of cluelessness that nobody seems to know precisely what education is. And even worse: What it's supposed to be. And it's a function of passion that we all have a few stations of our own educational *via dolorosa* behind us. In what follows, then, we offer our thoughts on education in double form. First, as questions, since we're convinced that questions are the best instruments for better understanding the world – in this case, the world of education. Which can't hurt as the basic prerequisite for the public discourse we consider a necessary basis for thinking the education of the future. And second, as concrete suggestions for how one could start down a different path even though we ourselves don't believe that these stimuli will suffice in bringing about future-directed education.

How come we're capable of suing each and every cyclist who scratches our cars, but we accept incompetent teachers who are trying their hand on our children?

Why is the discussion of education mostly a discussion of school?
How come the discussion of education is so over-ideologized?
Who determines what we have to learn?

If education is supposedly so important, why isn't it felt to represent anything of value?
What is the source of the widely-accepted conviction that it's not possible to make any changes in our educational system?
How come education still functions more or less that same way it did under Empress Maria Theresa in the eighteenth century?

How do we get educational institutions that can keep up with the world we live in?
When will rebellion and resistance attain the status of marks in their own right?
When will trade unionists, politicians and teachers who were traumatized by their own system be excluded from the discussion about education?

When will anyone who, in the context of a discussion of education, mentions his own school experiences, be sent off the field with a "red card?"
Is education there only to release employees out into the world?
When is the educational system so bad that there needs to be a right to "alternative service" in place of compulsory school attendance?

How come school has to take on even more tasks when it's already overwhelmed by its current ones?
How come children have to go to school in the dark during the winter?

How come English as the language of instruction is as rare as the "Blue Mauritius" stamp?
Why aren't teachers (a) permitted and (b) required to switch subjects?
Why can't contributions to the discussion of education get beyond being boring, platitudinous, or polemical?

On Community.

There's a tendency to place the interests of the individual above those of the community. There's another tendency that says the individual derives his strength from the community. All for all. Only those who didn't experience segregation in school can learn community. Our assertion: Those who do something for society will also get independent and resistant personalities in return.

Learning to Learn.

Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Paul Watzlawick showed in their works that the world consists of at least as many realities as there are people. For educational reality this means: Learning can finally be developed further. Strengths deserve to be strengthened and weaknesses weakened. That was already clear to Heinz von Förster in 1971: "Imagine there were a world with 'second order' schools in which one learned how to learn, designed designing, planned planning – or invented inventing." For anyone who wants to apply this to individual fields of learning, here are a few required contents: attention management, the capacity to reflect and perceive, how to deal with the subconscious, and bicycle repair.

The End of Monoculture.

A teacher who tells the same story for the fiftieth time won't evoke any passion – not in himself, not in his students. That's why teachers should be catapulted headfirst into life. Only when they have earned their spurs there will they be allowed to teach that which fills them with passion. And to teach their pupils what they – the pupils – are interested in. So that successful school attendance isn't rewarded by not having to go to school.

Whither thou Goest.

Education is a serious business. In order to act, we require orientation. Education needs a goal. To bring these two things together is the common cause of the teacher, the parents and the child. Together they must determine competence and savvy. And then describe where it might lead and what is to be attained. Only that can provide the child with real information about her or his true achievements and successes. And the teacher then has the chance to evaluate his own work.

Happiness through Creativity.

People are happier when they value that which they possess, no matter what it is. For this reason we have the strong suspicion that happiness is not, in the final analysis, a function of that which the ego arrogates to itself, but rather what the person's inner self brings to bear and amplifies. In the schools, everything that smothers creativity should be prohibited on the spot. And from kindergarten to adult education the task is always: Arouse and promote creativity.

Helmut Konrad

A Look into the Past of the Future.

Born in Wolfsberg in southern Austria in 1940. Has taught history at several Austrian universities and in New York, Ontario and Florence. This, but not only this, made him an expert on universities. He was a member of Austrian and European accreditation commissions and Rector of the University of Graz. Which is where he now teaches and directs the Boltzmann Institute for the History of Society and Culture.

In order to learn something about the future, we recommend looking back to the past. The past shows that there are indeed things that one can know about the future. And not just those things one wants to know.

There's an old joke among doctors that goes like this: Surgeons can do everything, but they know nothing. Internists know everything, but they can't do anything. Pathologists know everything and can do everything, but only afterwards, when it's already too late.

Projected onto the broader realm of knowledge, the surgeons would be the economists or perhaps lawyers. The internists would correspond to the philosophers or sociologists. And the pathologists would look in the mirror and come face to face with historians.

It's an occupational hazard: Historians bet on the horse races of yesterday. That way, they know the exact finishing order of the horses and are in a position to analyze the race. But that's of only limited use in predicting the races of tomorrow. History isn't really a reliable teacher of life skills. Yet a glance into the past helps us to attain at least a modicum of certainty. Our identities, multi-dimensioned as always (person, family, gender, age cohort, language, nationality, club and many more), need alterities. To be comprehensible, an "I" or a "we" needs a "you" or "the others." And we can find these "others" along the spatial axis (we Austrians versus the Italians, for example) or along the temporal axis (we today and our grandparents back then). We don't have other alternatives. If the task at hand, then, is to call on people to take that look back, then we're already facing our first difficulty. But after all, it looks so simple: 2005 – project commences; 2017 – project completed. Comes to twelve years. The same time span takes us back to the year 1993. But only for Swiss watchmakers is time a standardized process. In societal, social and cultural terms the experience of time is quite individual – years can fly by and minutes last forever.

Even when different observers are looking at one and the same situation, their perceptions are quite different. Let's assume that the home team is losing an important soccer match 0 to 1 with 5 minutes left to go, but is pushing for the equalizer. The fans of the opposing team are looking desperately at the clock; the minutes seem to be drawing out endlessly. And the supporters of the home team think somebody's gotten to the referee, so quickly does he blow the final whistle.

We can doubtlessly proceed from the assumption that in many realms of life the pace of change has increased and will increase still further, but that there are also realms which have decelerated. On the whole, acceleration predominates; so that if we want to see the society of 2107 in its relationship to the reality of 2005, we would have to double the time-span of our retrospective gaze, and thus look back to the year 1981. That's an audacious assumption that requires explanation.

Let's take communications technology as an example. Here it's apparent that the pace of development has been not just linear, but has actually increased many times over. Other technologies – for example, that of transportation – are certainly experiencing development, but not nearly as rapidly. Nevertheless, it's possible to say that the distance covered in the last few years is at least the equivalent of that of the previous two decades. That's also the case for medicine, for the increase in life expectancy. But it doesn't apply to quantitative aspects of population growth. There has been an especially strong acceleration in societal changes in systems of values and norms. Just forty years ago it was almost unthinkable for partners to live together without being married; today it's the rule. 1968 and the years thereafter changed the relationship between genders and generations more profoundly than did the previous centuries. It's here that the pace of change is even more evident than in all other areas except perhaps communications technology. Naturally – and especially in post-modern times – there are also contrary tendencies. Not everything is regarded as doable; the boundaries of science are becoming topics of conversation; and there are demands for ethical "stop signs". Such things as genetic technology, globalization, reproductive medicine, the industrialization of the food production, nuclear energy are no longer seen only as elements of progress but, increasingly, as threats. These days, feasibility is not synonymous with desirability.

So if we want to foretell right now how society will be twelve years down the road, then it might be of interest to recall prognoses from 24 years ago. Let's examine not astrological predictions, nor those of card-readers, but only those predictions that claimed to be scientifically based.

Since 1957 the Journal of Market Research, Opinion Polling and Economic Futurology (subtitle: Quarterly Review of Theory and Practice) has been appearing, a serious periodical issued by the Wickert Institute and published by Democrit in Tübingen.

I picked up the volume for 1980-1981, where, on pages 5367 to 5376, cautious predictions of the future are attempted. A few of these prognoses:

1. Israel builds a canal from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea. The difference in elevation of nearly 1300 feet will be used to produce energy. The Dead Sea would receive 265 million gallons of water, allowing it to maintain its water level.
2. The subject of technology transfer will play an especially prominent role in the North-South dialogue.
3. Between 1985 and 1990 the male birth-control pill will be massively marketed.
4. The demand for new chemical compounds will rise markedly.
5. Plant diseases will soon disappear due to a new remedy, a Japanese invention, made of soy beans.
6. In 1985 hydrocarbon production will be ready to go in Germany.
7. Germany's population will shrink by 4% per decade. The number of single-person households, above all those of older people, will climb, however.
8. Unless other sources of nuclear energy come on-line, from 1985 on there will be power outages due to insufficient capacity.
9. Disposable income will climb by some 6 to 7 percent annually.
10. In 1990 there will be 10,000 satellites orbiting earth; by 2000 there will be 100,000.
11. (Western) European unemployment will settle in at 10 million in the long run.
12. Treated sewage sludge will soon replace fossil fuels.

These excerpts are intended to show that even large-scale scientific efforts do not lead to prognoses that stand the test of time. We know only that everything is changing, but the direction remains the subject of speculation. Especially remarkable, however, is the fact that wrack-and-ruin scenarios have typically surfaced not only at the turn of millennia, but also in those years along the temporal axis to which we have turned our attention. At least three of these are quite remarkable. In 1972 the "Club of Rome" published its path-breaking study "The Limits of Growth," a key document of the postmodern era. At that time, population growth to 7 billion by the year 2000 was predicted, reaching 14 billion by 2030. Additionally, the report forecast the end our reserves of raw materials: Copper would be depleted by 1993, gold by 1981, petroleum by 1992. Even if it were possible to quintuple the size of the reserves known in 1970 (by finding new sources), gold would have run out five years ago and oil would be on hand for only the next 16 years.

These prognoses were a warning shot. Modern societies have the possibility of responding to crisis scenarios. No car that, if its speed and trajectory remained constant, would crash into a wall within 30 seconds, would fail to activate a countermeasure, in other words brakes and steering. Thus, it does not constitute criticism of the Club of Rome to state that the terrible scenario that was predicted has not come to pass.

A similar case obtains with the American "Global 2000 Report to the President" commissioned by Jimmy Carter in 1977 and released in 1981. The prognoses prepared by the Council on Environmental Quality were based on the assumption that nothing fundamental would change on the political scene. In this case, there would have been the potential for serious problems on a global scale by 2000. The capacity of biological systems to make resources available to meet basic human needs would, the report argued, show a downward trend until 2000.

Both of these reports extrapolate from the developments up to the point of their publication. As a method to point up problems, this is thoroughly legitimate, but it's easy to uncover the absurdity of predicting the future by reading the past. Over 200 years ago Thomas Malthus had attempted, in his "Essay on the Principle of Population", to demonstrate that the final catastrophe was in the offing, since the population was growing at an exponential rate (two parents have four children, then sixteen grandchildren, etc.), but the production of food was increasing

only arithmetically. Back then, Malthus, too – and this was criticized by Friedrich List and also Karl Marx – did not take into account the changes and improvements in the means of production. Yet these are evident. As recently as a hundred years ago, one farmer was needed to feed one city-dweller. Today one farmer can produce food for twenty other people. Within the timeframe in question, there were still other prognoses of crisis and catastrophe. If atomic energy were expanded, it was feared we would wind up with the "atomic state," under constant threat of being blown up and poisoning whole regions for very long periods of time, something that actually did happen with Chernobyl. And the fear that criminals or terrorists could get hold of fissionable material is not wholly unrealistic these days. The possibility that this would entail more control, a higher level of surveillance, and thus a restriction of civil liberties cannot be rejected out of hand. The dsytopic vision of a Robert Jungk from those days cannot be completely dismissed, but has proven to be controllable through democratic means.

The only method of prediction that has more or less functioned proven itself over the past ten years has turned out to the Delphi Method. Delphi, the ancient Greek oracle, was always right for two reasons: First, because its prophecies were so ambiguous that they always contained something that indeed came about. And second, because there is such a thing as a self-fulfilling prophecy simply because a prognosis also evokes certain forms of behavior that make the fulfillment of the prophecy more likely. If I receive the prediction that I'll be able to climb a mountain, the probability of my succeeding climbs accordingly.

The Delphi Method, however, isn't an oracle. It attempts to bundle society's existing knowledge. It brings in a large number of experts and proceeds in three stages. First, expert commissions develop working hypotheses. These hypotheses are then presented to other experts in various fields for their assessment. The results of these second steps are then collated and sent out once more to the first panel of experts, who can then recognize any deviations from the "mainstream" and present rationales for their analysis. In this way, certain reality-based trends can doubtlessly be identified. Nobody today has serious doubts that the aging process in the industrial societies is progressing or that the degree of globalization is increasing. That the post-secondary education sector will continue to grow and that life-worlds will become increasingly individualized are also not subject to serious dispute.

If, however, we again retrace the past 24 years, then we can see that the really crucial changes – including those that were in the immediate offing – were not recognized and perhaps could not have been identified in advance. It wasn't possible to foresee either the Internet and its consequences, nor the collapse of the Soviet empire and the implosion of an entire political system. At the beginning of the 1980's, neither the end of the Cold War nor the end of the "grand narratives" that situated individual lives within a large, future-directed context, could be predicted. History collects traditions and experiences. From experience, we are familiar with the change of the seasons; and through tradition, we know what kind of food will be on the table for Easter. That makes predictions possible. But where history attempts to explain a complex, intertwined system of economics, politics and culture, it describes retrospectively and does not attempt prescriptions for the present, much less prognoses for the future.

Thus, if one asks whether, through our 12-year, 24-year, or 36-year retrospective surveys, we are capable of drawing any conclusions for the structures and needs that will obtain by and in 2017, we have to answer the question negatively. A friend of mine, Peter Skalicky, Rector of the Technical University of Vienna, coined the lovely sentence: "Prognoses are hard to do, especially when they're about the future."

But there is one thing we can say with relative certainty: For most problems that are recognizable as such, our society also develops solutions. That means that expected catastrophes are averted, but the solutions themselves usually also have unexpected side effects. And there it's no use, in the favorite phrase of German pharmaceutical advertising, to "ask your physician or pharmacist." Rather, we have to seek new solutions that in turn lead to new challenges.

It nevertheless makes sense to make use of all the means at our disposal to predict the society of the future to the degree possible. That society will then certainly look differently from what we expect, but in retrospect we'll be able to recognize where and why we were wrong.

Peter Heintel

Hope and Despair.

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On the fear of empty places and blank spaces and the difficulty of thinking the future openly and not according to pre-thought patterns. And on dealing with contradictions as a criterion for the success of developing urban districts.

It's a fact. Right in the middle of a city there is actually still a space that, as a bird's-eye view reveals, is not yet urban. It's also true that one finds buildings on this "free" terrain, the remnants of previous use. But the use is no longer present. What to do with the space? Future generations will possibly wonder, even be amazed: "In the beginning – of this development of an urban district – was a book." Not: architecture, city planners, business representatives and – in league with them – politicians. To place a book at the beginning may sound strange, because: What is its value, real and symbolic? There were times when books of beginnings provided and constituted the authority – an almost "sacred" authority – to do and explain. And there were also times in which "book learning'" was despised as abstract and abstruse theory, as an obstacle to practical progress and independent creativity. What's more, despite Internet and databases, Google and other search engines, there seems to be a flood of books even as readership declines; and we can also say that there exist well-researched expert books on all topics, including ours. So, then, what kind of significance does a book have? What is this kind of beginning supposed to mean?

Beginnings always carry a contradiction within them: Something is supposed to begin at the beginning, *de novo*; something new is meant to come about that was not there already. On the other hand, everything new and different can only be recognized and defined through contrasting it to what already exists. That which already exists also usually serves as the crucible in which the new must explain, identify and justify itself. These days we receive repeated assurances that we are living at a time of radical innovation, that everything is changing rapidly, that we are hustling to keep up. And we notice that – sometimes and in some places – we overtake ourselves, can no longer keep up. What some see at the "entrepreneurial" challenge, as a trend in the face of which one is well advised to define oneself, others see as an acceleration devoid of quality. An acceleration in the face of which they wish for deceleration, places of repose, silence, spirituality: a contradiction that one can extract from many utterances in this book. In any case, the following seems worthy of note: Continual innovations in quick succession devalue themselves as such, become inflationary, and drift further into an innovational hysteria that constantly has to repeat the credo that that which is new is also that which is better – a foundation of the logic of production.

A book as a beginning interrupts the current processes of innovation. It's not a matter of new buildings, new streets, new shopping malls, a new recreational area close to the city. In any case, what's new is already known to us for the most part. Very occasionally we are surprised by something architectonically unique. Something whose extraordinariness consists of its not fitting into its surroundings and about which one can hear that it is a visual gem on the outside whose visibility is impressive, but that it is less than optimally suitable for daily use by "inmates" and residents. Far too many (and especially) specialists always know what's good and what needs to happen, and in reality what they are doing is continuing to spin the threads of the past further into the future, true to their discipline and its way of functioning.

What would happen, however, if one designates a city *in its own right* – in other words its "as-a-whole-ness" – as a living, continuously changing being capable of learning; if one thinks about how structures, buildings, plazas could influence and support this process positively so that the future isn't "blocked up" in advance. What would happen if one asked "about the reciprocal effect between the city as creature and people as city creatures," about the origins of a "personal atmosphere"? Then it might well be the case that the road more traveled, with all its ruts, would have to be abandoned. In its place a start would have to be made with the human being as city-creature, as someone for whom nature has gained significance in contrast.

An unobstructed, unmisconstructed, "free" space, veritably forgotten and left over, challenges the productive impulses of the human imagination. Right in the midst of an abundance of city, of tradition and of covetousness – a blank spot. Nothing has the power to attract and provoke us more. The void, nothingness, or not-yet-ness have always challenged humankind and driven us into diverse actions; there is such a thing as a horror vacui, a fear that nothingness is also possible. And so the pressure grows to do away with it, to fill it up. But who are those who possess the authority and the right to do such a thing?

From an historical perspective, beginning and "creation" were always connected with power (the Greek work for "beginning" is *arche*, which also meant "rule," "domination"). This etymology respected the beginning as something *"firm"* that enables something new to come about. And in order to *"af-firm"* something into practice, there is a requirement for implementation.

The founding of cities, too, was attributed to authorizing powers: the gods and their offspring. Along with them arose the computation of time. Now cities could be founded, and dominion within them could be organized; but forms of living together had yet to develop. Urban culture subsequently did develop through the interplay of the city's functionaries (priest-ruler, artisan-citizen, of the surrounding area and the markets, etc.). It guaranteed the differentiation of the estates, demarcation of various groups, and the development of social life. But also cooperation, working together. This development is now termed "organic." For the moment it functioned well, but it was not yet the object of future-directed planning.

This "condition" changed with the rise of the new "powers" that gradually became dominant: science, technology and the capitalist economy. Developments became the topics of planning and were linked up with economic interests. Politics as such declines in power and enters a state of dependence, though sometimes retaining an interest in balancing competing interests.

Early modern cities develop accordingly, often in the nostalgic retrospective of their "old," narrow, winding cores that represent a "human scale". It would not be all that far-fetched to assume that the blank spot in Graz would have long since been built-over if had it not been private property. Private ownership, to the extent it possesses courage and resolve, can resist public power and economic pressure – that's a middle-class right with a long and honorable tradition. But it's also, for the first while, just as indefinite, unless it makes a fenced-in playground out of the district in question. As an individual – and this is the more obvious and usual attitude – I can subordinate myself to the powers that be and in the process attempt to extract the greatest possible benefit for myself; or I can ask what is on people's minds today, which needs they have, how they imagine the city of the future. This approach accords recognition and respect to the role of free individuality. This individuality is gathered around a project from which it is usually excluded, despite all the models and slogans of citizen participation.

Happy circumstances bring together here: (1) a piece of "free" land in the heart of a city; (2) the freedom of that which is private and individual that lends its support to the land's potential; and (3) a future that is still open, as a place of possibilities not yet realized. If so much freedom and individuality are the starting points, then we must first pause for a moment to remember: Freedom in connection with persons means to concede space to self-determination (autonomy), not to "pre-scribe" the future. Self-determination begins with a self-reflection: Who am I and what can I wish, want? Self-reflection interrupts, removes itself from the workaday sequence of events. Rethinking is interruptive.

To be sure, it is a function of the lack of modern individuality that much in the way of reflection remains within the individual and therefore also remains impotent in the public sphere. Nor is there much demand for it. In the book, this condition is present on the one hand – everybody says what he happens to be thinking at the time, and many regret that there are hardly any spaces for communicative interaction that would allow such reflection to become public. (Such spaces are desired, however, within the design of spaces and public plazas.) On the otherhand, the book creates a condition of partial publicness. In any case, this book crisscrosses our society, showing what concerns people and in which contradictions we find ourselves.

And so: In the beginning is the book. The beginning also wants and is able, however, to posit and exercise power, prescribe secured knowledge, anticipate the future. This power is in any case long since gone, and the multifaceted nature of our lives no longer allows it. Such a book, however, can point to a different form of beginning and can bring to bear a different approach. This has to do

with: (1) individual freedom; (2) self-reflection that is creatively unfettered; (3) inclusion of the "whole" person, above all of those realities and contradictions of need to which the current societal system accords no room; and (4) the organization of spaces of commonality and participation, of the shared process of getting-to-know-how-to-live-together. With more or less good fortune and to more or less good end, there are also many questions asked in this book. Questioning – in the words of the philosopher Martin Heidegger the "piety of thinking" – is, when it serves the interest of opening things up, the opposite of exercising hegemony.

A beginning comes into view that is different from that in the historical sense: In the beginning is not the power of wanting to posit something, but an interruption through demand and re-questioning and re-thinking. It is an opening into the not-yet-familiar and an intervention to concern oneself with oneself, to (dis)place oneself into concord. Asking respects the meaningfulness of possibility.

That which is possible but not yet actual can also be thought and imagined as that which is future. Some of the questions were therefore directed to the future (2017). If one asks a cross-section of society about their images of the future, one receives answers of highly diverse character. One group refuses to answer altogether. Among them are, first, those who want to either enjoy or control the present – that which is now – and find this to be a sufficient mission. Then there is a second subgroup that doesn't respond because they feel themselves indebted to tradition and its values and norms, wish the perpetuation of the past, and so view the future as the repetition and confirmation of what has been up till now. And third and finally there is a subgroup who are of the opinion that one cannot in any case know anything about the future, because it usually transpires differently from one's suppositions and because future generations should also have the possibility of taking their own decisions.

Then – and here we are talking about the majority – one receives answers arising from the respondent's own life experience; it's a question of correcting or compensating for what is missing now. That differs according to the position in society that the person occupies. The wish for socially assisted housing and nearby recreation areas is just as understandable in this connection as the demand for paying more attention to the fine arts or for a more appropriate approach to the topic of migration.

This is also the spot where criticism blossoms forth, where the respondent expresses dissatisfaction with present trends. Among the central perspectives are acceleration, the densification of time, stress, and the wish for zones and times of deceleration. The objects of criticism are the media whose programming is becoming ever more uniform and which subordinate themselves to the dictates of economic game rules, thereby completely forgetting their "educational mission." And then our ways of dealing with the new information technology, with the increasingly anonymous nature of direct communication and the concomitant loneliness. Many responses that cannot be listed here demonstrate a critically alert *Zeitgeist*, whose "material" frequently comes from its own passion story, its *via dolorosa*. And many then also include proposals for solutions. What is striking here is, however, the discrepancy between these proposals and the general reticence to specify how and where these solutions should be instantiated, and who should be made responsible for them. Here one hears an undertone of resignation as well.

If one poses the question of future to those who are currently enjoying success, it's clear they'll offer themselves as the model. Interestingly, however, they don't seem to be able to capture rationally all those things that constitute their success. Thus, on the one hand they talk, invoking the logic of business, about the importance of understanding the market, the quality of one's team, technology, and a business plan – and in this order of priority – but at the same time they speak of a "faith in miracles," a "religious" attitude, a new culture of failure, etc. A "local hero" is, to be sure, a representative individuality – one might speak of a successful "Me Incorporated" – but what is it that really captures the essence of their model function? There does seem to be one common element shared by successful people: the will to configure, to design. Admittedly, there are many things one can't take into consideration, a lot of complexity, and therefore the uncertainty connected with these things. Some of that uncertainty is of our own (and constant) making, because we keep going down the old roads, remain more reactive than proactive.

Action-for-action's-sake, however, is not the order of the day. The will to design and configure, and the creativity associated with it, assumes and requires that we will be leaving those tired, rut-filled paths, presumes also an individual and collective sense of self in contradistinction to others that is constantly reflecting on itself.

Nor do "miracles" occur any longer as divine gifts; one must at least create the space for them, and grant them a period of time in which they can arrive.

Present in very many of the answers is a strange contradictoriness. Despite progress, a technologically extremely highly developed civilization, the greatest degree of affluence that we can call our own in our entire history, many believe that in the future, life will be more difficult, harder. That, in other words, future generations will be confronted so strongly by all these problems of enrichment that they will be at their limit of coping. The arguments advanced in favor of these prognoses seem logical. Among them: It will be more difficult to find work, to secure an income. The widening gap between rich and poor will make more and more people into candidates for relegation to the minor leagues. And, as a general argument, Europe is stagnating and will be overtaken by other continents. Our young people have forgotten what hard work is; and our educational system, with its focus on school, has long since ceased to be adequate to the task.

That's the one side of the fears. The other seems to be generated more by a self-diagnosis. People think they've caught onto the fact that having "money and possessions" has not yet brought them that happiness they expected. They are aware that material goods only partially satisfy needs, only partially resolve contradictions between needs. They sense that a certain (market) saturation does indeed produce a feeling of satiety, but doesn't really satisfy in the long run. They've experienced that the "event culture" doesn't represent a sufficient compensational answer to our need for community and communication. And finally, they have seen that although we have learned (sometimes in the name of tolerance) to liberate values, norms, cultures from the tyranny of external determination – have learned to accord the individual more rights – the pluralistic coexistence of values can easily lead to a disorienting relativism of values.

The contributors locate a vacuum of orientation, of commitment and self-obligation to the same degree as they wish to be "at home in convictions." One's own freedom is not only celebrated as the achievement of painful historical struggles. It's also experienced as a burden, as an instance of having too much room to (re)search within a multi-option society. Reason enough for the old question of the meaning of life to resurface, in formulations such as: "Does one work to live or live to work?" Or: "Can a basic income provide the means to set out for totally new horizons by accepting the notion that work is not the first goal of being human, especially when it has no connection to 'self-realization'?"

Suddenly, thoughts of the "immaterial" reenter our materialistic age; one isn't quite sure what it is and what to do with it. There are demands for a "new spirituality," even if its perversion in new sects and in fundamentalism is evident. But what contributes most to the unease about the future of our children is our own inextricable bound-up-ness with the system and our powerlessness. We seem to know what we are lacking, what we must seek for, but we tend rather to push ourselves into stress and burnout instead of looking for fields of resistance against them.

One indication of this schizophrenic condition can be found in our encyclopedic incapacity to define what "education" actually is. The answers that are offered here are remarkably thin and devoid of content. But they can be regarded as thoroughly representative, even if only a few people were asked for their responses. Nowhere does one obtain a satisfactory answer these days. This is connected to a kind of schizophrenia, or co-existence of knowledge and ignorance, which we can summarize as follows: We clearly know what education is in the sense of acquiring basic knowledge for our survival as a civilization, for our knowledge society. Perhaps we can also understand what "key qualifications" are and that, in all of this, one has to engage in "life-long" learning. Yet, all these facets leave behind a gap: What can be understood today as "ethical" education or as social, "political" or civic education? What contributes to "self-education" in the sense of self-knowledge and self-orientation? Which competencies must one acquire in order to be able to participate successfully in the process of communal communication that everyone longs for? What contribution does the comparison of cultures make to education? What actually is education when it comes to existential questions, when it comes to the "immaterial," and so forth? These are the kinds of things about which we know very little. And for this reason the question of education finds itself poised to take a new step into a future that is still undetermined.

But interestingly, the contradictions inherent in the pessimistic prophecies I have described can, if given a positive turn, establish a sensible diagnosis of the present. What is striking is that for the first time in the history of modern Europe there is not only skepticism about progress, but also our generation's concomitant wish that those who follow us will not have it worse than we do. That's something that some of those interviewed say despite – or precisely because of – their fears. In earlier times, the wish was always that one's children would someday have it better than one does oneself; and people worked on this energetically, in part seeing it as constituting their life's meaning.

But apparently we here in our "satiated" European world can no longer imagine that the next generation will have it still better than we do. In saying this, however, we indirectly concede that, on the level that is relevant to us, that of "money and possessions," further progress will be limited. We are saying that "more of the same" does not lead to the longed-for happiness; and in the short run leads us astray into the abstraction of cupidity.

As individuals who are for the most part both economically unburdened and "satiated", we have nothing more to expect. A new phase of development, a new epoch of education, would be on the agenda. Prescience about this, desires and longings to go further in this direction, exist in sufficient quantity. This also obtains in reference to the ideas expressed about the city of the future: Urbanity understood as communicative space for working up and nurturing the contradictions mentioned above; urbanity as a living and vital place of learning, where these contradictions and where various dialectics – of "intimacy and propriety", of alterity and familiarity, of possibilities to meet others and single-person households, of old and young – can be processed in advance and thereby become predictable and manageable. The sensible and necessary process of globalization must be balanced and opposed by that of "downscaling", the "cunning of individual reason with designs on design". "Aural absence" cannot be the answer to the pulsating, vital life of the "mega-cities".

If one reads this book that "was in the beginning", one must be torn back and forth between despair and hope. Despair at the subjective multiplicity, including that of the one-sided opinions neatly packaged into normativity; and at the embarrassing inability to give answers to questions that would concern a common future. There follow conjectures about the difficulties of participatory planning, the amount of time it demands, and how to organize it.

We also notice the "impact" of the tasks that await us, if we no longer want simply to continue at our old pace and to blunder into those dead ends that are the object of criticism. Finally, we must note with shock and dismay how little we know about this next step, despite our knowledge society and this scientifically structured world. This step, it's important to realize, is not one that can be anticipated through existing schemata of knowledge or in the framework of traditional disciplines. We must first do something – set up, organize, create times and places – so that there is space for that which was expressed as a hope-filled utopia in the future. Here we ride the pendulum's swing from despair to hope and encouragement. We recognize that there is much extant in the way of individual reflection, of consciousness about our present.

All one actually has to do, as Friedrich Schiller said some two hundred years ago, is "to ask one's way through from individual to individual in order to find out about humankind." There is much here lying fallow or strewn to the winds. The idea of the city is at the same time one of creating and bundling community. Finally, we further recognize – and this too is cause for hope – that the time of the specialist segmentation of human beings has reached its limits. Just as the scientific disciplines were parceled into subsystems and segregated areas of competence; and just as societies created classes and other means of differentiation, so the human person was also split up: into work and free time, profession and private life, young and old, urbanites and country bumpkins, employers and employees, et cetera. The project that led to this book, oriented as it is to the basic categories of life, work, education and urbanity, has made evident that there are many interconnections and that divisions are not acceptable, that people will not allow their "wholeness" to be taken from them. Thus, in the book's summaries, more real "humanness" is expressed, despite all the surface-level disparities, than is the case in many scholarly studies that arise in the context of a specific discipline. A living urban district will have to take this into account, too, if it wishes to have an integrative effect and doesn't *a priori* divvy up all the differences and contradictions cleanly and locally.

Translator's Note

This is a book of disparate and sometimes contradictory voices, but possesses a coherent approach and spirit. Translating it has been both challenging and rewarding – and both to a higher measure than I originally thought possible. The book's English-language readers will no doubt be struck by the tension between those things in it that are, on the one hand, quintessentially Austrian and, on the other hand, the ways in which it addresses problems, challenges, and opportunities common to many societies. I have attempted to retain the specific flavors and perspectives of the book's speakers and writers (including occasional run-on or truncated sentences), while rendering their thoughts and words into comprehensible English (with U.S. American spelling and measurements).

Mark J. Webber
The Canadian Centre for German and European Studies
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Graz
Austria's second largest city. And though not a typical metropolis, Graz, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, displays three-fold greatness. Economically, as an industrial center, primarily through its automotive cluster. Intellectually, with its 40,000 students out of 240,000 residents overall. And culturally, with the "Styrian autumn" and "styriarte" festivals and the architecture and collections of the *Kunsthaus*.

Graz-Reininghaus
With its 129 acres, the grounds of the former Reininghaus Brewery are approximately the same size at the Old City of Graz. That amounts to 72 soccer fields. The distance to the city center is about one mile. Right now three percent of the area has buildings on it. It's primarily industrial archeology, however, and thus unused.

Asset One
Since May 2005, the Real Estate Development Corporation, headquartered in Graz, has owned the properties formerly held by the Brau AG. Three quarters of the 13 million square feet are suitable for building in the prime locations in Salzburg, Linz, Schwechat and Graz. In Graz, the intention is to create greater living satisfaction through an increase in value that balances economic and cultural interests.

Institute for Brand Development Graz (IFMG)
The Institute is considered one of the leading consulting firms in the German-speaking world. In developing and stimulating brand personalities, IFMG relies on innovative processes – such as the project "Reininghaus017", which furnished the basis for this book. The Institute steered the project through to completion and directed the editorial process.

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