

Waldzell Meeting 2005: Central Statements

Jonathan Wittenberg

Scot, rabbi of the New North London Synagogue

"What so often happens in religious leadership is the contraction of God into the idol of our own ideology that we proceed to worship, put up on a flag to, and feel legitimized to kill in its name. It happens all the time: it is going on in our world now. That is the bending of spirituality into idolatry, and is among the most dangerous phenomena of our day."

Craig Venter

American, biochemist, geneticist, businessman

"We have harvested over 95% of the fish in the ocean, we have depleted most of our resources, and collectively we are putting 3.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year. We are burning those billions of years of biology over a few decades and putting that in our atmosphere. We all know that we can't keep doing that. Collectively we do it, because there is no clear-cut alternate choice for each one of us."



Peter M. Senge

American, professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, author of "The Fifth Discipline"

"This is the Industrial Age; the industrial age is not over. All this stuff about the Information Age, not the Industrial Age! Take a look! Take a look at the energy we use, take a look at the materials we use: take a look at our lifestyle. But most of all, take a look at our thinking. The Industrial Age is the age of the machine, the Industrial Age is the age of technology. We still define our world by our technology, and we define progress, most tragically, by our latest technology. This is the Industrial Age; it has not changed."

Thom Mayne

American, principal of Morphosis Architects, Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate 2005

"Realistically, we have absolutely no idea where we're going. It's impossible in a world of unknowability and complexity. The future, in my estimation, is, therefore, completely irrelevant. What matters is the present, what we do in the present and what we understand about the present. And what we don't understand: We don't understand how we operate politically, culturally, biologically, ecologically."

Tenzin Palmo

British, buddhist nun, founder of a nunnery in North India

"Spiritually, we are as ignorant as we were when our Buddha walked this earth."

What are we ignorant of? Einstein said that in our age there has been a tremendous growth in knowledge, but absolutely no growth in wisdom. Ignorance has nothing to do with education, nothing to do with external brilliance and genius of mind. What are we ignorant of? We are ignorant of our true being and what is really the nature of this world."

Alan M. Webber

American, longtime editor-in-chief of the Harvard Business Review, Cofounder of "Fast Company" Magazine

"Why does Waldzell exist? I think Waldzell exists to give us all the opportunity, to be present at, and to assist as midwives, in the birth of the future. I think what Waldzell offers us, in the conversations that take place in a very compressed time, are glimpses of the future. The lesson from Waldzell, I think, is that we have the most to learn from people who are the least like us."



Franz Welser-Möst

Austrian, general Music Director of the Zurich Opera, Principal Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra

"The tension between Hellenistic thinking and Christendom was not resolved by the culture of the Occident. The 20th century was mostly characterized by politics, which was due to the two world wars. We are still in the process of coming to terms with the events of World War II. There was little progress also in the cultural scene, in which I include philosophy."

Paulo Coelho

Brazilian, author of "The Alchemist" and "The Zahir", Patron of the "Architects of the Future"

"How do I see the world in 2050? Can we foresee the future? Are we going to cope with it? So I wrote a list of several things that I see to come in the future: So--one, no diploma, two, no cities, three, back to the tribes, four, rising of the Islam and of xenophobia!"

Christian de Duve

Belgian, biochemist, Nobel Prize in Medicine 1974

"What if, in those five billion years that, perhaps, are left for life on earth, the curve continued to rise through the ceiling up to high in the sky? What would those brains conceive, what would those brains produce as works of art, what philosophy, what religion, what science would they come up with?"

Anton Zeilinger

Austrian, quantum physicist

"The world is open in an inner way. I always say that in the quantum world things are defined insofar as not even God knows how a singular event will end. Theologians always retort that this imposes a limitation on God. To this, my reply is always, "Do allow God to run the world as he wants to run it."

WALDZELL

I N S T I T U T E

© Waldzell Institute
1010 Vienna, Dorotheergasse 22/2/4
Phone: +43 - 1 - 513 81 92 - 0
Fax: +43 - 1 - 513 81 92 - 4
Email: office@waldzell.org
Website: <http://www.waldzell.org>

Published by: Andreas Salcher, Gundula Schatz, Alan M. Webber
Photos: Philipp Sassmann, Mani Hausler
Layout: Petra Lepschi

All rights reserved

Vienna 2005

Content

<i>So What Is This Waldzell Anyway?</i>	6
by Andreas Salcher and Gundula Schatz	
<i>The Secrets of the Cellar</i>	9
by Paulo Coelho	
<i>The Recesses of the Heart</i>	11
by Abbot Burkhard F. Ellegast	
<i>Close Encounters of the Third Kind</i>	13
by Hans Rauscher, Der Standard, FORMAT	
<i>High Numerators and Low Denominators</i>	14
by Heinz Sichrovsky, NEWS	
<i>Let's Dance the Change!</i>	15
by Roland Falb and Alexander Gutzmer, Roland Berger	
<i>The Central Statements of the Speakers</i>	16
by Alan M. Webber	
Christian de Duve	16
Thom Mayne	20
Tenzin Palmo	22
Peter M. Senge	26
Craig Venter	29
Franz Welser-Möst	32
Jonathan Wittenberg	35
Anton Zeilinger	38
<i>The Key Questions of the Meeting 2006</i>	41
by Christiane Neubauer, FORMAT	
<i>Comments by the Participants</i>	46
<i>Reflections by the "Architects of the Future"</i>	50
<i>MELK ABBEY: A Place with Meaning and Spirituality</i>	56
by Abbot Burkhard F. Ellegast	
<i>The Waldzell Meeting 2005 – Executive Summary</i>	58
by Alan M. Webber	
<i>The Topics of the Waldzell Meetings 2004-2008</i>	62
<i>Additional Projects of Waldzell</i>	64
<i>The Founders of Waldzell</i>	65
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	66

So What Is This Waldzell Anyway?

by Andreas Salcher and Gundula Schatz

For many generations, the myth of “Waldzell” has brought forth the desire in people to search for and experience this truly inspirational place of spiritual discussion and creation. “Waldzell” is a fictitious place in Herman Hesse’s novel, *The Glass Bead Game*, in which extraordinary people come together once a year to create an especially intellectual work of art whose impact unfolds far beyond this circle and makes a significant contribution to the development of society.



Gundula Schatz und Andreas Salcher

Inspired by this literary role model, we founded the Waldzell Institute in February 2003. Our idea was to create places for dialog and to inspire today’s and tomorrow’s decision makers to make their contributions towards a better world.

The first step in the realization of our mission was the “Waldzell Meetings – Global Dialogs for Inspiration” in Melk Abbey. The aim of the Waldzell Meetings is to initiate a sustainable dialog between those people who have made revolutionary changes in the areas of science, politics, the arts, business and spirituality, and decision makers from the world of business and media.

Global Dialogs for Inspiration

Alone the title “Global Dialogs for Inspiration” is a challenge for us, as it contains the three main principles of Waldzell.

1. **Thought on a global level** – we interpret this as a serious attempt to act and think in a manner that is in the long-term interest of fellow human beings. As our mindsets are all heavily influenced by our own individual cultures and social backgrounds, it takes a great effort by everyone involved to prevent turning global thinking into just another empty phrase. Global thinking is a question of survival.

2. **Encourage dialog** – for us this means not only simply promoting stimulating discussions, but also exceeding the limits of individual understanding and gaining insights which the individual would not have been able to reach. We are not seeking a final answer but hope that, by posing the correct questions, we can set new priorities in our time anew.

3. **To inspire** – by this we mean touching people – for a few moments – deep inside and helping them find new ways for themselves. Inspiration cannot be planned or guaranteed. To be inspired can be compared with trying to catch a ray of sunshine. Nothing is so powerful and at the same time so fleeting. However, the very difficult task of trying to harness the slightest spark of inspiration that can be passed on to others is the most important goal of the Waldzell Meetings.

Choosing the correct location was of paramount importance to us in order to facilitate inspiration. We hunted around for a long time and, after several detours, we found a place that met with our requirements and our image of “Waldzell.” Not only has the Benedictine abbey at Melk in Lower Austria been the inspiration for architects, painters and scientists, it was also the inspiration for writers such as Umberto Eco and his acclaimed *The Name of the Rose*. Melk Abbey is a haven for peace and security in these fast moving and dangerous times. It unites over a thousand years of Christian spirituality with an open acceptance of new ideas and other faiths.

The first Waldzell Meeting

The power of this special place was already felt by the participants at the first Waldzell Meeting that took place on 10 to 12 September 2004. One of the highlights was the meeting of the religions by the first Islamic Nobel laureate for Peace, Shirin Ebadi, senior rabbi David J. Goldberg and the 66th abbot of Melk Abbey Burkhard F. Ellegast at the abbey's church. At the end of the two-day session, David Goldberg declared he had more in common with tolerant people of other faiths than he had with intolerant followers of his own church. And, much to her surprise, Shirin Ebadi discovered that despite being the only Muslim in attendance, she noticed no difference between herself and any other participant. It was as if they had all grown up in the same culture.

The second element that contributed substantially to the special intellectual and spiritual intrigue was the meeting of completely different disciplines. The sciences were represented by Nobel laureates Günter Blobel and Kary Mullis, the inventor of the "Pill" Carl Djerassi, quantum researcher Anton Zeilinger and the leading worldwide researcher of happiness Mihály Csikszentmihályi, while the participation of baritone Thomas Hampson ensured the arts were represented on the highest level. The presence of psychologist Helen Palmer ensured that wisdom and intuition were accounted for.

The Waldzell Meeting 2005 – Blueprints of a Future with Meaning

The first two contributions of the Waldzell Report in 2005 were impressive examples of the power of dialog continuing far beyond the two days of the meeting. They staged the meeting of two people who would otherwise not have met if it were not for Waldzell. Deep beneath the foundations walls of Melk Abbey the world famous Brazilian author Paulo Coelho bared his soul to the wise Abbot Burkhard Ellegast. The touching conversation about self-doubt and the eternal search for meaning between the author of *Eleven Minutes* and the man of God, who has been abbot of Melk for the past 26 years, took place on a Sunday after the end of the meeting. We owe it to our friend and mentor of the first hour, Paulo Coelho, that we were not only the witnesses of that evening. He wrote a contribution for his newspaper column, which appears regularly in 40 of the most important newspapers of the world and is read by approximately 50 million people.

To give people the courage to ask the meaning of their life and then ask them to make their own contributions for a better world is an integral part of our mission. Waldzell believes that every person is capable of having a positive effect on the world today.

Of course, the success of these contributions depends on the power of the individual in question. More power in the world should mean more responsibility for the world.

For this reason, the primary target groups of the Waldzell Meetings are decision makers from business and the media. The Executive Summary by Alan Webber is certainly of special interest to this group of people with very tight schedules. The third contribution should be of special interest for this group. Alan Webber, the long standing editor-in-chief of the acclaimed *Harvard Business Review* and founder of "Fast Company" is one of only very few journalists in the world who understands what it is like to ask the most influential and powerful managers in the world crucial and inspiring questions.



Head of Provincial Government Erwin Pröll

His much noted closing speech "...", at the 2005 Waldzell Meeting was largely responsible for the feeling that most participants had after the two days, that something had indeed changed in their way of thinking. It was a great honor for us that we were able to win Alan as chief editor for our report, especially as he is also very engaged in his new project "Blue Letters." It is widely hoped that Blue Letters will act as a signpost for managers and executives around the world, pointing them in the direction of good advice and the solutions for urgent future questions.

The Speakers 2005

We now come to the topic of the Waldzell Meeting 2005: *Blueprints of a Future*. The very opening speech by Governor Erwin Pröll was given a lot of attention: He called himself a son of simple farmers who are obliged to cultivate their land providently in order to deal with the future in a responsible way. The first plenum session assembled the current holder of the Pritzker Prize for Architecture; a management visionary whose book *The Fifth Discipline* was described by the *Harvard Business Review* as one of

the most important books in the last 75 years; and the “Master of the Genes”, one of the most important scientists of our time and voted both Time magazine and Financial Times Man of the Year. Thom Mayne redefined the world of architecture with his brilliant and radical buildings; Peter Senge discovered the learning potential of organizations, while Craig Venter decoded the human genome. Without a doubt, three people who dramatically changed the world around us. Just another reason for us to take a hard look at why it is exactly those people who are so worried about the future of our world.



Christian de Duve, Peter Senge, Thom Mayne, Alan Webber

The universe, the kingdom of God and the world of the quanta are the core issues for Christian de Duve, Jonathan Wittenberg and Anton Zeilinger. Their discourse showed just how connected with one another these apparently different fields of expertise are.

Medicine Nobel laureate de Duve impressively displayed the possibilities the growth of the human brain over the course of evolution can have for mankind. This is to be used wisely. Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, one of the most important representatives of the traditional and non-fundamentalist Jewish faith, spoke of a God who does not want his gospel to be falsely used by extremists as an excuse for killing. Anton Zeilinger, who successfully carried out the world's first quantum teleportation in 1997, explained that the world of God and the sciences should not be seen as each other's enemy and “we should let God run the world as He wants.”

Also, in the third plenum session two very different worlds collided: a dialog between Franz Welser-Möst, a man who, even in his youth, was regarded as one of the world's best conductors, and Tenzin Palmo, an Indian woman who realized her vocation as a Buddhist when she was only 18 and then spent twelve years as a hermit in the Himalayas developing her spirituality. On the basis of this experience, Tenzin Palmo radically questioned our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

The Waldzell Report 2005

Alan Webber kindly summarized the main statements of all speakers, in order to provide readers with a quick overview. In their commentaries, Hans Rauscher and Heinz Sichrovsky recount personal and heartfelt “snapshots” of the meeting.

Christiane Neubauer thematically documented the meeting, her contribution focusing on the central questions and keeping records of the considerable contents amassed.

The comments by some participants and by the “Architects of the Future” demonstrate the wide range of impressions and perceptions evoked by the topics and the speakers.

We kept the most important question until last: is it possible to make a significant contribution for a better future with the help of this century's leading scientists, exceptional artists, principle religious leaders and influential leaders of industry? Is the attempt to create a forum for discussion a suitable weapon against terrorism, starving children in Africa and major environmental catastrophes? And is it really worth the effort to write a report like this in a time when there is truly no lack of nicely printed paper?

Does what the Waldzell Meetings endeavour to achieve have any real influence on the world? Will they be just a storm in a teacup, or more like the butterfly, the beating of whose tiny wings can cause a sandstorm in a desert? We do not know. The only thing we can be sure of is that if it had not been for somebody inventing the bicycle sometime, if it had not been for the dragonfly's wings being in constant movement, there would be no life and no progress on earth.

The Secrets of the Cellar

by Paulo Coelho

Brazilian, author of “The Alchemist” and “The Zahir”,
Patron of the “Architects of the Future”

Once a year, I go to the Benedictine abbey of Melk, in Austria, for the Waldzell Meeting – an initiative begun by Gundula Schatz and Andreas Salcher. The whole weekend is a kind of retreat spent in the company of Nobel laureates, scientists, journalists, a couple of dozen young people and a few other guests. We cook, walk in the abbey gardens (the abbey was a source of inspiration for Umberto Eco’s *The Name of the Rose*) and talk informally about the present and the future of our civilization. The men sleep in the abbey itself and the women are put up in nearby hotels. The Waldzell Meetings are some of the most creative I have ever attended, and, if things go to plan, they will become a model for all discussions on the present and the future of the planet. The 2005 meeting had all the expected ingredients - passionate debate and moments of both joy and confrontation. Most of the guests left on Sunday night for their various countries; but since I and the organizers were staying on to take part in the inauguration of the Austrian section of the Road to Santiago and needed to spend another night at the abbey, Father Martin invited us to have supper in his ‘secret place’.

We excitedly followed him down into the subterranean depths of this ancient building. An equally ancient door swung open, and we found ourselves in a vast room, where I saw a world which contained everything, or almost everything that had been accumulated over the centuries, and which Father Martin refused to throw away. Antiquated typewriters, skis, helmets from the Second World War, old tools, out-of-print books - and bottles of wine! Dozens, no, hundreds of dusty bottles of wine, from amongst which, as supper progressed, Abbot Burkhard, who dined with us, selected some of the finest. I consider Abbot Burkhard to be one of my spiritual mentors, although we have never exchanged more than a couple of sentences (he speaks only German). His eyes brim with kindness and his smile reveals immense compassion. I remember that once he had to introduce me at a conference and, to everyone’s horror, chose a quotation from my book *Eleven Minutes* (which is about sex and prostitution).

While I ate, I was intensely aware that I was living through a unique moment in a unique place. Suddenly, it occurred to me that although all these things in the abbey cellars had been stored away, they nonetheless still made sense; they may have been part of the past, but they also completed the story of the present.



Paulo Coelho

And I asked myself: Is there anything in *my* past that has been stored away and is no longer of any use to me?

My experiences form part of my everyday life, they are not locked away in a cellar, but continue actively to help me. So, to speak of my experiences as having been stored away and useless would be wrong, so what was the right answer?

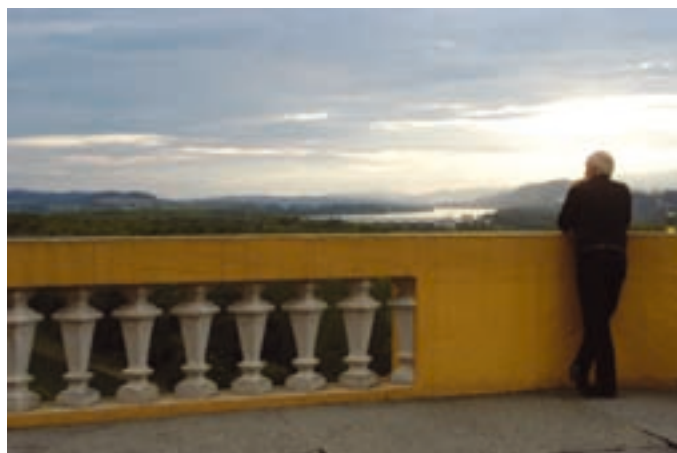
My mistakes.

Yes. Looking around at the cellar in Melk Abbey and realizing that one should not necessarily discard everything for which one has no further use, I understood that my mistakes were stored away in the cellar of my soul; once, they had helped me to find the path, but as soon as I recognized them as mistakes, they became redundant. And yet they still need to accompany me, so as to remind me that, because of them, I slipped and fell and almost lacked the strength to get up again.

When I returned to my cell later that night, I made a list. Here are two examples from it:

(a) The arrogance of youth. I was always a rebel, always looking for a new path to take, and that was a positive thing. But whenever I was arrogant and convinced that older people knew nothing, I missed an opportunity to learn much that would have been useful to me.

(b) Forgetting my friends. I have had many highs and lows. On my first 'high', I thought that, having changed my life completely, I should surround myself with completely new people. Of course, after the subsequent 'low', the new arrivals disappeared and I could not go back to my old friends. Ever since then, I have tried to preserve friendship as something that does not change over time.



Paulo Coelho

The list was immensely long, but the space in this article is only limited; however, what matters is the awareness that, although my mistakes may have taught me everything I needed to learn from them, it is still important to preserve them in the cellar of my soul. That way, when, from time to time, I go down there in search of the wine of wisdom, I can look at them and see that, however neatly tidied away (or resolved) they might be, they are, nevertheless, part of my history and form part of the foundations of the person I am today; I need, therefore, to accept them. Otherwise, I run the risk of repeating them all over again.

Portrait

Paulo Coelho is not only one of the most widely read, but also one of the most influential authors writing today. "His books have had a life-enhancing impact on millions of people" wrote *The Times* in the UK. To date, 65 million copies of his books have been published in 150 countries and sold in 60 languages.

Paulo Coelho was born in Rio in August 1947. During the early seventies, he started an alternative magazine called *2001*. He also began to collaborate with music producer Raul Seixas as a lyricist and, at age 26, he already worked as an executive in the music industry.

In 1977, however, Coelho decided to follow his dream and started to write.

In 1987, Coelho wrote *The Pilgrimage*, a diary of his pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela. A year later, he wrote a very different book, *The Alchemist*. *The Alchemist* went on to sell more copies than any other book in Brazilian literary history—over 30 million copies in 140 countries to date.

Coelho has received numerous prestigious international awards including the Crystal Award from the World Economic Forum, America's Blouin Foundation Prize, Germany's Bambi 2001 Award and Hungary's Budapest Prize. The French government bestowed the title Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur upon him. In 2002, he was inducted into the Brazilian Academy of Letters. He was appointed special advisor to the UNESCO program "Spiritual Convergences and Intercultural Dialogs" and is the founder of the Paulo Coelho Institute, which provides support and opportunities for underprivileged members of Brazilian society.

The Recesses of the Heart

by Abbot Burkhard F. Ellegast, 66th Abbot of Melk Abbey

Sometimes we have experiences that lead us to ask ourselves: “How did this happen to me? How did I get here?” In 2004, I suddenly found myself surrounded by a group of amazing people, great spirits whose task it was to think about the meaning of life. Why was I there, someone who entered a convent, a teacher of youth, an abbot in charge of my convent for the last 26 years? I have come to have the opportunity to do a bit of what I enjoy: being there for people, standing by them when they share their joys, and moreover, when they are in dire straits or when they feel that their life has no meaning.

As I stood in front of the guests and this corona of collective genius, I knew everyone expected to find help that would apply to their hectic and goal-oriented lives. And so, I just spoke about myself. I conveyed that my faith gives me the strength to go on living despite my pessimism, as if everything would, or at least could, “be alright.” I explained my motto: “If I go down, I’ll go down not only kicking and screaming, but waving flags and banners as well!” I shared that my motto helps me access quite a significant meaning in life, and that when I come face to face with a new situation, basically afraid of everything, I imagine myself stepping out of a boat, the little “boat” of my fears, out into the stormy waters of the situation. I know, due to my faith, that if I start to drown, I can raise my hands and call out: “Lord, save me!” and a path will always appear before me. I noticed, as I was shaping my thoughts, that my audience had a palpable spiritual longing: why else would they listen to me so intently, especially after a tough day, so late in the evening? And why else would so many of them come to the early morning meditation the following day?

For me, the Waldzell Meeting was particularly significant, because it showed me that, as I get on in years, I experience meaning in life when I share my own thoughts about the meaning of life with others. A premier example of such meaning is the attempt by Gundula Schatz and Andreas Salcher, Waldzell’s founders, to address the “whole” human being, to help find a “common denominator,” if you will, for pure rationalism, cursory sentimentalism, and one-sided aggrandizement of the body. Topics from the 2004 Waldzell Meeting found cohesive continuation in 2005, as its initiators continually reaffirm how suitable the venue Melk is for this meeting.

Then I met Paulo Coelho. The Waldzell Meeting made it possible. I had read some of his books, in which I experienced his depiction of the peaks and valleys of human existence. His descriptions are so vivid, they can only come from profound personal experience. I did not yet know much about his life, but felt that he was a man of dreams and visions. I felt he must have had to wrestle with himself, in order for his dreams and visions to carry any meaning. Above all, I sensed he feels that he is still seeking, that he still has much to learn on his journey, in particular from his mistakes...those which lie deep in the recesses of his heart and in the forefront of his mind’s eye.

Essentially, his works deal with the freedom of mankind and the many things that encroach upon freedom, keeping it from developing, from growing. One determines to find freedom simply by eliminating all boundaries, by simply doing as one pleases, and one finds oneself terribly constricted. Often, we can only realize how we have confined ourselves in hindsight. In his column “The Secrets of the Cellar,” Paulo Coelho relates how surprised everyone was that I presented quotations from his books *Eleven Minutes* while introducing him in Melk. I read the description of a beautiful bird, fictitiously penned by one of Paulo Coelho’s main characters in her diary. The bird came to her often and she loved it. Because she wanted to have the bird near her, she caught the bird and put it into a cage. She then had the bird near her at all times. But she became accustomed to the bird, and it just was not the same beloved bird that visited only now and then. Even the bird itself was not the same as when it could fly free. The bird lost its luster and got weaker and weaker. When the bird died, she realized why everything happened the way it did: if she had allowed the bird to fly free and come and go as it pleased, then she would have loved it. She needed the bird’s death, in order to understand, to “see clear” again.



Burkhard F. Ellegast

We often imprison and are imprisoned as well, because we see freedom as something that has no boundaries; we find ourselves believing that “ties” encroach upon freedom. Yet, we overlook that this results in individualistic confinement and thus robs us and others of freedom. Freedom is impossible without ties. That is what the famous tree in the middle of paradise means. When the main character in *The Zahir* desperately searches for his beloved wife, he needs to learn that love is not ownership, not command over another, not self-evident; instead, love is only true when freed of individualistic constraints.



Meeting of the religions in the church of the abbey

Coelho depicts a variety of characters in each of his works, but behind his characters, we find Coelho himself with all his personal experiences. His words come to life, because they have a solid foundation in real-life experience. In his column “The Secrets of the Cellar“, he reveals many weaknesses and mistakes, stored in the recesses of his heart, where he can view them and remind himself of them. There, they are tidily organized, and his conscious recognition of them protects him from imprisonment.

Spending time with Paulo Coelho in our “secret hideaway,” Melk, was a magical moment in my life. Although I do not speak English, I understood almost everything he said, as eyes and gestures often communicate much better than words. I can still hear him asking me: “What do you think I should do next?” I said that he should just stay on his journey, that he should search and thereafter, he should search some more. Because it is through searching that we find, and it is while searching that we become curious, which gives us meaning, new meaning with each new journey.

The mistakes and weaknesses in the recesses of our hearts will lead us to freedom. Paulo Coelho writes that I dutifully sought to find the best wine in the house, but what I wanted to find was not the best-tasting wine, or the one which would win the highest critical acclaim, but the wine best for him. I selected a wine from 1986, which, as far as I understand from my meetings with him and from his books, was a year in which he took significant steps toward his own personal, true freedom. He let the bird out of its cage, and allowed it to fly free.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind

by Hans Rauscher, Der Standard, FORMAT

To hear from someone like Anton Zeilinger that you might deduce the existence of an inexplicable guiding principle, possibly also called God (if I understood Zeilinger correctly), from certain characteristics of particle behavior in quantum mechanics is this kind of immaterial profit you can gain from participating in the Waldzell Meeting. Then, in my role as moderator, to try to come at least close to being a match for Paulo Coelho, the “Warrior of the Light“ appearing in a rather bellicose mood himself, is another lure of this young event. To watch the honoring of some participants in the library of Melk Abbey, with young singers disguised as Muses citing excerpts from their work, is almost a *Close Encounter of the Third Kind*.

The concept of Waldzell is based on three pillars: the gathering of exceptional people, the quest for meaning and the special atmosphere of Melk. In my opinion this concept was realized at Waldzell 2005 if you--like myself--content yourself with the very event. Hardly ever will you find a group of such distinguished national and international thinkers and key movers united in one place, including the decoder of the human genome Craig Venter, management philosopher Peter Senge, and conductor Franz Welser-Möst. At times, the discussions meander, but this is inevitable and should not disturb anyone. The special atmosphere of Melk, interwoven with a hint of esotericism and the structure of a seminar worked in by the creators of Waldzell, is truly stimulating and relaxing at the same time.

It is certainly right and necessary that the creators Andreas Salcher and Gundula Schatz keep demanding a potential of realization and practical utilization.



The "Waldzell Collection": Incorporation of the speakers' life achievements into the library of the abbey

Someone like me, however, who participated for the first time in 2005, was satisfied by merely listening to brilliant people, engaging in a discussion with them and freeing himself for two days in autumn from the pettiness of public issues in Austria.

High Numerators and Low Denominators

by Heinz Sichrovsky, NEWS

What Waldzell was this year: more sovereign, more relaxed, more playful, deeper than in the previous year. The disciplines mingled even more naturally, and with so many high numerators being present the lowest common denominator was the essence, as well as the highest concentration of an idea: to change the world with the help of exceptional individuals.



Anton Zeilinger, Cristian de Duve

It assembled opposites: Paulo Coelho, the personification of sensuality and spiritual contentment, and Tenzin Palmo, who meditated alone in a cave for twelve years; Craig Venter, the epitome of the most brilliant and cutting-edge scientific pragmatism, and Franz Welser-Möst, who as a conductor is a disciple of the rule of the absolute and who has declared the laws in his field null and void; the aura of Christian de Duve and the restlessness of Thom Mayne; Peter Senge's angry call for change and Jonathan Wittenberg's

power of contemplation. And Anton Zeilinger, who showed us a way into another dimension, and, in doing so managed to connect with Welser-Möst, the simultaneous interpreter of the unutterable.

The religions met and put their respective standards of the absolute into perspective. Some agnostics will no longer declare their viewpoints on religion. Events like this tend to develop the structure of a sect if all the participants do not display the highest level of responsibility and integrity. Waldzell proved to be the contrary, although for the first time some young scholars were offered to be taken under the wings of some of the world's greatest minds. We called them "Architects of the Future," whose inherent meaning was, however, that they were not misused either as building material for the others' fantasies or as navvies carrying bricks.

Art, religion, science: Much to the dismay of mankind, science has kept pressing and marginalizing the other two in the past century with a brutality similar to that of the Darwinian process of selection. For religion — if it manages to survive at all — this was a necessary, long overdue process. The arts, however, always a delicate flower, need events like the Waldzell Meeting in order to be perceived as actuals, as a vital organ of the whole.

Hence, Waldzell deserves to be considered not only a mere appointment but a concept, a way of life, a necessity.

Let's Dance the Change!

by Roland Falb and Alexander Gutzmer, Roland Berger

The trick is old: To rouse conference participants from their pleasant passiveness, experienced lecturers prescribe interaction. This is exactly what MIT management thinker Peter Senge did at his workshop in Melk. But teamwork and small group discussions here quickly developed a deeper meaning; there was more than the usual presentation of old knowledge. Instead of getting excited about two by two matrices, the participants engaged in the controversial discussion of the possibility (or impossibility) of organizational learning and the human factors which hinder change. The activity level was high – apparently Senge's questions "What do we want from Waldzell, what's the meaning of the search for meaning?" hit a nerve.

The thematic journey undertaken – from interpersonal relations in companies to recent social developments and the heterogeneity of Islamic cultures – makes "sense" in the true meaning of the word. Because it is precisely this type of textual substance, in terms of explaining what societal or organizational relevance a particular change process has, that is lacking from many debates on the topic. The rhetoric on the necessity and difficulties of change often forgets that every change process must first settle the question why change is necessary and what should result from it. Change must have content, purpose, "meaning." And this is where the 2005 Waldzell Meeting made an important contribution. For particularly in our change-resistant Western European societies, people do not question the necessity of change as such; rather they lack visions of 'whereto.' Change is okay, people tend to think, but what exactly awaits us at the end of the change process?

If these questions are answered, a target-oriented development process is possible. In a company, this would create an optimistic attitude towards change. Peter Senge, too, sees such an attitude as a driving force of every change process. For it challenges the main obstructers of change pointed out by Senge in his book *The Dance of Change*. The impression people in the organization might have that a change process does not follow any purpose can be countered by clear statements on how it is strategically embedded.

The fear of those who drive change in the organization to be left alone is unfounded if these people are provided with the vocabulary to communicate to others why the change makes sense internally. And the main obstacle of many change processes, that they deliver no measurable results, at least in their early phases, becomes less problematic even if countable results may not turn up at first.



Helmut Schönthaler, Roland Falb

By setting clear objectives and goals, there is a certainty that at the end of a change process, its effectiveness will be measurable. This motivates people to support the process, making them true change agents. In this light, Senge and the Waldzell Meeting as a whole generated a clear and important entrepreneurial input: By putting the search for meaning on the agenda.

Dr. Roland Falb
Partner, Roland Berger Strategy Consultants
roland_falb@at.rolandberger.com

Alexander Gutzmer
Editor-in-Chief, think:act
alexander.gutzmer@burdayukom.de

The Central Statements of the Speakers

by Alan M. Webber

Christian de Duve

Belgian, biochemist, Nobel Prize in Medicine 1974

“This extraordinary increase, this rapid, exponential increase of the human brain in the last two to three million years, is the most amazing event in the whole history of life, of evolution.”

Life started on earth a little less than four billion years ago, that is four thousand million years ago. It is a very long time. According to cosmologists, the earth will remain able to sustain life for at least another one and a half billion years, perhaps as long as five billion years, longer than the past history. So we are just about half way in this very, very long saga.



Christian de Duve

How did it all start? The answer is, we do not know. But we have some ideas. The first idea is that if life started naturally—which is the only hypothesis scientists can entertain—then it started with chemistry. It started with small molecules being made, interacting to make bigger molecules, to make even bigger molecules, to make assemblies of these molecules up to the first living cells. It is easily said, but we do not know how it happened. We do know a little more. We know the beginning; we know the end of this long history.

The beginning is very interesting. It is a discovery that was made only in the last 30 years. The building blocks of life, amino acids to make proteins, sugars, fatty acids, nitrogen bases, the small molecules, out of which all living organisms are made, all these small molecules arise spontaneously in our galaxy and very probably also elsewhere in the universe.

Two hundred years ago, it was called organic chemistry because it was believed to be a chemistry that only living organisms could perform, including, later on, organic chemists. Organic chemistry is, in fact, the most banal, the most abundant chemistry in the whole cosmos. The building blocks of life, the chemical seeds of life, are everywhere. How do we know this? I do not have time to tell you in detail, but we know it from the incoming radiation, from the analyses of comets, and the analyses of meteorites. The endpoint was an organism we call LUCA, the last universal common ancestor. This again is something that we have learned recently: All living organisms, microbes, plants, fungi, animals, humans are descendants of a single ancestral form of life. This is now established, I think, with a high degree of confidence.

The problem of the origin of life is: How did it happen that the building blocks provided by cosmic chemistry transformed into the LUCA? As I said, we do not know, but we suspect one thing that is very highly probable, namely, that this long pathway from the building blocks to the LUCA started with chemistry. There can be no doubt about that. But at some stage in this chemical saga, there appeared, for the first time in the history of our planet, molecules capable of being replicated, of being copied. In life today, those molecules are made of DNA, mostly. But in the early days, it was probably RNA. There are many reasons to believe that RNA came before DNA. Some scientists believe that a simple molecule preceded RNA. But this is of no importance for our talk.

What is important is the word replication, or reproduction. For the first time, a molecule had the ability to influence the mechanisms that made the same kind of molecules, so that it was being copied, reproduced. Replication has a number of important consequences. First, it is the seed of genetic continuity. From generation to generation, you copy what was before—there is continuity. But in addition to continuity, you have variation. Why? Because copying is never perfect. There are always accidents, mistakes of one sort or another.

As a result, some imperfect copies are made at the same time as perfect copies are made. Those imperfect copies start making perfect copies of themselves. So you get lineages of variant forms that arise of the original forms.

With those variations, you get competition.

The end result of competition is selection: The emergence among the variant forms of those forms that are most stable, survive longer, or especially reproduce faster, make more copies of themselves under the prevailing conditions. That is a very important point. With the advent of RNA or whatever replicable molecule preceded RNA, chemistry continued to rule, and it still rules. All organisms function by chemical mechanisms. But in addition, there came selection; it was added to chemistry. The important point here is that chemistry is a highly deterministic process. In chemistry, when you mix A with B under certain specified conditions, you always get C. It is deterministic; it is reproducible. If it were not, if it were dependant on chance, you could not have chemical factories, and you could not have chemical laboratories. You could not rely on chance to make chemicals.

This means that the early part of life was governed by a highly deterministic set of processes, meaning that under the conditions under which this happened on our planet, let us say, four billion years ago, it was bound to happen. If the same conditions should obtain, the same kind of processes will take place.

But what about selection? Selection introduces a completely new set of factors, because selection can only act on whatever variant forms are offered to it. There could be much better forms, but if they are not provided, selection cannot make them emerge. One thing we know again with a fair degree of confidence today is that those variations—we call them mutations—introduce variety in the history of life. Those variations are accidental. They are not random. They have causes, very clear causes that we are beginning to understand. But they are accidental. What is important is they are unintentional; they are not goal directed.

The mutations—or whatever causes the mutations—do not look into the future, and say, “This kind of mutation would be useful, so we are going to make it.” They are unintentional; they are accidental. This is the main reason, I think, why many biologists today believe that the history of life that was largely governed by selection was contingent. It was something that was governed by chance.

As the late Steven Jay Gould said in a well-remembered analogy, should you rewind the tape and replay it, you would not get the same story. I think, this attitude, this view is based on a sort of implicit assumption. If you have accidents and if you start again, you would not have the same accidents. It is a sort of implicit feeling of contingency. But I think they are neglecting one important point. I may be wrong, of course. But the point I am making is the following: It is true that if you get a limited number of choices that are offered to selection, it can only choose among those variants the one most apt to survive. You start again, you get another set of variants, and another form emerges by natural selection. But what if you are offered all the possible variants? If you are offered all the possible variants, then selection will reproducibly cause the optimal to emerge. This is called selective optimization.



Christian de Duve, Anton Zeilinger

A bit on calculations about what it needs for events to come out with a fair amount of certainty: You buy a lottery ticket, seven digits. If you want to win with a 99.9% probability, it is easy. All you need is 69 million drawings. Is that clear? One chance in a million to win, 69 million drawings, you win 99.9%. It is the same thing in evolution. You provide enough time, enough numbers of individuals, and you are almost sure to get, under the conditions that prevail, the mutations that will turn out to be optimal. I do not have time to go into this more, but I can tell you that this general idea of this selective optimization is beginning to be considered with some interest.

In other words, what I am saying is that deterministic chemistry plus a large number of events of selective optimization give you a story that could be reproduced, provided the same conditions are obtained. That is, of course, where chance comes in. You cannot expect on another planet to have exactly the same earthquakes, the same tsunamis, the same periods of draughts, the same periods of ice ages, and so on.



Craig Venter, Christian de Duve

The probability of finding on another planet, the same kind of geological history, climatic history of our planet, is very remote, certainly impossible. But certain trends are very clear, and I think an important trend in the history of life is this progressive evolution in the direction of increasing complexity, which is to what we owe our presence today.

This is the first point that I wanted to make.

A few words now about us, about humans.

Humans are the end product of a very long process of evolution. For three billion years, there were only microbes, no plants, no animals, nothing. Then, about one billion years ago, the first very simple plants, seaweeds, mussels arose, and only about 600 million years ago, the first animals. Those animals evolved in

the direction of increasing complexity. They went from invertebrates to vertebrates, from marine vertebrates, fish, to terrestrial vertebrates, from the first terrestrial vertebrates to mammals, from mammals to primates, from primates to humanoids, and finally to humans. We are really very latecomers in this history. Up to five, six million years ago, there was not even a sign that we would be there. Let me just concentrate on what we consider a most important and significant property of our brain, the history of the human brain. To understand the history of the human brain, I ask you to use your imagination.

In your imagination, move two and a half kilometres from this auditorium. That is 600 million years ago. That is the first sponges. They had no brains, no nerve cells, and then, progressively, during evolution, over those two and a half kilometres, the size of the animal brain slowly increased up to today, right there, to about the level of the word “Waldzell” on the screen. That is, 350 cubic centimetres; 35 billion neurons, nerve cells. That is the brain of the chimpanzee. From the sponge with zero neurons to the chimpanzee with 35 billion neurons, it took two and a half kilometres, 600 million years.

Now I want you to imagine: Somewhere here, from that almost horizontal line leading to the chimpanzee, a branch detaches, slowly, moves up, up, up, faster and faster and faster, exponentially, up to reaching the ceiling—two million years later, 20 meters over two kilometres. This extraordinary increase, this rapid, exponential increase of the human brain in the last two to three million years, is the most amazing event in the whole history of life, of evolution. How to explain this exponential increase in brain size is one of the most important problems in this field.

You have to realize that in this exponential increase, there were a number of forks, a number of stages. Some organisms, monkeys or humanoids, went on increasing their brain size, but others remained at the size they had reached, and stayed and continued to live for hundreds of thousands of years, sometimes more than a million years. Those are the organisms of

which the bones are found by paleo-anthropologists today. This is *Australopithecus afarensis* with 400 cubic centimetres. That is Lucy. Then a little higher, you have *Homo habilis*, 500, *Homo erectus*, 1,000, and so on, up to *Homo habilis* and *Neanderthalensis* with 1,300 cubic centimetres. What I am saying is that, at various stages, the increase stopped. This leads me to my final two questions: I have two questions, no answers.

First, what if, in those five billion years that, perhaps, are left for life on earth, the curve continued to rise through the ceiling up to high in the sky? What would those brains conceive, what would those brains produce as works of art, what philosophy, what religion, what science would they come up with?

The other question is: We are so proud of ourselves; our line is right on top there. But it is flat now, it is flat like the others, like *Homo erectus*, like *Australopithecus* and so on. What if that line remains flat as it is now and at some stage stops, as *Homo erectus* disappeared, as *Homo habilis* disappeared, as *Homo habilis* disappeared, as *Homo Heidelbergensis* disappeared, and so on?

The main point to remember from all this is that the game has changed. Until a few thousand years ago, natural selection was in the driver's seat: it was doing everything. Now we are in the driver's seat. We can counteract natural selection; in fact, we are doing it. We can direct the future of humanity, the future of life on earth. And from what we heard this morning, the prospects are not very encouraging. I am sorry to end on this point.

Portrait

Christian de Duve was born in Thames-Ditton, Great Britain, in 1917 and grew up with his Belgian parents in Antwerp, Belgium. Having completed his medical and, later, chemical studies at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, he assumed a teaching position there in 1947. In 1962, he was appointed professor at the Rockefeller Institute, now the Rockefeller University, in New York. In 1985, he became emeritus.



Christian de Duve, Gundula Schatz

In 1974, Christian de Duve was awarded the Nobel Prize, jointly with Albert Claude and George Palade, for their fundamental discoveries elucidating the structural and functional organization of the cell. With the aim of applying the results of cellular research to medicine, de Duve founded the International Institute of Cellular and Molecular Pathology, which now bears his name, in Brussels.

After decades of intensive research in cellular biology, de Duve turned to "greater" issues in the 1990s. Landmarked by several books, this quest has led him to explore the origin and evolution of life and to analyze their mechanisms and significance. His provocative hypothesis: "Life is a cosmic imperative." It was bound to come into existence on earth and, probably, on a great number of other planets too. Humans have achieved the feat of setting aside the forces of natural selection for themselves, but they are heading for a "demographic trap." If we should fail to put a halt to the population explosion, the ruthless laws of natural selection will take care of this problem for us, predicts de Duve.

Thom Mayne

American, principal of Morphosis Architects,
Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate 2005

“You have to understand that no matter what you believe, if it is based on faith, it’s fiction. It’s an invention, it’s in your brain.”



Thom Mayne

The future is here. We just have not found it yet. The issues today are all about the present. The future is something much more about trajectory, about some idea as to where we are going. But realistically, we have absolutely no idea where we are going. It is impossible in a world of unknowability and complexity. The future, in my estimation, is, therefore, completely irrelevant. What matters is the present, what we do in the present and what we understand about the present. And what we do not understand: We do not understand how we operate politically, culturally, biologically, ecologically.

The title of this conference is all about the future and meaning. So we should start the discussion with the question, meaning to whom? For example, when you are just barely surviving, do you really have the time to worry about meaning? Recently I was reading a fascinating article in *The New York Times* about the changing demographics and economics of New York City. The difference between the poorest person in New York and the richest person is now two cents to one dollar. That is about equal to Namibia. There are huge changes going on in the United States right now in terms of the further differentiation of wealth, the further differentiation of opportunities.

Meaning is a function of privilege. Meaning comes when you are in a place where you have the privilege of controlling your life; meaning comes when you can afford to ask those types of existential questions. Meaning comes when you have resources, some sort of wealth and comfort.

When you are investigating any kind of problem, you have to ask simple questions. Architecture starts with questions. The first one I would ask about our topic today is: Are you sure we *need* meaning?

Today, any discussion of meaning has to be contextualized; it is going to be personal, individual, and private. Today, meaning is highly politicized. And of course it is immensely coopted by capitalist enterprise. Another factor that affects meaning today is lifestyle—changes in how you look, changes of location, changes of behavior.

If you want to talk about meaning and the future, we have to establish some kind of premise about what the problem is. And we have to ask what we are talking about when we try to discuss our different ideas about meaning. We should start with the nature of the human character, the *Homo sapiens*, “us” differentiated from the rest of the animal species. A little bit arrogant I have to say.

We are much, much closer to the rest of the species than we recognize. Arrogance is not doing us any good in terms of how we behave. We received this potential, this cognitive ability. We have the ability to place things within abstractions, we have the ability to define ourselves. This capability has produced a kind of knowledge of who we are and why we are, and it seems also in some ways to lead us to ask questions in terms of meaning.

A part of that rationality is a dilemma. Because the same intelligence that allows us to ask questions about the meaning of life also understands the simple dilemma of life: life ends. Because of this, we fabricate stories, narratives, fables, various fictions to deal with the terror of death, to allow us to exist. But that is not the end, because the institutions that are here to help us with these things, in fact become part of the problem. All religions, as they become institutions, focus on the preservation of their narrative, their story, as the basis of their institution.

This is for me the center of discussion. You have to understand that no matter what you believe, if it is based on faith, it is fiction. It is an invention, it is in your brain. Does that mean it is not reality? Of course not. It is absolutely real, you live by it. James Turrell has said there is no metaphysics, there is only physics. Unfortunately, we live by metaphysics. We are living in a world that is approaching 7 billion people; it is increasingly global, increasingly complex and unknowable. The important thing for us to understand is that all of us live by fictions. They operate as provisional ideas; they are fluent, they are flexible, they are changeable. In that sense, I would say that our systems of meaning are much closer to science and the way the sciences operate: They are theories.

I come from a very religious Protestant family. I went to church everyday starting when I was just three years old. But when I was eleven, I was kicked out for asking certain kinds of questions. They were very basic questions.

Did God make me and my brain? The answer was yes. Is God really all-forgiving? Yes.
Do I go to hell if I do not believe in God? Yes. Tommy, no more, please!
But if God made my brain and this brain does not believe in God and he is all-forgiving, why do I go to hell? Tommy, get out of here!

Today if there is something important taking place in the realm of meaning and values, then it is the aligning of these notions to the nature of the reality of the world in biological terms, in real terms. What would be most interesting is if we were to find a global convergence of values, a convergence that has to do with sustaining us ecologically, sustaining us biologically, sustaining the physical reality of the world.

As to the future, and the implications of all this to the “Architects of the Future”, I would say this: Believe in your initial instincts, because when you are young, you have less knowledge, but you have certain instincts. The world of art is somewhat subjective, and somewhat complicated and somewhat isolated from society. Something very deep comes out of knowing yourself. So you have to believe in yourself completely and follow your instincts because you have nothing else. There is no choice.

Portrait

Thom Mayne was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, in 1944. He received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Southern California in 1968 and his Master of Architecture from Harvard University in 1978. In the early seventies, he co-founded the Southern California Institute of Architecture, and currently holds a tenured faculty position at the UCLA School of Arts and Architecture. Morphosis, the Santa Monica, California based architecture studio that Mayne founded in 1972, has grown to more than forty architects and designers, with projects built worldwide.



Thom Mayne, Jonathan Wittenberg, Franz Welser-Möst

The jury of the Pritzker Prize – the “Nobel Prize of Architecture” – emphasized that, with his buildings, Mayne leaves behind traditional forms and materials, and goes beyond the boundaries of modern and Post-modernist architecture. Mayne’s work ranges from designs for watches and teapots, to large-scale civic buildings, innovative academic buildings, and urban design and planning schemes.

Morphosis has built in the United States and abroad, in such locations as Austria, Canada, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, and Spain. In Klagenfurt (Carinthia), Morphosis designed the headquarters of the group Hypobank, the significant Hypo-Alpe-Adria-Center. Current major projects include the winning entry for the New York 2012 Olympic Village Competition, a Federal Office building in San Francisco, as well as a social housing project in Madrid.

Tenzin Palmo

British, buddhist nun and founder of a nunnery
in North India

“The word ‘Buddha’ means to awaken. We are all asleep, we are all dreaming, and we believe our dreams. This is the problem.”



Tenzin Palmo

One time when I was living in the cave I had a dream. I dreamt that I was in an enormous prison without end. In this prison, there were many levels. There were the penthouse suites where people were laughing and talking and dancing and making love and working. There were the levels all the way down, until you got to the dungeons where people were writhing in agony and despair of mind. But whether we were in the penthouse or in the dungeons, we were all in the prison. I suddenly realized it was so insecure; people in the penthouse today could be in the dungeons tomorrow. We are all trapped together; we had to get out. So I spoke to a number of my friends: “Look, this is a prison, we have got to leave.” They all said, “Oh yes, it’s a prison, but it’s okay, it’s not bad.” Or they said, “True, it’s a prison, but to get out, it’s so difficult, better to accept the fact that here we are.” Eventually I found two friends who agreed to try to escape with me, and the dream went on.

The question is, why do we regard our ordinary life here as a prison, and how do we get out? This is basically the question in Buddhism. But why is it a prison? You might say, “My life is okay, it’s not a prison. I can more or less do what I want to do.” It is not dealing with the physicality; it is dealing with the mind. Our minds are

imprisoned, not by external gates, but by ignorance. This is so universal, and it is why I am troubled for the future. Despite all our external learning, our research and science, we are still absolutely ignorant. Spiritually, we are as ignorant as we were when our Buddha walked this earth.

What are we ignorant of? Einstein said that in our age there has been a tremendous growth in knowledge, but absolutely no growth in wisdom. Ignorance has nothing to do with education, nothing to do with external brilliance and genius of mind. What are we ignorant of? We are ignorant of our true being and what is really the nature of this world. Because we are clinging to all the wrong things governed by ignorance, we are enslaved.

Buddhism is always concerned with how to become free. It is always concerned with liberation, liberation of mind. The problem is that normally we live within a world of time—past, present, future—and in a subject/object dichotomy. There is the subject “me” and the object “everyone else out there.” We cling to this sense of “me” and “mine-ness.” Some people think “I” when they think of their gender, their race, their country, or their religion, and they think, “This is who I am. I am the sum of my personality, I am the sum of my memories, I am the sum of my race. This is who I am.”

Some people are more subtle, and they say, “No, behind all that there is something else. There is an ‘I’ which is unchanging, which has always been there since I was born up to now.” But when you look to find this “I” which separates “me” from all the “yous” out there, where is it?

Buddhism is not just to make us calm and quiet and feeling happy. It is to peel off the layers of our onion of individuality. If you peel off the various layers, the first layer race, then the layer gender, then nationality, then education, then one’s level in society, one’s profession, where is this “I?” Eventually you get to something else which is totally beyond “I.” This intrinsic awareness, this primordial awareness, which is at the very basis of our being, has nothing to do with me or you.

We experience a level of awareness behind the coming and going of thoughts and feelings and concepts. It is a wordless, timeless, non-dualistic perception. If we can remain always in that higher level of total awareness, we are Buddha. It is simple.

This awareness is not something up there, and it is not actually something that is difficult to realize. Awareness is just awareness. The Tibetans compare it to the sky. The sky has no center, and it has no circumference. It is endless. The sky is not just there, it is there and here. It is space. In Tibetan, the word for space and the word for sky is the same word. So where is space not, where is this awareness not?

The word “Buddha” means to awaken. We are all asleep, we are all dreaming, and we believe our dreams. This is the problem. When we awaken even for a moment, then we see that what we cling to is really our own projection. Then our minds are so sharp, so clear, and so awake, and we realize that our true nature is something completely beyond the conceptual thinking mind. The important thing is that externally nothing changes, but inwardly everything changes. Everything becomes alive and clear and vivid, but there is no ego driving it. Then everything spontaneously happens, whatever one needs to do is spontaneously accomplished, without the ego getting in the way. It is accomplished skilfully.

What stands in the way of our liberated mind? This is what we have to deal with, what is happening in our society nowadays. What stands in the way of our realizing our mind? The true nature of our mind is this thick cloud that obscures the blue sky. That cloud is made up of our negative emotions, like our clinging greedy mind, and our anger, and aversion, and hatreds, and our pride, and arrogance, and jealousy, our envy, and especially our ignorance of not realizing our true nature. And this acts like a screen. Do we realize how much we live our lives through our minds? Everything we see, everything we say, everything we do, is directed by our mind, our thoughts, our feelings, our memories, our concepts, our judgments.

We hardly see anything as it is. We see our *opinion*. It is very hard to see things nakedly without the many sheaths of our conceptual opinions and ideas about that thing. We come here and we look at this ceiling. Either we think this is magnificent art, or we think it is

absolute kitsch. We think it is wonderful, or we think, “Oh my God, how could anybody have done this?” It makes no difference; the ceiling is just a ceiling and the painting is just paint. How we react on it depends on our mental framework, our background, our education, our aesthetic taste. Everything is like that. We never see things as they really are, we only see our version. Everything we experience, we experience through our mind. Everything we see, we hear, we taste, touch, or feel, is interpreted through our mind. Yet the mind itself we do not know.

We say, “I think that, I feel that, in my opinion it is that.” But what is a thought, what is a feeling, what is an opinion? We are always streaming outside through our senses, but we never turn that awareness which sees and thinks and tastes and touches inward, onto the mind itself. What is a thought? Where does it come from? What does it look like? Where does it go? And who is thinking? If we say, “I am thinking!” Who am I? What is this whole thinking process and what is behind the thinking process?

We are so caught up in our brains. Some neurologists say that nowadays we know so much about the brain, but we still have not found the mind. In Asia the mind is not up in the brain. The brain is the computer, but the source of the mind is somewhere down here (in the middle of the breast). It is very interesting that when you first start meditating, you are meditating in the head. There is the mind thinking and the meditation practice you are trying to do. So it is like they are both facing each other. It is you and the practice. This dualistic approach which we start with is up here (in the brain). The brain is trying to meditate. Once the meditation really kicks in and the mind really goes into a state of meditation, the meditation itself goes down to here (in the middle of the breast). Then there is no meditator and no meditation. You become one with the practice. At that time, things start moving. This is something you experience. It is not something you think about. As long as you are thinking about it, it stays up here. When you become the meditation, it moves down here, as all religions have always known. What troubles us in our modern culture in particular? Is it what the Buddha said, that the causes of our suffering are our negative emotions, especially our ignorant clinging to an ego and our greed, which means “I want” for this ego, and our anger, and hatred, which means “I do not want” for this ego. This is the cause of our suffering.

Our modern society is selling us the idea that if we could only fulfil our desires, we would be happy. Two thousand years ago, Buddha said, desires are like salty water: “The more you drink, the thirstier you get.” You are never satisfied. Just look at you! You have enough clothes for another ten lifetimes! Why more? We all have more than enough things. If we packed them all together, we could not even carry them. We need a truck to carry all our possessions. Why more? Why do we think, if we only had the latest model of whatever, that would make us happy. When are we going to learn that happiness comes from giving, from generosity, from enjoying the happiness of others, and from contentment?



Tenzin Palmo

The terrifying propaganda that happiness depends on what we get is very dangerous. Not only is it destroying our planet, it is destroying our mind. Young people, little children have all these advertisements on television. They all want designer clothes and designer toys. They are plugged in already into this very insidious propaganda, which is the opposite of any spiritual wisdom, together with this incredibly increasing violence. When you watch the movies and games that children play, it is all violence!

I read recently that from the ninth grade to twelfth grade, children watch on an average 25,000 hours of violence, through their cartoons, through their movies, through the games they are playing. Every movie has to make more violence, be more terrible, be more gory, to get that extra little take. Together with this ego, this me, I have to sell myself! I am the most important. If I am happy, then the rest of the world is okay. This ego, this adorning of the ego, these are the poisons, the poisons of the mind. No wonder, we are a sick society. Every day we are imbibing more and more of these poisons, then we are wondering why we do not feel well.

We have gone wrong somewhere. We have gone horribly wrong, and we need to get back to thinking out the basic essentials, and to our spiritual roots. Happiness rests in the happiness of others, giving happiness to others, not thinking so much always of our own satisfactions and benefits. Our satisfactions and benefits are in giving joy to others, in being kind, in being generous, in being thoughtful, and in learning to cultivate our inner tranquillity, our inner clarity of mind, and our empathy with all beings. Not just human beings, but all beings. We can all do it. If others have done it, we can do it. But if we do not learn to do it, and if we do not teach our children to do it, if we give them all the wrong values right from when they are small, what can we expect for our next generations?

We are in dire straits. We can pull ourselves out, but we can only do this through transforming our own attitudes. Our attitudes are genuinely transformed through understanding. Understanding and compassion, love, go hand in hand.

The important thing is to transform our inner being, because our inner state of mind is reflected in our outer reality. What is happening with our planet at this moment is a reflection of the beings inhabiting our planet, mostly the human beings.

To transform the planet, we need to transform ourselves.

Portrait

In 1943, Tenzin Palmo was born in London as Diane Perry. Already as a child, she felt the burning question of how to obtain perfection. When her quest led her to existentialism at the age of 18, she happened to read a book on Buddhism. She was absorbed instantly and decided to become a Buddhist. At the age of 20, she traveled to India to look for her guru. She found H.E. the Eighth Khamtrul Rinpoche, who ordained her a Buddhist nun in 1964. One of the first Western women to have undergone such a ritual, Diane Perry turned into Tenzin Palmo.

To bring her spiritual practice to perfection, she retreated into solitude after a couple of years of spiritual practice: Tenzin Palmo moved to a small cave at 4,000 m/13,000 ft above sea level in the Himalaya. There she spent 12 years of her life in meditation. During that time, she hardly saw anybody and



Tenzin Palmo

took care of herself mostly without any help. Tenzin Palmo describes these 12 years as the most instructive period of her lifetime. She learned how to deal with being all by herself and to help herself. This applied to practical tasks such as chopping wood, but also particularly to being confronted with her mind.

In the nineties, she founded the nunnery Dongyu-Gatsal-Ling in Himachal Pradesh, India, which is supported by, among others, H.H. the Dalai Lama. As head of this nunnery, she promotes education and equality for women, who have a minor role in Buddhism.

Peter M. Senge, Ph.D.

American, author of “The Fifth Discipline” and Senior Lecturer for Organizational Learning at the MIT

“We live in a historic time. But what do we mean by ‘historic?’ The simplest way I have tried to make sense of it is this: Human beings have never before lived in a condition where our actions today literally affect people all around the world.”



Peter M. Senge

One of the things that I am very mindful of today is living in the United States. I am aware how problematic the American culture is and how isolated and how insular. My reflections this morning are those of an American, but I would like to touch on several things that keep striking me again and again. Maybe I can also use the American culture as a kind of icon, not a model, but an image that we project around the world. Of course, this is a Eurocentric icon. We are much more European than Chinese. Ironically, we are much more European than American.

It is not unusual for our Eurocentric culture to think of intelligence as somehow having to do with the brain. The oldest Chinese symbol for the mind is actually a drawing of a heart. It is important to remind ourselves that this kind of brain-centered concept of intellect is a particular narrative. It is a particular story. Our intellect is both collective and individual, and it is most definitely embodied in all of who we are, that which we can see and that which we cannot see. It is not the brain; clearly brains do not understand the spirit very well.

Hearts seem to do a much better job and perhaps even bodies do a much better job. My background has always been in trying to understand systems. It is a bad word, I always feel to need to apologize just a little. I do not know a better word. It does not mean computer systems, although we have used computer models and simulations. It does not mean management systems either. When someone is unhappy in an organization, whether it is the Abbey here or a business, they all say, “It’s not my fault, it’s the system.” We often use “system” to point to a vague collection of rules and constraints that does not let us be who we are. But that is not the core. The core of systems thinking is understanding how we live in a world of interdependence.

What is in the foreground of my mind—as an American travelling to Europe this week—are the tragedies in America. Almost everybody I spoke with in Europe this past week started off their conversations by expressing their concerns and condolences. Obviously, crises and tragedies bring out something in us. Ironically, this was short term. What we need is something that endures, not just something that comes and goes with emotional events.

As a systems person, what I found myself thinking about this last week, is how difficult it is in the middle of something like this not only to be caught up in the compassion of reactivity, to help people in need. That is a very important type of compassion. But there are other types of compassion. There is the compassion of deeper understanding. That is the compassion for the future. That is the compassion for the children that they might not have to suffer what the children in New Orleans have had to suffer this last week. That is not just a reactive compassion; it is a thoughtful compassion. Few Americans are capable today of thinking and saying “Maybe we had something to do with this. Maybe this is not just bad luck.” Of course, it is bad luck when the hurricane or the typhoon lands here, not there. That is bad luck. But the deeper causes are not bad luck in the least.

We warm the oceans. For years, scientists have talked about the increasing instability of weather patterns all around the world. I know that the insurance industry spends a lot of time looking at this. This is their business. Swiss Re, the largest reinsurer in the world, has been convening private meetings among heads of state and CEOs to discuss the problem of increasing unpredictability of turbulence in global weather patterns for almost a half a decade now. They can see it in their business. But we cannot see it—and that is the question! Why do not we see it? What is keeping us from saying, “I had something to do with the tragedy of this week”? Not in the sense of having to criticize myself and flagellate myself about it, but more in the sense of that compassion for the future. Trying to understand the world of interdependencies is about trying to understand at multiple levels what’s going on around us.

We live in a historic time. But what do we mean by “historic?” The simplest way I have tried to make sense of it is this: Human beings have never before lived in a condition where our actions today literally affect people all around the world. This is a simple biological reality, which is obviously augmented by our technosphere, our technology. I think it is probably safe to say that no village has ever been able to sustain itself for very long until people came to appreciate this sphere of interdependence that defines their living together. We have never lived alone. But now we are living in each other’s backyards around the world—and that has never happened before. A couple of years ago, I was doing a presentation in Taiwan with a very successful entrepreneur. He was very famous in Taiwan. I could see that there were some deep differences in our views of the world. I really respected him, he is a wonderful man, he has accomplished a great deal. But there was something vexing me. I was sitting there, thinking, “What is it that he sees so differently than what I see?”

Then an image popped into my head. The dotcom collapse was a fairly recent event. People had got caught up in an extraordinary world, the dotcom world, a narrative that was very powerful and very dysfunctional.

For years, historical economists have used the term “bubble” to describe this. This is quite a beautiful metaphor. Inside the bubble, there is a worldview. There is a way of seeing the world, a way of talking, a way of thinking, a whole set of reinforcing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. And they seem to make sense. In the dotcom bubble, people who had been in business for sometime were saying, “I don’t understand how you have a business that does not make a profit!” But inside the bubble, they all say, “Profit does not matter, we have the best Web site!” Of course, the bubble burst as financial bubbles always do.

All that was flashing through my mind in an instant when I was talking with my friend in Taiwan, and I said, “You know, I think the Industrial Age is a bubble.” By the way, this is the Industrial Age; the industrial age is not over. All this stuff about the Information Age, not the Industrial Age! Take a look! Take a look at the energy we use, take a look at the materials we use: take a look at our lifestyle. But most of all, take a look at our thinking. The Industrial Age is the age of the machine, the Industrial Age is the age of technology. We still define our world by our technology, and we define progress, most tragically, by our latest technology. This is the Industrial Age; it has not changed. He looked at me, and that was the instant when I knew, that was the difference that was trying to come up through me.



Peter M. Senge, Thom Mayne, Alan M. Webber

Inside this bubble everything looks pretty cool, but outside the bubble people look and ask, “What are these people thinking?” Now one of the things that is difficult right now is that in the Industrial Age it is difficult to find people who are outside the bubble, because the bubble has spread around the world. But you can. I give you two easy places to look. You go into the developing world or into societies that have not been fully drawn into the industrial world. That you can do. But you actually do not have to travel that far. Talk to an eight-year old, talk to a ten-year old, talk to a young person who feels sucked into this screwy world we have created.

All ages are defined by their assumptions. There are three core assumptions underlined in the Industrial Age. The first assumption is that our technology will conquer nature. It is a core assumption of the Industrial Age. Whatever problems life may present, technology will solve those problems. Technology will conquer nature. It is a rather screwy, bizarre kind of image, if you stood today in New Orleans and said, “I wonder how we have done conquering nature!” But it is a core notion.

Embedded in it is a whole set of assumptions about what nature is. Nature is a machine. Newton called it "God's clockwork." It is a crucial assumption in the early stages of the formation of the Western scientific world. By the way, a small reminder: Science did not start in the West. Science is universal. All people have science. Native peoples have profound science. It is just a different kind of science.



Paulo Coelho, Peter M. Senge, David Goldberg with spouse

The second assumption: Materialism defines progress. On a personal level, it tells us how well off we are. When we look at our lives, we always define our lives by our relationships. Is it not ironic? A good life is defined by how much I have got. Yet none of us actually thinks that. We are caught in this huge inner conflict continually. My accomplishments, my achievements, how well I did in school, what degrees I have got, what job I have got, what position I have. It is something that does not mean terribly much compared to who I know, who knows me, who cares about me, who I care about. Those are the things that define our life.

So that is the bubble. And the bubble is bursting. The question all this leads to is very simple: How do we shepherd, how do we steward, how do we live, how do we be, how do we help as the bubble is bursting. And it is bursting.

Of course, this is a very traumatic time and it probably will be a very traumatic time for a long time. It will probably get harder, not easier, more wrenching, not more comfortable. There is no reason in the world that I see why we could expect to be more comfortable.

We have to work together and we have to find ways to shepherd this transition.

Portrait

Peter Senge received a B.Sc. in engineering from Stanford University, a M.Sc. in social systems modeling and a Ph.D. in management from MIT. He has been a senior lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a fairly long time. He is also founding chair of the Society for Organizational Learning (SoL), a global community of corporations, researchers, and consultants dedicated to the "interdependent development of people and their institutions." Senge's work articulates a cornerstone position of human values in the workplace; namely, that vision, purpose, reflectiveness, and systems thinking are essential if organizations are to realize their potentials. His areas of special interest focus on decentralizing the role of leadership in organizations so as to enhance the capacity of all people to work productively toward common goals.

In 1990, Senge published the much-lauded book *The Fifth Discipline: the Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. Since its publication, more than a million copies have been sold worldwide. In 1997, *Harvard Business Review* identified it as one of the seminal management books of the past 75 years. *The Journal of Business Strategy* (September/October 1999) named Peter Senge as one of the 24 people who have had the greatest influence on business strategy over the last 100 years. *The Financial Times* (2000) named him as one of the world's "top management gurus." *Business Week* (October 2001) rated Senge as one of The Top (ten) Management Gurus.

Craig Venter

President, J. Craig Venter Institute, United States

"If I were going to make a bumper sticker, it would be: Life happens."

To talk about the design of life, we have to go back to what our architect said earlier: We have no history.

In terms of life, however, we have a tremendous history. We have somewhere between three or four million years in which our genetic code has evolved, leaving the diversity of species that we have, including our own. Just last month the genetic code of the chimpanzee was finished by some of my colleagues. The sequencing of the human genome was finished around 2000. When we first published the human genetic code, people were stunned that we have such a small number of genes. We have 26,000 instead of the 300,000 that some people were projecting. People were very disappointed at this. Why were they disappointed? Because they had been thinking in linear terms, that we had one gene for each function, maybe the same way an architect would design a building: here are the components, you put them together, and all of a sudden you have a living person. This is not how our biology works.

Of those 26,000 genes, we find probably all the same ones in chimpanzees, with just a minor difference in the spelling in their letters. We actually find all 26,000 in my dog, Shadow, a standard poodle. In fact, over half of his genome lines up with my genome. Maybe that just proves that you get more like your dog every day. We wanted to feel that we were special and that the human genetic code would be totally different from that of any other species. But what has been established is that we are part of an absolute continuum.

Possibly for the first time in history, we will be able to define the exact evolutionary events that led to our existence. We will be able to understand the minor differences between the chimpanzee's genetic code and ours, and be able to study their function. It looks like there could be as few as a dozen changes. We *are* special, in that we read the chimpanzee's genetic code; the chimpanzee did not read ours. So those changes do have some significance. But to lose sight of our multi-billion year old origin would be a tremendous mistake. We do have this history, and over the next several decades we will begin to define how much that history defines each of us. Yet, if we looked at one of our cells biologically, we would have almost 100% identity in every one of those cells. The biology of cells differs almost not at all between us and all mammals. So, at the biological level, we are virtually identical.

What is different is the mind, the brain. I have the privileged position of being the first one in history to look at the complete genetic code of a species with my colleagues in 1995. I was actually stunned and frustrated, because I was looking for some sort of enlightened message to come out of my discovery. But all I came out with was looking at the first complete set of genes that define the life of that organism. There was a sense of frustration that I could not understand. Most of the genes were new; they had never been seen in biology, and how they work in the cell was not understood at all. We went on to do another species, which turned out to be the species with the smallest genome yet to be found. In contrast to our 26,000 genes, this species only has 500.



Craig Venter

So we asked a very simple question: If one species needs 2,000 genes, another 20,000, and another only 500, what is the smallest set of genes that could define life at the molecular level, the basis of life?

It was an extremely naïve question because by doing experiments and knocking out genes, one at a time, to see if we could get to the definition of life, we found out that all life is *contextual*. People may think it is ironic that molecular biologists are discovering how important the environment is. But even at the level of the simplest cell, a set of genes cannot define life. *It is the set of genes in combination with what is in its environment that defines life.*

Simple cells can grow on two different sugars, glucose and fructose, and there is a gene that codes from a

molecule that moves those sugars across the membrane of the cell, allowing it to use it for metabolism. If you knock out the gene for the glucose transporter, the cell does not seem to mind, because it can still transport the fructose across its cell and live happily. But if you only have glucose in the environment and you knock out that gene, the cell dies. So it does not matter what genes it has, if there are not the right compounds of chemicals in the environment. The genetic code is worthless.



Craig Venter, David Goldberg, Ernst Scholdan

I am an unusual person to be a scientist. I have had an unusual career. I was totally bored with school; I enjoyed building things, surfing, and swimming. Right after high school, I moved to southern California to take up a surfing career. But a short while later, I got knocked off my surfboard, and was sent to Vietnam. It was a rude awakening into the world of reality, as we define it. I actually started all my education in Vietnam, but I commenced my formal education afterward and moved into science. I have been very fortunate to have my training with some of the best people in the world, but my experience in Vietnam gave me a unique vantage point that other scientists do not seem to have. When you are in a situation where all you have to lose is your life, it makes you less afraid to take risks. I have taken some fantastic risks in science. Because of those risks and because of the people I have worked with, I have been successful. It has changed the course of what we can do. We are taking bigger risks now.

If I were going to make a bumper sticker, it would be: Life happens.

Life will happen anywhere on this planet, anywhere in the universe, where the right components exist. It is one of the laws of nature. Looking for the meaning of life, therefore, is foolish. It is like looking for the meaning of having the moon, or the solar system, or the meaning of the galaxy. What we can do is looking for a meaning of our individual lives. We are not the same as viruses. There is a subtle difference, when you go from the virus to the microbial world. To those who do not believe in evolution: evolution is actually not something to believe in: it is a reality. I recently did a wonderful interview with a reporter who asked me, "What would happen, if evolution stopped?"

If evolution stopped today, life on this planet would disappear rather quickly. For example, everybody in this room has a different version of the bacterium *haemophilus influenzae* in his lungs. It is a different version and it is evolving in real time. We develop antibodies against these bacteria, but every species that we have seen has built-in mechanisms that constantly change its genetic code, that change its surface molecules. *Haemophilus* does this every 20 minutes or so, and so it constantly avoids our immune system. But it is not the survival of the individual that matters with the virus or bacteria; it is the survival of the genetic code and the lineage. When you get into mammals and higher organisms, you find they are comprised of a hundred trillion cells. In our philosophy, we like to think of survival as the survival of the individual. We do not make a billion copies of ourselves, just hoping that some will survive, although, maybe from outside the bubble, it looks like that is what we are doing. But we believe very much in individual survival where the survival of any virus or bacteria is largely immaterial.

To help prove that life just happens, my team is working on trying to create life from scratch, from chemical entities. We have been building the genetic code from scratch, synthesizing a chromosome, trying to make an artificial species, to help understand the fundamentals of life. This is beginning to make us architects of life, versus architects of buildings. We will now be able to start to harness biology, not to conquer nature, but to help us survive in nature. In fact, if we do not do something pretty radical, pretty soon, all those bacteria out there in the ocean we are discovering—roughly 40,000 new species every 200 miles—will be laughing at us, as we start to feed them as we decay rapidly.

We have already exceeded our ecosystem. We have harvested over 95% of the fish in the ocean, we have depleted most of our resources, and collectively we are putting 3.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year. Just as I think every individual is important, every individual, each of us, is contributing to this. If we drive cars, if we have a refrigerator, if we use electricity in any way, we are taking coal and oil, which is the result of biology billions of years old. They took billions of years to develop. We are burning those billions of years of biology over a few decades and putting that in our atmosphere. We all know that we can't keep doing that. Collectively we do it, because there is no clear-cut alternate choice for each one of us.

I used to go down in the ocean in California, and think how vast it was and how there was nothing I could do that could impact it on any scale. But now as we are almost ready to conclude our circumnavigation, our scientific expedition, I have been stunned to see how little life there is left in the oceans. There is not a part in the ocean where I did not see massive amounts of plastic trash.

We have to take individual, as well as collective, action. We are trying to harness biology to see if it can help produce clean sources of energy. One of the discoveries we have made in the ocean is that, in each milliliter of seawater, there is a million bacteria and over ten million viruses. I tell people to think about that the next time they swallow a mouthful of seawater, how many species they have just consumed. But almost every one of these micro-organisms in the surface of the ocean has photoreceptors, which are almost identical to the photoreceptors in our own eyes, with the same molecules, the same structures. They use these photoreceptors to capture energy from sunlight and they fix carbon. They are responsible, in fact, for the air that we breathe. If we kill these organisms, very soon we will not have an oxygenated atmosphere. It is hard to imagine, on the scale we are working on, but it is a potential. We are trying to harvest these systems. Imagine using these photoreceptors to capture energy from the sun and produce hydrogen or other chemicals that do not add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere!

Within a decade or two, we need to make global fundamental changes. We have to stop using carbon that comes out of the ground. If we do not, we will not be able to manage many of the vexing problems facing our climate and global environment.

Portrait

After his tour of duty as a Navy Corpsman in Danang, Vietnam from 1967 to 1968, Dr. Venter started his tertiary education. After earning a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and a Ph.D. in physiology and pharmacology, both from the University of California at San Diego and both in three years, he was appointed professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute. In 1984, he moved to the National Institutes of Health campus where he developed expressed sequence tags, a revolutionary new strategy for gene discovery.

In 1992, he founded The Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR). There, he and his team decoded the genome of the first free-living organism, the bacterium *Haemophilus influenzae*, using his new whole genome shotgun technique. TIGR has sequenced more than 50 genomes to date using Dr. Venter's techniques. In 1998, Venter founded Celera Genomics to sequence the human genome using the whole genome shotgun technique, new mathematical algorithms, and new automated DNA sequencing machines. The successful completion of this research culminated in the publication of the human genome in February 2001 in the journal, *Science*.

Venter is founder and president of the J. Craig Venter Institute and the J. Craig Venter Science Foundation, for non-profit research and support organizations dedicated to human genomic research, the exploration of social and ethical issues in genomics, and the search for alternative energy solutions through microbial sources.

J. Craig Venter, Ph.D., is regarded as one of the leading scientists of the 21st century for his invaluable contributions in genomic research, and is one of the most frequently cited scientists. He is the author of more than 200 research articles and is the recipient of numerous honorary degrees, public honors, and scientific awards. These include: *Financial Times*' Man of the Year Award, TIME Magazine's Man of the Year (runner-up), 2002 Gairdner Foundation International Award, and the 2001 Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize. Venter was also one of the first 38 people to be selected by Desmond Tutu as part of his "Hands that Shape Humanity" traveling exhibition.

Franz Welser-Möst

Austrian, General Music Director of the Zurich Opera and Principal Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra

“Handcraft and discipline are the conditions for the creation of art. Anything else is charlatanism.”

The culture of the Occident rests on two pillars. One is Hellenistic thinking, which later on continues in the philosophy of the Renaissance and goes on into the 19th century. The second pillar is Christendom. What happened was the idea of the learned Vico, who said, “Verum est factum,” or, “What is true is what we make.” This is virtually the hour of birth of the motto, “Everything is feasible.” There is another saying I would like

to cite. Descartes said “Cogito ergo sum”—“I think, therefore I am.” This was transformed into “Cogitor ergo sum”—“I am thought, therefore I am”—by the famous theologian Baader. This tension between the two pillars was not resolved by the culture of the Occident. In my opinion, we still can see the consequences of that.

The 20th century was mostly characterized by politics, which was due to the two world



Franz Welser-Möst

wars. We are still in the process of coming to terms with the events of World War II. There was little progress also in the cultural scene, in which I include philosophy. I have mentioned the two pillars and the gap in-between. We have not succeeded in bridging this gap in the culture of the Occident, which is more and more becoming what we call “Western culture.” This is also expressed in a certain superficiality and broadness.

But, I think, we have forgotten something. You may have read that I think Europe is in a phase of weakness and needs a process of re-cultivation in many respects, which can be observed by any open-eyed person. I would like to insert here something: Like every decent young person, I have rebelled against the tradition in which I grew up. By making a number of detours, I have found my way back to the realization—and this applies only to me—that you cannot cut your roots; you must water them as you would with a plant. The humus layer, in which the roots lie, must be tended.

Culture means identity. And we are losing this identity. This is not a reactionary statement; on the contrary, as Peter Senge said yesterday, it is transformation through conservation. This is exactly what tradition is—“tradere” means to carry along. This is subject to the condition that we question things and carry along only what is worth preserving, leaving the rest behind.

From my own narrow field of activity, I could not help smiling at the comparison with the onion that came up earlier. The German word for “develop” is “entwickeln,” which means “to unwrap.” We can see that this means to do away with superfluity. Especially in the later works of the great composers, the geniuses like Beethoven, Mozart, or Bach, we always observe a reduction, a reduction to the essential, the fundamental elements. An experienced, wise, old composer is able to express much more with very simple means than a young one. By this I can learn something myself; I also try to learn something in my profession.

Many people tell me, “I don’t understand classical music.” My answer to that is always: “Nor do I.” Yesterday the word “understand” was mentioned. It consists of two parts: “under” and “stand,” which leads us directly to humbleness. We talked about that yesterday and now some of you will be disappointed when I tell you what my profession is all about. Yesterday some people asked me, “We are curious what you will say about your world, about your profession.”

Art and religion have something in common, which I call “boundary experience,” though this may not be the correct word for it. We make boundary experiences. This is difficult to describe for people who have never been directly involved. Yesterday I used the word “timelessness,” because time consists of moments. You will, perhaps, all have had the experience how, in different situations, time can pass by very quickly or wear away slowly. We deal with that in performances, hoping that people do not fall asleep during “Parsival,” which lasts more than five hours.

My profession has much to do with “handcraft,” the mastering of a material, and with discipline. Handcraft and discipline are the conditions for the creation of art. Anything else is charlatanism. I say this quite brutally. Command of the handcraft and discipline opens the door to the possibility of boundary experiences in the cultural field. I only interpret music, I do not create it. But also in talking with composers, they will tell you that it is necessary to have both, the handcraft and the discipline, otherwise there is no inspiration.

I come only from a tiny field and I know that art and classical music are minority programs. I cannot offer great visions, but I have a few wishes, which I will state at the end. Before that, I would like to point to something. We are all confronted with the concept of “lifestyle.” Lifestyle is what pretends to be culture, but it is superficiality. I would like to contrast art with lifestyle in order to make plain to you very quickly what I mean.

Yesterday we talked about timelessness in arts and about transgression. Lifestyle is devoted to the moment and to celebrating itself. Lifestyle is uncritical consumption and not dealing earnestly with a matter. Art is concerned with exploring dimensions beyond the obvious. Lifestyle is event; art is concerned with an old-fashioned concept, the essence of a piece of art. Lifestyle is business, even, quite brutally, prostitution by us, the so-called artists. Art deals with messages. Lifestyle deals with quantity, but art should deal with quality.

I have mentioned the Island Cleveland. It is, in fact, still an island in this cultural world, because I hardly know any other institution giving so much thought to the list of priorities. In the language of business, this is simply product, packaging, marketing. We live in a time where this sequence is much in confusion, and this is not only so in the field of culture.

The 20th century was a century of politics and we are not yet out of it, but I hope that we will soon be. The lesson I learned from today and from yesterday is that that we need to reassess categories. In my profession this means that a conductor needs self-confidence,

because there is a clear hierarchy. It is not any more the case that there are the ones who give orders and the others who receive orders. It is my conviction, founded in deep philosophical reasoning, that we will quickly become dinosaurs and die out, if we do not succeed in my field to find answers to social developments.

I have learned that hierarchies are necessary. In America, I am not only the one who “fidgets around with something to make them play well”; I am also half of the time an artistic director. I have to deal with many other things, with business models, business cultures, and with what such a business, a non-profit organization, can contribute to society. I have come to the realization that hierarchies lived with respectfulness before the individual are an indispensable necessity. When Karajan was asked one day, why singers love working with him, he gave a wonderful answer: “I give them all the freedom they need to do what I want.” A clever sentence, but it has nothing to do with manipulation; it has to do with leadership, which means to challenge everyone according to his talents and possibilities and thus promote him.



Tenzin Palmo, Franz Welser-Möst

Classical music is the highest level of development of Occidental culture. I just leave it as that. If you deal with Johann Sebastian Bach, you will not find anything comparable in the culture of the Occident where contrasts between head and belly are so perfectly balanced. Bach was not only an ingenious musician; he was also an excellent mathematician. This balance between logos and myth is combined to form ingeniously sensual music, something you find only in classical music. But just as much as in the culture of the Occident, you will find wonderful painters and poets also in other cultures. This level of development, the philosophical and spiritual development of classical music, however, is not found in other cultures.

With that, I have arrived at my wishes for the next generation. I ask you to display courage. We live in a time in which everything has become quite grey. When I listen to discussions between young people who are 20 and 30 years old, I am upset to see how gutless everything has become. Show your opinion and defend it. You will be beaten for it, but this is part of it. In the course of life, rough edges will be polished, but if you do not have them in the beginning, the whole thing is uninteresting.



Franz Welser-Möst, Paulo Coelho

I would also wish for a re-cultivation of Europe. We must educate ourselves again. I am appalled at the lack of education of some of my colleagues in art. Growth is not possible with quick success on the surface. Yesterday I had a long talk with the abbot. If we only use one of the two halves of our brain, we restrict ourselves permanently. Yesterday, I found it very interesting when the concept of the “development of the heart” was mentioned. It is an old-fashioned word, which you will hardly read any more, but in my work I try to exercise this, which is often misunderstood. If you do not center yourself and crack your whip as a conductor, you will be considered to be a pushover. But you must allow things to happen.

A performance is something that needs enormous preparation, handcraft, and discipline, but then there will be the moment when you must let go, or you will never carry away other people. When you get into that stream, you must try, quite consciously, to abandon your will. I am a great friend of tranquillity, even if I deal with noise.

Rough edges, the acknowledgement of hierarchy, and the promotion of such respectful hierarchies, these are the things, I wish for.

Portrait

Franz Welser-Möst was born in Linz in 1960. He attended the Linz Musikgymnasium, where he played the violin. Although he never received a conductor's education in the classical sense, he was soon appointed principal conductor of the Norrköpping Symphony Orchestra in Sweden. In 1990, he was appointed music director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and thus rose to the international top league already at the age of 30. In 1995, he assumed the position of music director at the Zurich Opera. In 2002, this was followed by his appointment as principal conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra, one of the best orchestras in the U.S. In May 2005, he was appointed general music director of the Zurich Opera, but will also retain his position with the Cleveland Orchestra until 2012. Starting in 2007, Welser-Möst will conduct the new production of Wagner's "Ring des Nibelungen" at the Vienna State Opera.

In 2003, the music magazine "Musical America" named him "Conductor of the Year." Other awards include the Gramophone Award, the Japanese Record Academy Award, two Grammy nominations and the Mozart Award in 1999.

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg

Scot, rabbi of the New North London Synagogue

“Here is what I believe: If we do not nourish the capacity for compassion at the level of daily interactions with others, I do not see our future.”

What I want to talk about today is no more than what I struggle with in my own heart, with our children, with my community, and in dialog with other faiths. I want to talk about compassion and about what I call “moral or spiritual imagination.”

In the Jewish tradition, awe, love, and compassion are in a constant and creative tension—fear of God, awe of God, and love of God. But there is no doubt that in our relationships to one another, compassion is the primary and most important relationship. But I do not feel I am in a world that necessarily nurtures this sense of compassion. I hear people going on “assertiveness training,” acquiring a “thicker skin,” becoming tougher and harder. One of my ambitions in life is to acquire a *thinner* skin, especially around the heart. I am a great Shakespeare lover and I think of that line in *King Lear*, my favourite play, when Edgar, who is disguised as a beggar, is asked what manner of a person he is. He says, one *“Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows Am pregnant to good pity.”*

Here is what I believe: If we do not nourish the capacity for compassion at the level of daily interactions with others, I do not see our future.

Compassion takes a certain toughness of spirit. I worked for quite a time in the multi-faith chaplaincy at the local hospice. One day, I was called to the bedside of a young man, maybe just in his forties, and his wife. He was dying, and he said, “Pray with me.” I said, “What would you like to pray for?” and he said, “Say something about the beauty of the world, because we have loved it.” I said a single line when he broke in. He and his wife spoke for ten minutes about where they have walked in the countryside and the city. Then he turned to me and said, “Now say some words about parting, because I am dying.” I have not often encountered that openness of hearts coupled with straight-in-the-eye courage.

I talk about awe and compassion first because they are the basis of everything else. The most difficult topic is what I call the issue of “moral imagination” or “spiritual imagination.” This is the challenge of “how to include the other,” about which, as a person in the religious world, I feel particularly strong. Most of us have parentheses around the extent of our compassion. To include those, from whom longstanding differences and hatreds may have divided us, that is a great challenge.



Jonathan Wittenberg

We were in Israel a year and a half ago, and a good friend who is head of the Israeli organization “Rabbis for Human Rights” took us to the home of a Palestinian family. Their house had been pulled down because they had built an extension without planning commission approval. Mercifully, it had been rebuilt through Israeli and Palestinian cooperation. I have been in Israel maybe fifty times, but after visiting them and their children, I had to ask myself, “How come this was the first time I had ever been in a Palestinian home in a refugee camp?”

Now I want to talk about the soft side and the hard side of working together. My grandfather was a rabbi in Frankfurt and fled in 1939 to England. He always differentiated between Nazism and Germany, and was among the first rabbis to return to Germany for the re-dedication of the Frankfurt Synagogue. He always believed in bridge building. This has been part of my heritage. In the multi-faith chaplaincy in which I worked at the North London hospice, I found very

quickly, as I began to lead the chaplaincy team, that the division of faith and philosophy that so often are perceived as dividing us, fades into insignificance before the common factors of our vulnerability and our mortality.

But when I left the building, which I experienced time and again as a place of real holiness, I would ask myself, “Do we really have to wait until we are dying before we work together?” That led to the idea that I have been working on with colleagues of different faiths and educators: creating a multi-faith school. The root principles are simple. Children of different faiths, committed to their practice, would learn secular subjects together. They would learn their own faith, with vitality and depth, *and* they would share the ethics and wisdom and celebrations. This idea is making slow but steady progress.



Tenzin Palmo, Jonathan Wittenberg

But the harder side is this. Before 9/11, I had, to my own regret, few contacts with Muslims. That has changed. Now my wife and I have many close contacts. One of them, a brave man, runs a satellite television station, mainly to the Arab world from London, and I have been on his program many times as part of a dialog of civilizations. For most of the audience, I am one of the only Jewish faces they have ever seen, the exceptions being hated spokespersons of the Israeli military. This has been a very educative and not an easy process. You can imagine some of the questions that I have been asked: “If there were no America and no Israel, do I agree there were no evil in the world?” The issue of Israel’s borders has come up only rarely; what comes up is why this pernicious state should exist at all. There have also been some moving and insightful comments on our common humanity.

What I want to say about this is as follows. I have learned that this is not about a kind of hatred. It is about the fact that we are growing on different stories. There are different mythologies.

Nobody should be considered as really educated unless they have listened carefully to the experience of different faith groups, or to people from other places. Only when we put our own received wisdoms into question, do we really think about the conceptions of the other. I particularly believe that just as there is an international licence for airline pilots, there should be a kind of international recognition that people should not be religious leaders unless they have some experience of other faiths and living in other faith communities.

With these points, I come to the conclusion: to say something about God, something about sacred texts, and something about meaning. The first thing I want to say is, God is only a word. Everything we say about God is what we project onto God, except the unutterable essence of God’s being. The Kabbalah has a name for God; I only just learned this: “Sodha es Shaar,” the secret of the possible.

What so often happens in religious leadership is the contraction of God into the idol of our own ideology that we proceed to worship, put up on a flag to, and feel legitimized to kill in its name. It happens all the time: it is going on in our world now. That is the bending of spirituality into idolatry, and is among the most dangerous phenomena of our day.

Finally, I want to talk about religious texts: I am an anti-fundamentalist at heart. What we say about God is always within the context of human condition and human language. Every text has context. To take sacred words, to declare that God said this, “*and therefore,*” is terribly dangerous. There is a bubble today of the religious world which wants certainty. But we need to be self-critical, we need to critique our sacred texts, we need to go back to God who transcends everything we say and everything we know. All these things I call our moral and spiritual imagination. Without that imagination, I think, we are lost.

Portrait

Jonathan Wittenberg was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1957, and moved to London with his parents in 1963. He was born into a family with a long rabbinical tradition, going back several generations in Germany and Eastern Europe. Having earned his degree in literature at the University of Cambridge, he studied for the rabbinate at Leo Baeck College in London, and in Jerusalem.



Jonathan Wittenberg

Since 1987, he has been rabbi of the New North London Synagogue. Wittenberg plays a leading role in the development of the Masorti community in Great Britain, a movement that fosters traditional, non-fundamentalist Judaism. Joining with Christian and Muslim religious leaders, he strives to promote understanding and cooperation between different faiths. He has worked in multi-faith hospital and hospice settings and, together with leading figures, including the Bishop of Oxford, he is working to establish a multi-faith school in London. The school would offer pupils from different faiths the opportunity to study secular subjects together and share the wisdom of their traditions, while also studying their own religion in depth.

Rabbi Wittenberg has written several books on the Jewish faith, moral issues, the spiritual search, human responsibility, and the transience of life. Rabbi Wittenberg believes that accepting life's limitations is essential; only when we struggle with them do we obtain freedom. Rabbi Wittenberg invites his readers to explore their own history and spirituality.

Anton Zeilinger

Austrian, quantum physicist

“Can there be a God, from the point of view of natural scientists, who interferes in the world again and again, and in a way that is not in contrast to the laws of nature?”

Looking at the world of today, I am not too pessimistic. I do not see it in such a bad state, as we always hear. There were times when it was much worse. I do not share the opinion that the sense of unity was much stronger in small communities or in villages. This simplifies the problem too much. I have lived in villages. If you go there as a visitor, it looks different. It may look quite nice from the outside. I am not of the same opinion as Leibniz that we live in the best of all worlds. By the way, it is very hard to prove that. But I think our situation is not so bad.



Anton Zeilinger

Just look at everyone's personal life today. Without the achievements of the natural sciences, at least 75% or more of the people in this room would not be alive today. This cannot be dismissed out of hand; it is a simple fact. I do not want to appear as someone who naively and in a silly way praises and sees positively everything that is happening at the present. Certainly, we have work to do. We only need to look at what is going on in the United States at the moment, the catastrophe in New Orleans, and how little is being done to help the people. It is unbelievable that a country claiming to be one of the leading nations of the world has no health care for one-third of its people. This has direct consequences on all these dramatic things going on now. Another reason, however, why I think that the actual state of affairs here and now is not so bad is, in part, naïve optimism. I admit that.

There are two things I have learned from quantum physics that are essential. Here we must be very careful, however, because it is dangerous to draw wider conclusions from one's own scientific field. The first point is that in quantum physics we have learned that there are things, processes, for which there is no real cause. There are events that simply happen. They constitute a breach with our centuries-old philosophical tradition, which maintains that there must be sufficient reason for every event. This means that our world is much more open. It is also much more dangerous if we cannot define a cause for things that happen, and if the state of the world now does not define precisely what the state of the world will be in five minutes.

The world is open in an inner way. I always say that in the quantum world things are defined insofar as not even God knows how a singular event will end. Theologians always retort that this imposes a limitation on God. To this, my reply is always, “Do allow God to run the world as he wants to run it.” It was God's decision to create the world in such a way that there exist things we call pure chance, things we cannot predefine, and for which we have no explanation.

That means that the world is much more open. So our thinking must be much more open. My personal feeling is that many of these pessimistic views come from linear thinking, for which scientists are blamed so often. A famous example is the report of the Club of Rome—some 30 or 40 years ago, I think—which was simply wrong, because of its simplifying, linear thinking.

My second point is the following: We have learned in quantum physics that what is important is the question. In quantum physics that is much more radical than it is in a more general philosophical context. A little while ago, I talked about chance and about the fact that to some of our questions, nature gives answers which are purely accidental. Our question defines which of the various alternatives will become reality. This is a really radical point.

A simple example for the natural scientists among you: I can either measure the location or the momentum of a particle. In other words, I can measure where a particle is or how quickly it flies. The particle will give me an answer that is accidental within a certain range. I can only put one question to the system at a time. Here, I come to the essential point. It was a naïve view that measuring the momentum of a particle interferes with the system in such a way that afterwards the particle's location is different. This view is too simple.

Today, we know that before my question, the particle has neither a defined position—it was at no certain point—nor a defined velocity. It has none of these properties. My question forces nature to give an answer as to where the particle is, but only at the moment of my observation. My question produces reality, and, the way in which I ask my question, qualifies reality.

I always say that the manner in which we put a question to nature has a qualifying influence on the world, but not a quantifying influence. It defines which quality is reality. By asking the particle, “Where are you?” I cannot influence its location. This is highly interesting. I think that this kind of openness, which is defined on the one hand by chance and on the other by my question's potential to influence reality, has a wider significance. At least it has had a strong influence on my thinking, as is described humorously in *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, about life, the universe, and everything. The word “modesty” has already been mentioned today. The consequence of these lessons from quantum physics must be that in uttering negative views, we should always remain within the bounds of modesty. In this connection, I would like to make two or three final points before I come to an end.

You have asked what we can do. I think it is very important for us to indulge in a dialog between cultures, not only in a dialog between religions, but also in a dialog between religions and natural science. I regard religions as being a part of mankind's great spiritual traditions and here, I think, we can also learn from each other. When natural scientists claim that there are things they cannot explain, where they cannot find an answer, then this must be exciting and interesting to theologians too. Perhaps we can learn much from each other concerning the questions of where the limits lie of what we can know at all. I am fully convinced of that, and this is a point about which also natural scientists must be more modest.

It is a principle of scientific methods in natural science and progress to extrapolate one's own position as far as possible. Every natural scientist fights for his ideas and tries to apply them in some ways, but one day, he would not get ahead any more. We must not go so far as to lose sight of the limits of natural science. With regard to this aspect, the present discussion between religion and natural science on evolution does not always run well. It is quite okay to ask these questions, but the most important point is to be aware of one's own limits. When a natural scientist says he sees something that he cannot explain, then that must be of interest for theologians too. We must be open here.

A number of natural scientists adopt a very negative, almost aggressive, position towards religions. Sometimes, asking the questions which interest me may even arouse hostility. One question is relatively simple: Which roles can God, whatever or whoever this is, play in this world? One role is very simple—the role at the beginning. The question where the laws of nature come from is not a scientific question. But, in my opinion, it is absolutely legitimate to answer that they come from a God. This is a totally legitimate and a relatively simple view.

There is a more complicated question, however, which interests me more and more: Can there be a God, from the point of view of natural scientists, who interferes in the world again and again, and in a way that is not in contrast to the laws of nature? To my mind, there is a wide scope for that. We only have to look at it very carefully and closely, and take heed to avoid any dogmatic views. This would be a catastrophe. Which view you take for yourself is up to you.

What I have said during the last twenty minutes, I have said as the person Anton Zeilinger, not as the natural scientist. For me as a natural scientist, there are borders I cannot cross, partly for reasons of principle. I am convinced that it is very important to have a broad discussion among all spiritual traditions, whatever direction they may come from.



Anton Zeilinger at the Meeting of the religions

Portrait

Anton Zeilinger was born in 1945 in Ried/Innkreis, Austria, and studied physics and mathematics at the University of Vienna. In 1971, he completed his studies with his dissertation, and in 1979 he received his postdoctoral lecture qualification in neutron physics at the Vienna Technical University. Until 1981, he worked as an assistant at the University of Vienna, followed by two years as a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He then taught at numerous universities in Austria and abroad, such as Melbourne, Munich, Paris, Innsbruck and Oxford. Since 1999, he has been director of the Institute for Experimental Physics at the University of Vienna.

In 1997, he and his research group achieved the world's first quantum teleportation. Yet another premiere followed in 1999: the first encryption of a secret message through quantum cryptography. This opened up the possibility of encrypting information in global data transmission in ways that cannot be cracked. In 2004, Zeilinger demonstrated a bank transfer performed via quantum cryptography for the first time in Vienna.

Apart from his achievements in the area of experimental physics, Zeilinger is one of the few scientists who are able to explain highly complicated work to a lay public. For several years, the gifted instructor has been active in the educational field: together with an expert group made up of 27 people, he presented a concept for an outstanding university in Austria in June 2005. The planned starting date is October 2006.

Zeilinger has received numerous awards, among them the prestigious Saudi-Arabic "King Faisal International Prize in Science" in 2005 together with Federico Capasso and Professor Franz Wilczek (USA). He was honored with the highest scientific recognition that Germany has to offer when he was inducted into the order "Pour le Mérite." Zeilinger describes the motivation behind his work in physics as the search for "what holds the world together at the most basic level." The scientist also makes reference to the importance of philosophy and regrets that physicists today are more tinkers than thinkers.

The Key Questions of the Meetings 2005

by Christiane Neubauer, FORMAT

In a letter to a young woman dated 15 July 1930, Hermann Hesse appealed to the individual responsibility of every human being for a life with meaning: "I cannot answer any of your questions, I cannot answer my own questions. [...] I nevertheless believe that meaninglessness can be overcome by giving my life meaning again and again. I think that I am not responsible for the meaningfulness or meaninglessness of life, but that I am, however, responsible for what I do with my own, singular life." For Hesse, writer and later Nobel laureate in Literature, the path to a collective creation of meaning leads through the personal effort and actions of every individual. Years later, Hesse created the antithesis of political and social reality with the ideal, meaningful and fictitious place "Waldzell" in his novel *The Glass Bead Game*. There, spirituality, science and arts are equally cultivated at the elite school Waldzell.

The difficult search for the meaning of life was also the focus of the Waldzell Meeting 2005 in Melk Abbey, Lower Austria, named after this fictitious school in Hesse's novel: "What has to be done today so that mankind has a future with meaning?"

But what, pondered the international speakers, is the meaning of life in the first place?

Is it the search for God, as the different religions see it? The American genetic researcher Craig Venter merely shrugs his shoulders at this. "Life happens. Everywhere in the universe where the suitable conditions exist. This is the law of nature." What is important is to search for the meaning of one's own life. "Searching for the meaning of life itself is silly: we might just as well search for the meaning of the possession of the moon."



Thom Mayne, Andreas Salcher

For the American architect Thom Mayne, the first American Pritzker Prize recipient, the construction of a meaning underlying human life is also completely irrelevant. "Meaning for whom?" he asks provocatively and describes such a search for meaning as a privilege of affluent society: "Only those who live well can afford the luxury of such considerations." The human race is part of the cycle of nature: "When it is over, it is over. There is no life thereafter." Mayne sees the search for meaning as man's reaction to the fear of death.

Even the ones who believe in a deeper meaning of life only know how to formulate it in complex codes. The Brazilian author Paulo Coelho, patron of the event, thinks, "We shouldn't try to find the answers. We should rather try to ask the right questions and to live according to them."

Natural scientists do not quite agree on this question either. Quantum physicist Anton Zeilinger, "One is permitted to ask the question about the meaning of life but science and religion must work together on it and refrain from their respective dogmas." It is all about interdisciplinary thinking.

The dialog of the disciplines as a solution?

For centuries, science and religion did not only deliver heated debates amongst themselves on the question of the origins and meaning of human life. The different science traditions themselves vied for their significance for civilization and their contribution to advancement in knowledge. The search for similarities toward solutions of problems is increasingly a priority today. The dialog between science and practice as well as between the individual sciences is necessary.



Craig Venter, Christian de Duve, Peter M. Senge

Anton Zeilinger, author of *Einstein's Veil*, stresses the importance of this realization: "I regard the deeper dialog as very important, primarily between the natural sciences and religions." However, science must acknowledge its own limits in this regard. Zeilinger: "If we say in the natural sciences now that there are things which one principally cannot explain causally, to which we would not find any answers, then this must be something which the theologians must really find exciting."

For Zeilinger, even from the position of the natural sciences, a God who gets involved again and again is a possible conception.

In turn, the conductor Franz Welser-Möst, musical director of the Cleveland Orchestra, sees a close relationship between classical music and religion: "Art and religion have something in common, namely that we make boundary experiences."

The Jewish scholar Jonathan Wittenberg laments that science often does not want to have anything to do with morals. He therefore calls on the religions to engage in stronger dialogs with each other alone for this reason: "We are civilized only when we have gotten to know the experiences of other religions." He himself has been involved in the Islamic community life in London since the attacks of 11 September 2001.

The renowned American journalist Alan Webber, co-founder of the business magazine *Fast Company*, also supports crossing boundaries: "The future will take place at the interfaces between the individual disciplines." Perhaps the meaning underlying human existence is still not clear to mankind because our ability to understand is not yet sufficient. From which the question arises:

Is the human being the crown of creation?

Nobel laureate in Medicine Christian de Duve thinks that evolution is an irrefutable fact -- which for him logically means that it will also continue. For de Duve, the most astonishing thing is the exponentially rapid development of the human brain in comparison with other living beings. According to de Duve, humans, who consider themselves the crown of creation, are still incomplete because they are still too young in relation to the history of life.

For de Duve, therefore, the concept of mankind has, by far, not ripened yet: "Humankind is still only at the beginning of its evolution, since the brain and its abilities will further develop." Christian de Duve on the superhuman of the future: "We are relatively still ignorant in comparison with what evolution will still produce."

The concept of a superhuman is, however, a foreign word for the American geneticist Craig Venter, who decoded the human genetic code in the year 2000. Although he also considers man as part of a continuum, he believes that "our genetic code does not distinguish us fundamentally from animals." According to Venter there was big disappointment internationally about the low number of human genes he had proven to exist: 300,000 had been expected instead of the actual mere 26,000 genes. Venter: "Humans want to see themselves as something special, but in our genetic construction we resemble the chimpanzee, the dog and the rat." The question is: Is evolution actually an irrefutable fact? Venter does not believe in a creation plan, about whose existence the Viennese cardinal Christoph Schönborn also recently aroused an intense discussion. Such ideas are merely a substitute for the present lack of facts. This debate is enjoying the highest topicality particularly in the USA at present. Media, science and education authorities are leading a real cultural battle on Darwin's evolution theory and divine creation. Fact is: The first organism, named "Luca", the forefather of all life, resulted from molecular constituents four million years ago. Whether by divine creation or due to coincidence, chemical reactions will probably still remain a controversial issue for a long time to come.

Evolution and its history raise numerous questions about the role of earthly life in the universe. One of the most important is:

Does the past hold significance for the present and the future?

What is largely considered as certain: Events mostly cannot be isolated without considering their history. What happens in economy, politics and society is a result of historical developments. But how strong is the influence of history and tradition?

In his world view, architect Thom Mayne largely negates the past as the origin of today: "The significance of history for the solution of our problems of today is unbelievably overvalued." Life doesn't take place yesterday or tomorrow but exclusively today. He considers searching in the past for solutions to problems a dispensable method. "Answers from yesterday will not bring us any further."

Peter Senge, Professor at the Boston Massachusetts Institute of Technology, sees things differently. For him, history cannot be shaken off so easily. As a scientist born in the USA, he feels continuously confronted with his origins and past. For example, 11 September 2001 and its consequences were defining and are present in his consciousness: "We cannot shake off history and always carry around the past with us." In turn, his profession has taught the Austrian Anton Zeilinger not to see the present as having causally arisen in the past. "We have learned in quantum physics that there are things and events for which there aren't any causal explanations." The condition of the world at the respective present moment is not exclusively defining for how we will be in five minutes.

The conductor Franz Welser-Möst laments the lack of awareness of tradition in Europe. He demands a return to one's own culture and history. Welser-Möst: "I have come to the realization that you cannot cut off your roots, but you have to water them." Culture means identity, and Europe is especially in the process of losing its identity. Europe is economically as well as politically and culturally weak. The artist: "We have passed moral authority on to the media."

The latter diagnosis also applies to the USA, perhaps even to the entire globalized world. The question is: In view of such a gloomy scenario when is it too late to take countermeasures? In other words:

Has the clock already struck?

Or, on the contrary, as the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz postulated, are we living even in the best of all worlds? Leibniz proposed this concept, as Anton Zeilinger likes to call into memory, at the beginning of the 18th century. What cannot be denied: There are shortcomings everywhere on our planet. Overpopulation, pollution and terrorism are the greatest problems of our time. Craig Venter, who was recently in the South Seas on a research exploration, is appalled at the condition of our world: "The sea is full of plastic, 95% of the fish populations in the oceans have disappeared and we have used up the fossil energy sources within just a few decades for whose development biology has needed billions of years." According to the estimations of the geneticist, mankind still has ten years to make fundamental changes. The most urgent measures: The cessation of burning carbons and the promotion of alternative energies.



Gundula Schatz, Anton Zeilinger

Management guru Peter Senge, author of the bestseller *The Fifth Discipline*, also shares the negative opinion of his compatriot: "We live in a traumatic time and nothing will change so quickly." He does not see light at the end of the tunnel: the situation will rather become more difficult than easier. He therefore appeals to mankind to "find ways out of the plight" together.

Anton Zeilinger sounds more positive: "The world isn't in such a bad condition. There were times when it was in much worse shape." He cites the report of the Club of Rome as an example, which painted a far too somber picture of the future of our planet thirty years ago. Zeilinger: "The report was purely and simply wrong because one had thought in too simple terms." Zeilinger relativizes himself, though: He represents a certain naive optimism.

Naivety, optimism, illusion: Do we live in a bubble?

Peter Senge, an expert for organizational learning, uses the metaphor of a bubble as an explanation of the condition of society. He describes the closed system of the industrialized civilization - with a view to the future - as a bubble which will burst one day. Within the bubble, there is a certain view of things, ideas and behaviors, which apparently all make sense. "We believe in the age of machines and define progress through technology." Mankind leads a convenient life in the bubble but from the outside the world is quite different, says Senge. Life looks quite different from the point of view of children or the third world.



Thom Mayne, Peter M. Senge

Franz Welser-Möst believes the same. "In economic terms, the product comes first, then the packaging and the marketing. Today, marketing and packaging count far more than the actual product. Quality and depth, according to Welser-Möst, are left by the wayside. Welser-Möst: "What counts today is lifestyle."

The Buddhist nun Tenzin Palmo sees the world caught in a bubble of egoism: "The spirit of our society is poisoned." Our thinking is marked by ignorance. Tenzin Palmo: "All of us dream and sleep and we believe our dreams. But Buddha means the Enlightened." Tenzin Palmo's conviction: If we wake up, we will see that everything to what we so desperately hold on to is only our own projection of the world. Everything we see, say and do is shaped by our spirit. Humans do not see the world as it really is, but merely their perception of it. Buddhism is the way to awakening and to liberty.

The Scottish rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg also finds ignorance in religion: "The bubble exists in the religious world as well. We must be self-critical and find our way back to God."

It is in man's nature to act. The question is:

How to act? And what to do?

For example, doing something to tackle the urgent problems like environmental catastrophes, hunger, wars and overpopulation? If the whole world population is to participate in the prosperity and a future worth living is to be secured for the coming generations, precipitance is advisable. Peter Senge, who explains dealing with change in his book *Dance of Change*, knows that the will to change often arises only in crises.

Senge: "Although we can already see the harbingers of necessary changes on the radar screen, we often still act as though they do not concern us at all." Senge demands systemic thinking in times of globalization: "All of us are part of a system. Enterprises aren't only responsible for themselves but also for the system in which they operate."

Despite the great time pressure exerted by time, Senge warns against a hasty thirst for action, "With all the talk about change we must not forget that some things must also be preserved." Franz Welser-Möst, too, recommends a moderate questioning of what has already been established: "Tradition comes from the Latin word 'tradere' and means to carry further. It is important to scrutinize everything and then only to carry the valuable things further."

Craig Venter, founder and director of the Institute for Genomic Research, challenges people to act individually and collectively: "We must change the collective thinking. Not to change is not an option." Venter concretely appeals to the politicians: "We must invest much more money in the exploration of alternative energies." Christian de Duve demands a closer cooperation between politics and science: "We can solve the environmental difficulties only with the help of the scientists." Jonathan Wittenberg agrees: "As a man of religion, I see my role in warning that we mustn't destroy God's world. We should follow the leadership and advice of science."

For Briton Tenzin Palmo, who lived in a cave in the Himalayas herself for 12 years, mankind must first overcome its ego: "Our modern society sells the idea that the fulfillment of our wishes and desires makes us happy." Buddha already had the correct answer two thousand years ago: Desire is like the sea -- saltwater makes you all the thirstier the more of it you drink. For Tenzin Palmo, founder of a Buddhist nunnery for women in India, happiness comes only and solely from giving, generosity and the joy shared with others. She is especially concerned about children: "If we communicate the wrong values to our children from the beginning, what can we expect from this generation?"



Tenzin Palmo, Franz Welser-Möst

Paulo Coelho, author of *The Alchemist*, *The Zahir* and *Eleven Minutes* emphasizes the significance of the connection between dreams and actions for the people of the 21st century: "Only those who believe and fight remain alive. Dreams are food for the soul."

Peter Senge's urgent appeal during the Waldzell Meeting 2005 to the coming generation, the "Architects of the Future": "Our generation must prevent the ship from sinking, you must change the course! We must act quickly. The next two decades are the decisive ones."

Comments by the Participants

Tatjana Bister

Saab Austria

Two days in Melk to search for the meaning of life. Time out from the daily routine, but no ordinary weekend.

There is one thought I cannot get out of my mind: it is not answers, but questions, that create realities. It is so often the case that we invest a lot of time in correct answers, whereas the question as such can already create realities, and can have qualifying power. We are constantly searching for solutions – pausing with the question can get us closer to the truth. It was this thought as well as many others that the speakers and participants gave me to take away. I shall work on their implementation at least until the next Waldzell Meeting... Thank you for this challenge.

Hubert Mierka

Mierka Donauhafen Krems

Waldzell has given me very much in 2005 as well – it was a journey into my soul and out of myself, in which I was able to discover new and unknown worlds. Christian de Duve impressed me the most, not only with his intellect but also with the joy and strength he radiates at his age -- this has touched me in a very positive manner.

What I take away from the meeting is how precious and valuable life is, which one becomes particularly aware of at this marvelous place in Melk, and yet how thin the ice is, on which we live. Every one of us is responsible for treating this world and this life well; we must go into the future with courage and confidence, precisely because of all the dangers that loom ahead.



Ernst Primosch, Henkel International

You must never stop dreaming, but when you do wake up from a dream, you have to follow your star. Looking at the whole of this magnificent event, I found myself most impressed by Peter Senge's statement when he drew a comparison between the dot.com bubble and our present economy. Even today a great number of people say when they watch this bubble, "This cannot possibly work forever!" But while we are sitting in this bubble we deny reality persistently.

Was there anything I took with me from the Meeting and were able to put into practice?

It makes sense to contribute something towards the future of mankind. It makes sense to withdraw regularly from your daily business and to explore which contribution--small or large--you have just made. Without such a contribution life loses meaning.

Gerald Rainer, Grichmonde

When I arrived in Melk a "Zahir" had taken possession of my mind. My beloved partner had left my life without explanation or at least without one that could be understood by a self-centered ego.

When I left the Waldzell Meeting I had come down to earth, was humble in mind and peaceful in heart. Waldzell had started to teach me to read the signs along the path of life. The quest for arrival had lost its importance, the soul-searching process of walking down the path took its place.

I learned that the sharpness of our intellect should be mixed with the softness of our emotions to become more human in dealing with each other - be it in our private life or our business world."

Anna Katharina Laederach

Stadt Zürich

I thought the top-level speakers were excellent, and at the same time I wondered whether they were able to put their message across in a satisfactory way. Please do not misunderstand me: I was a little surprised about the audience who had come to hear these top-level thinkers.

I would be extremely happy to see Waldzell become a “think tank.” I have to say that I regretted the lack of any networking opportunity for the individual participants, simply because time was too short. I also wonder whether the right priorities were set. Perhaps less would have been more.

I am convinced that these two young founders will succeed in making Waldzell an established institution in Europe. International speakers of this caliber also require a high-level international audience.

Hans-Jürgen Manstein

Manstein Zeitschriftenverlagsgesmbh

Only those who have attended the Waldzell Meeting once know what they have been missing. This was probably the most impressive event I have ever participated in. It is already an experience to attend an ecumenical mass. Perhaps even a tad more so in these times where terror and xenophobia dominate the daily press and our society.

Kerstin Kitzmüller, ÖBB

Our time is composed of thousands of moments. When you look at the entire course of mankind's history, our life is one of these short moments. But this moment, our life, is something very special, as is each moment our life consists of. We ought to form each moment in such a fashion that we can recognize the joys of our life and seize and enjoy each moment.



Gregor Medinger

Rum Hill Capital

As a first-time participant I was not quite sure what to expect not only as regards the interaction between the panelists amongst themselves but also between the audience and individual panelists. General Q & A sessions are often quite unsatisfactory so the brief moments of having exchanged a thought or two with a brilliant mind are the treasures to take home, to guard in our mental jewel-box, to look at from all sides and to think about for years to come.

I doubt that the connection between quantum physics and Darwinism will have any bearing on my business in the foreseeable future, but I would not be surprised if it enters intellectual discourse rather sooner than later.

Peter Senge said, "We are too much formed to see things how we are taught to see them." This sentence has evoked quite a lot in me, even more than Tenzin Palmo's words of "imprisoned minds."

The Waldzell Meeting had its particular significant moments. Together with others, I expanded my consciousness and felt inside me how a large number of new mosaic stones keep adding to my picture of "life." You learn how to look at the beauty of life from many different perspectives.

Finally one sentence that guides my life: My happiness rests in the happiness of others, therefore my aim is to give happiness to others.

David Lurie

B2B Lawyers

Waldzell was, for me, a wake up call from spiritual and intellectual laziness and to reconnect. To work towards creating hope and to articulate the values and protocols of equity, independence but respect. Values that are contrary to peer pressure and the manipulation of lobbyists, extremists and religious and anarchistic fanatics. Values that encourage positive fervor and not nihilistic rage. Values that arise out of compassion and desire for justice, not out of fear and mistrust.

We must be forced to reenergize proactive programs that found creative competition and with a social net. To take the best features of globalization and distance learning. To create an economic and social miracle born of respect and loyalty and not driven by revenge or the memory of colonial and intellectual humiliation. A world of honest values and not sycophancy.

The future should not be characterized by the fear of the past and the present. A future where the propaganda of hate is de-legitimized. A future that synthesizes the values espoused at Waldzell.



Waldzell has and must continue to be a forum for expressing, formulating and disseminating ideas and ideals, which must be standard practice.

Michael Kraus

Donau-Finanz

It was my first time at the Waldzell Meeting. Although I have been close to the matter due to my position in the Advisory Board, I had followed the report of the first meeting in 2004 only superficially.

Therefore, in attending this year's meeting, both location and content struck me heavily since my expectations were relatively low and rather unspecific.

My résumé in short: It is certainly the combination of location and content that creates the uniqueness of the event as the most important element in an evaluation.

The experience of the meeting that impressed me the most was my acceptance to just sit and really listen and not try to constantly think of my own perspectives and my own conclusions. The fact that the panel consisted of highly impressive personalities makes you humbly accept their dominance. The only others who rightfully raised their voices, asked questions

and uttered their opinions were the young ones (i.e. the young "Architects of the Future".) It was their privilege to ask questions and to utter their opinions and whether these are relevant to the topic or not does not lend themselves to an objective judgment of our generation.

I personally also appreciated meeting Americans of high intellect and high sensitivity for political issues outside the US, something that we haven't been spoiled with by the official representatives of the country for quite some time.

Franz Hirschmugl

Institut für Markenentwicklung Graz

Among an infinite number of impressions, which I archived in my personal Moebius strip after Waldzell, two sequences seem to stand out particularly to me on quick thought.

The first was Zeilinger's statement that, given the right question, Aristotle would have been able to think quantum physics. The same can be applied everyday (even though one might not ask a question everyday that would lead to the Nobel Prize).

The second sequence was just after Tenzin Palmo's most powerful talk of all time when a photograph was taken of the sponsor's car in the inner courtyard. This was when I realized once and for all that traditional advertising belongs to the last century and that there will be more meaningful approaches. All you have to do is to ask the right question (refer to first sequence).

Günter Ofner

UTA-Telekom AG

Waldzell 2005 to me was an event that had the pleasant effect of provoking people into thinking in a manner that was much removed from everybody's daily routine and duties, and for this very reason, inspiring in more than one way. The faster the "train of change" races along, the more important is it to raise the question who or what is driving it on, slowing it down or accelerating it, who or what is steering it, and where it is (possibly) going to; but above all: where should it actually go to? And where should it not go to on any account?

It is precisely the very different attempts by members from various disciplines at answering the question about "meaning" and "future" that made the meeting attractive, as well as the opportunity to meet "competent" personalities of our epoch. Although it is true that elements with somewhat esoteric leanings are not exactly my type of thing, I found the program for the most part interesting and of high quality, and, all in all, a great gain.



Thomas Plötzeneder

DDWS

Apparently, the center of the earth is always where we live, work and read. And when several solutions to problems exist, the ones we are familiar with are always the best ones--no matter how they work. Waldzell demonstrates in an impressive way that the earth does not have a cultural, scientific, or spiritual center.

To intertwine the scientific, national, and religious best heads in Melk opens up new perspectives in our heads and reveals new, enticing paths (of life).

In concrete terms, since the Waldzell Meeting 2005, I got back into the habit of meditating on a regular basis, and I have made new, intellectually stimulating friends.

Norbert Gollinger

ORF NÖ

I was very impressed by the Waldzell Meeting 2005 at Melk Abbey. Particularly valuable was the uncomplicated and straightforward approach of the excellent speakers, as they addressed the subject of a future with meaning. People who have achieved so much that is excellent and outstanding in their own specialist areas opened up interesting new approaches to life's big questions.

I found that what Peter Senge had to say spoke most powerfully to me personally. The mutual relationship between an organization and the people who work in it is a decisive factor in the success of a company. Energy, passion and motivation are essential, even in the media industry. I look forward to reading his book *The Fifth Dimension*.

Reflections by the “Architects of the Future”

Julia Huemer

It is difficult to answer the question of what I took with me from the Waldzell Meeting 2005 since a lot of changes and developments are still in some sort of evolvement. From my point of view, the conversations at the meeting emphasized the importance of single actions, the notion that you can change the world – at least to some extent – in everyday situations. I took with me a stronger enthusiasm about the idea of making your dreams and aims a reality and of taking up the challenge to answer the questions life asks you in a responsible and warm-hearted way.

As for the most memorable moments at the Waldzell Meeting, first of all, the direct contact and conversations with the speakers come to my mind. During the breaks, there was time to get involved in specific discussions initiated by the speakers in the podium sessions and a lot of inspiring thoughts were discussed.

Jean-Louis Warnholz

The meeting conveyed a sense of urgency. A need for change. At the same time it called upon the responsibility of individuals to form part of this agenda for change. This was combined with an inspiring display of human courage and ideas, which had a profound and benign impact. It motivated me to get some friends together again and start a new project.

I remember sitting in the imposing, illuminated church of Melk Abbey. My eyes were closed and a truly beautiful voice filled the air with Tibetan Mantras.

After a long day full of exciting discussions and inspiring individuals, that provided a moment of calm reflection and the opportunity to marvel at life's wonders.



One of the most impressive experiences for me was the encounter with the “Architects of the Future” – 18 young people from all over the world, who have never seen each other before and who come from entirely different cultural backgrounds. All of us got on well and we benefited from each other to a large extent – not only concerning the insight into different projects but also in terms of personal contacts, views and opinions, which definitely broadened my horizon.

Constanze Seiss

The Waldzell Meeting was like a trip into a different, ideal world for me. A world, where people do care. There is a movement growing, which will revolutionize consciousness and, hopefully, change our world.

The moment that I consider most memorable was the extraordinary situation when the Waldzell participants of various religions and origins came together in silence and meditation in the church of Melk. The atmosphere in this moment was simply indescribably peaceful and thoughtful.

Princess Ukaga Ogechi

The Waldzell Meeting has rekindled my personal belief in the inherent and God-given ability of man to succeed against all odds.

Two arguments were raised which made a great impact on my personal perspective and have helped me a lot: There were two very visible camps at the meeting. Those who believe in the spiritual approach to solving and correcting world ills, and another camp that believes in the application of scientific evidence and theories in arriving at solutions.

At Waldzell, I arrived at the conclusion that perhaps if mankind will find a meeting point between scientific and spiritual approaches, the answers that have hitherto been hidden from us may soon be revealed.

Being at the meeting in Melk Abbey was one of the most memorable moments, walking round the garden, reading all that is written on the plates and reflecting on it made me realize when in my life I did effectuate anything and the changes in my life.

Johannes Graser

I was glad about getting so much insights from some of the most brilliant minds concerning our future. I came to the conclusion that to really make a difference for our everybody's future, we have got to start in our immediate environment.

Not only the scheduled contributions from the speakers were stunning, but also the more personal discussions during the breaks. I will never forget how Craig Venter told me about his personal experiences in Vietnam and how this time influenced and changed his whole life.

I also liked the whole idea of the “Architects of the Future” and how well we all got on with each other.



Allowing the “Architects” to ask the speakers questions made it more understandable, and gave me the chance to follow the flow of the discussion. Most of all, it made me understand that so many people - like all the people I met at the Waldzell Meeting - care about young people like me and are always there to listen to us.

Sachin Pilot

The coming together of people with such rich and diverse backgrounds at Melk for the Waldzell Meeting was a testament to how people have a shared view for a better tomorrow. The “Architects of the Future” program was a pioneering effort to make the young people stakeholders in our collective future. The setting, the ambience, the mood, the subjects and the deliberations were all aimed at working jointly to create a future that is truly meaningful in every sense of the word. The experience at the Waldzell Meeting was exhilarating and thought-provoking.

Christof Netzer

At a very personal level, I gained hope, inspiration, strength and, most importantly, courage. Deep in our hearts all of us know the difference from good and bad, deep in our hearts we know what we should do – but still many forces seem to distract us from our real being. Not facing the challenge alone, travelling part of the way together is a good thing. Now, after the meeting each and every one of us has the possibility to show what can be done in everyday life.

After the meeting, it took me almost a week to even partially realize what had happened at Melk Abbey. Every moment in everyday life is unique – but still I would say that the time at Melk Abbey has been a very special and intense one.

The most memorable moments have to do with the people I met. The most memorable moments were when people really met and really talked. I am talking about deep conversation.

Waldzell 2005 was a perfect setting for those moments. It is very hard to evaluate the value of a moment, but a very special one was when all the “Architects of the Future” met Paulo Coelho for the first time. What he did was to reflect our ways of thinking back onto ourselves. We had to think about essential things like

Idil Elveris

First of all, I met young and bright people that I would like to stay in touch with. Funny enough, in less than 2 months, I managed to see two of them in person already. This proves me that we did in fact manage to “connect.”

Second, I took ideas and insights for a better future home with me. I think over time, these ideas will change Waldzell to find a new course and mission.

I thought the speakers were chosen with a lot of care from diverse backgrounds which therefore made listening to them a truly insightful and memorable experience. I was especially very impressed by Thom Mayne and Christian de Duve. I think their warnings, predictions and descriptions were the most memorable moments from me. I do consider myself to be lucky to have seen them in person.



“who we are” and “what love is” as well as about “the reason we were here” and “what we expected Waldzell 2005 to be or to become”.

When we all said goodbye on the last evening in Vienna, I told Paulo Coelho that everything had a beginning and an end. First, he agreed, but finally – after a moment of silence – he told me that I was wrong. He said, “This is just the beginning”.

Cornelia Bruell

The meeting made me reflect on my own opinions and beliefs. I asked myself: How can I make my contribution most efficient for the entire group?

What was most memorable to me was the strong company of the group participants and the intention of everyone to make a contribution for a better future.

Edozie Imoh Colins

The Waldzell Meeting was a dialog of inspiration in many ways or, if you wish, in a different way. For me, this dialog could be interpreted according to each person's level of development and aspiration. It was different from previous meetings that I have attended. The setting was quite unique, and I was able to meet interesting people.

The concept of the "Architects of the Future" was quite innovative; the "Architects" represented a spring in winter. A true bond of friendship and solidarity was evident among the "Architects". I will say that, on a deeply personal level, I was able to meet people who believed in and supported our peace education project in Nigeria. The outcome was a website built by a member of the "Architects of the Future" and sponsored by a member of the "Architects of the Future".

I left the meeting energized in a different way, believing and reaffirming the power of belief. This belief is a not wishful thinking but a product of the power to triumph in circumstances that might be different and challenging. In a nutshell, I took a different type of inspiration home.

Reinhard Haslinger

The Waldzell Meeting, I can say, strongly encouraged me to continue to get involved, to have a say and to communicate my thoughts and reflections and to make contributions. Not just for the purpose itself because in the end, someone or something will bring us all and everything together. Just like Waldzell.

When I arrived at Melk I was pretty enthusiastic but frankly had no idea what the Waldzell Meeting would be like. I knew that some very famous people would be there and one of them would take care of the "Architects of the Future". Maybe my expectations were somewhat unrealistic but I guess I can say that I was very surprised that some of these people would be so different from what I had imagined. Funny but that is what happened, and, in fact, probably a good reminder that the world and its people are so different and unique. In the end, what really counts is not how you think others would be but what you actually do and have done with your own life.

And with regard to that, there were also these inspiring moments that I like to recall, two of them especially. At the very beginning, there was a little pathway with signs for every year of your life. So literally walking down the years of my life next to other wanderers, that was just amazing. It was not only an inner experience



The glass bead game was quite memorable for me, because it seemed to be the place where the dialog actually took place. The beginning was quite classic, the walk through the garden and the labyrinth.

or a mind game, but actually a physical remembrance of experiences from the past that I will gladly make use of during the years to come. And the other inspiring moment was meeting Peter Senge. That a management guru would be a man with such immense sensory acuity, sensitivity, humanity and holistic knowledge - that was not only a touching, moving and inspiring moment, but a lasting and invigorating experience.

Dane Muin

The Waldzell Meeting 2005 was a truly enriching encounter with high-minded people that led me to shape a new perspective on many different topics and also empowered me to follow my visions and think more ambitiously about global topics.

The raising of Dechen-Shak Dagsay's soft, yet strong voice, literally illuminating the Church at Melk, has revived my passion and allowed me to ride on an uplifting wave of energy.

Johann Raunig

Waldzell Meeting 2005 – blueprints of a future with meaning, with which expectations does one engage in a “Global Dialog for Inspiration“?

You were definitely disappointed if you had hoped for a singular enlightenment.

I spent an interesting and stimulating two days because I let myself be inspired by the impressive atmosphere of Melk Abbey and engaged in dialogs with unique personalities representing a variety of different backgrounds, and got to know different opinions, facets and approaches. I profited the most from this interdisciplinary dialog and diverged from the beaten paths.

Personally, Waldzell 2005 was an impetus, space and opportunity for me to become aware of the fact that there are also other things that need to be considered. – Which unfortunately is consciously accorded much too little time and space in everyday life.



Daniela Pollak

It is not important who you are, what you do or where you come from. As long as you share the same spirit with someone, you will have something to talk about, and a new friend.

The most memorable moments for me at the Meeting: Saturday evening in the church - the music, the environment, people - all together in one inspiring setting.

Magdalena Nowicka

Waldzell 2005 was a great and memorable experience that has definitely enriched my knowledge.

The glass bead game and the breaks after the talks, when you could interact with the speakers and participants on a one-to-one level.

Clemens Koblbauer

Our group of the "Architects of the Future" was a very heterogeneous one. Therefore our ways of thinking, our visions and even the opinion about the speakers' comments differed extremely. After participating at the Waldzell Meeting 2005, I can confirm that you really learn the most from people that are not like you. Out of the bundle of new ideas that I assimilated two of them still occupy my mind and have developed as key messages for me.

There is no need to search for answers in life. It is more important to ask the right questions.

So, I ask myself, what can I change in my life or how can I transform myself. If we wish to transform our planet and to go for a future with meaning, we have to start transforming ourselves. Until now I am still analyzing...

I cannot remember any special moment. For me the whole meeting was a very inspiring event.

Martin Kirchner

I have taken with me the power of the group of the 18 young talented, motivated and hearty people who dedicate their lives to creating a future they want. We still keep in contact and help each other, e.g. I made a website for Colins' project.

I have taken with me the confirmation that I am "on the right track", that I have a very clear picture of blueprints of a future with meaning and am incorporating these in my life. And that I have a lot to share - I have learnt so much about solutions, seen so many hopeful projects and I think so many people have a need for positive visions - so: I feel much more self-confident in what I am doing.

There were so many memorable moments, therefore I name just a few:

When Paulo Coelho talked about his vision for the world in 2050, because I share his vision in many respects.



I enjoyed the breaks, when I had the chance to have an informal chat with the speakers and other participants. Exactly in those moments I could listen to very interesting and personal stories. Maybe this happens because, then, people relax and stop merely behaving in a "wise" and "intellectual" manner.

When Craig Venter was sharing his impressions of sailing the polluted, emptied oceans and said "Not changing is not an option".

When Paulo Coelho explained how to follow the rules before breaking them. And how he broke it playing dictator in the Sunday afternoon session.

The beautiful evening in the church and the voice of the Tibetan woman.

MELK ABBEY: A Place with Meaning and Spirituality

by Burkhard F. Ellegast, 66th Abbot of Melk Abbey

Every Benedictine monastery is a settled place, hosting a confraternity of devout people in their search for God and thus for a life with meaning, or a sense in life. With whatever they do, they want to glorify God. This word - glorification - often used in a worldly context, is the Benedictine's keyword; this can be observed by looking at every chapel, church and dome built by them.

Here, two dimensions, imminent for the development of a culture and for human development, meet: a composed place, homely and vivid at the same time, hosting a community of heterogeneous personalities, brought together by the place itself and by their spirited faith.



Melk Abbey

Monasteries - Towns on Mountaintops

The development of Europe can be seen as an achievement by Benedict's monks. The monasteries taught the inhabitants to cultivate their fields; handicraft was enhanced and spiritual abilities were stimulated. This is how God's assignment of Creation was to be fulfilled.

The foundation of Benedict's monastery took place at the time of the migration of peoples. In the agitated surging of those times, the founded monastery was able to procure a safe and steady haven, bringing peace in stormy times. Those times required steady locations, permitting the peace and order needed for a healthy evolution. Monasteries of later times gradually changed from safe havens to places where people could and still can find foothold, direction and meaning in times of dramatic disorientation.

Monasteries in the Swaying of Different Times

Human life always takes place throughout times of peace and disturbance, change and upheaval. The trough of the sea is followed by the crest of a wave; upward motion is followed by downward motion.

Monks have always been the children of their time: monasteries were equally affected by the ups and downs related to the respective spirit of the age. There were times of prosperity and descent. Founded in 1089, Melk Abbey also plays its part in intellectual history.

Melk Abbey: The Beginnings

At the time of its foundation, the monastery played a major role in constituting a solid geographic basis, thus backing up the efforts by the Babenbergers to ensure the province. The monastery developed increasingly into a religious and cultural center.

New Ways in the 15th Century

In the aftermath of the downward drift of worldly and churchly life in the 14th century, the council of Constance (1414-1418) was able to save the institution. Reform was only achieved in a few areas though: on initiative of the council and upon the wishes of the Austrian duke, a group of reformers came to Melk. Those monks were able to bring about the vital renewal of the monastery - the so-called "Melk reform," which lasted not only throughout the 15th century, but also spread widely in the southern German area. Those reformers, together with the University of Vienna, supported the council's theory in order to keep reforms going, and councils took place on a regular basis. They thus had pointed at the church's shortcomings of that time: the institution had been redeveloped, without actually achieving a reform.

Change and Rise

Changes in the field of intellectual history had taken effect. Grounded in a devout belief in God, the Renaissance had positioned the human being at the fore; rationality and reasoning were the unidirectional views that followed: the French revolution, Enlightenment in Germany, Josephicism in Austria. Austrians are a special breed - intellectual changes are not as radical as elsewhere, take longer to happen, but are also sustained longer. In altercation with the tight discipline, the Benedictine monks were carried away by the new spirit. During the reign of Joseph II (1780-90), Melk turned into an enlightened monastery: the intellect expelled the people's religiousness or mystical submersion. The school and pastoral care were well looked after. The organization was right, although lacking in inner depth; daily activities functioned well, spirituality was harshly cut back on. Nevertheless the performance of assignments was good and positive progression could be achieved in the maintenance and management of the abbey. The prevailing good mood persisted deep into the 20th century.

The Human Being as a Unity

Despite the declared good intentions and common-sense organization, the intellectual and theological background was missing. Rational course of action without spirituality misses the essence of humanity. Humans are complex creatures, there is more to them than their brains. It was not until after the Second World War that spirituality started to regain importance in the monastery, thus leading to a drastic change of the situation: the former organizations, although functioning perfectly, were not upheld anymore. People discovered their individuality and their freedom; authorities were not accepted anymore without questioning them, although the absence of authority has shown negative aspects in the meantime.

Secularization has spread widely; rationalism thrust God aside and opened the way to increasingly materialistic thoughts. Everything seems practicable, regardless of what it might inflict; the sight of sane proportions is lost.

This is where the monastery, with its possibilities and conditions, provides an oasis for those in search of unity. Here you can find devout people, trying to live their belief with humanity and faithfulness. They want to affect, using everything available - the history, the location, the building and their personnel resources, all of this addressing not only the mind or the emotions or the body, but the person as a unity.

Melk Today

For centuries, the secondary school has led to encounter and debate between the young pupils and the cloistral community. The location with its enormous amount of big rooms, long, wide corridors and the beautiful ambience filled with artistic expressiveness, builds a solid basis for lively encounters.

It is amazing the way these assets can provide a homely atmosphere, giving youngsters the possibility to unfold creativity and spontaneity. Those ancient walls though, are able to host even further activities. Cultural events of diverse kinds are enabled by a setting, worthy likewise of distinguished culture and meetings aimed at the possibility of developing personal fantasy thus leading to intellectual dialog. The Waldzell Meetings offer the best possible example.

The monastery is a place in which to feel at home, a fitting environment for reflecting on one's own position in life: the intellectual disorientation of our days makes solid ground for such ideas valuable.

Melk as an Overall Work of Art

The monastery complex of Melk is an overall work of art that tries to appeal to the person as a unity. The monastery with the church - a center for religious belief and the library - an intellectual medium, is the home of those who live together in cloistral confraternity: this is where they pray, work and live together. The counter-piece of the building is the park on the other side: the fantastic nature is evidence of the Lord, who is able to create everything.

Art on the one side corresponds to nature on the other: the person as a unity should be able to find what he is searching for. In Melk, the monastery and the park are brought into agreement with each other: the cupola with the representation of the Holy Ghost opposite to the water reservoir in the park - water and spirit, both inspiring life.

Melk Abbey and the Waldzell Meetings

At the Waldzell Meetings, I had a formative experience of reflecting on what it was all about: The human being as a unity can only be reached by openness for others and not by fundamentalist constriction; not purely rational discussion and bodiless spirituality but emotional communication. This is when sense and meaning can be created.

The Waldzell Meeting 2005 - Executive Summary

by Alan M. Webber

American, long-time chief editor and publisher of the Harvard Business Review, cofounder of "Fast Company" Magazine

"Why does Waldzell exist? I think Waldzell exists to give us all the opportunity to be present at, and to assist as midwives, in the birth of the future."



Alan M. Webber

When Andreas asked me, shortly before I came here, to try to write an essay in real time, summarizing the discussions and presentations at this year's conference, I told him I thought this was a very scary idea, but I would try—not to write an essay—but to make some notes about what we heard, what we experienced, and what we learned together over the last two days. Perhaps I thought I could link last year's experience and this year's experience and try to answer, or at least suggest, some answers to two questions.

The first question is, "Why have the Waldzell gathering, in the first place?" The second question is, "Where is the Waldzell gathering going in the future?" Let me try in a few minutes to suggest some answers to those two questions.

When I came here last year, I thought I would talk about my own work in starting and running a magazine and in reflecting on the revolution in business that was going on in the world over the last decade or so. Then I ended up being the last speaker, and I had the benefit of listening to the Nobel Prize winners, the artists, the scientists, the religious leaders who came before me, and I ended up with real-time learning. There was not one revolution going on in the world around us, there were five happening simultaneously.

The first was a revolution that brought together culture, politics, and religion in a whole new way. Last year Shirin Ebadi talked about her experience in Iran, and David Goldberg talked about his thoughts, not only as a Jewish leader, but his understanding of the prospects for peace in the Middle East. This year, we heard Tenzin Palmo talk about her experience with Tibetan refugees. The question behind that, of course, is why there are Tibetan refugees and why this terrible event is going on in that part of the world where politics, religion and culture are creating a tragedy that the world needs to pay attention to.

We heard about a revolution in science, in technology, where we can actually begin to get a feeling for the origins of life and track the DNA revolution and the genomic revolution. We also heard about the threat to biodiversity, which science is increasingly aware of. In last year's conversation and in this year's conversation, we heard about the importance that we all place on a search for meaning and self-discovery, and how, no matter where you are from or what your age is, at some level there are questions we ask about our own lives to make sense of them.

We heard last year and this year about artistic revolutions that are going on and how we are in the middle of this struggle over tradition and self-expression, over what technology makes possible, so that we can all publish our own novel, or record our own album, or make our own movie, and yet how important it is to have skill and craftsmanship in producing these things.

Then there is the revolution that I have spent quite a few years thinking about and I share an interest in with my friend Peter Senge, and that is the revolution in work, in business, in the system by which wealth is or is not created in economies around the world.

So we have these five strands running parallel, transforming our lives and the world. They are separate and yet they are all connected; they are all echoing and reflecting on each other. Last year, my feeling of listening to the speakers was one of enormous energy and discovery, almost like a global vow that these five revolutions were going on simultaneously. This year I sensed in the group and in the speakers something more like a sense of disquiet, maybe not impending disaster, but great urgency that action needs to be

taken. I begin to think why this was in the spirit of the gathering this year, and it occurred to me that part of every gathering is what we talk about and part of every gathering is what we do not talk about. I thought that what was noticeable in its absence this year, was a discussion about the extent to which this disquiet and sense of urgency perhaps has to do with the state of the United States of America. Our speaker on the first morning asked, "Isn't it interesting that we start with three Americans?" But we did not talk overtly about what the United States is or is not doing in the world today that makes us feel uncomfortable, disquieted and perhaps sad. There is a great sickness in the United States, almost a fever that started on 9/11 and continues today, as if we had all collectively gone into a sleepwalking state where we have lost our capacity to make sound judgements and to align our values with our behaviour, and until that fever breaks, we are all a victim of it or an unwilling participant in it. That was the conversation that was in the room, but not part of the conversation, not given a voice.

What, I think, the two events share most powerfully, is the sense that we are all present at the creation of the future. I was thinking about the last time when this happened in the world, and, I think, it happened about a hundred years ago, when the world experienced what came to be called the birth of the modern, when music and painting and psychology and science and literature were all transformed by people like Stravinsky, Matisse, Picasso, Freud, Einstein, and James Joyce. That creation of the future, which happened a hundred years ago, is happening in this room, and we are all privileged to be present at its creation with men and women who are our version of those larger-than-life heroes, the speakers and the participants here at Waldzell. What I sensed in the urgency of the gathering this year, was a feeling that the future is drawing nearer. Thom Mayne started the conference by quoting a writer who said, "The future is already here, it is just unevenly distributed." I had the feeling that the future was drawing nearer; we can almost hear it knocking at the door of the Abbey at Melk and gaining entrance while we are sitting here.

Why does Waldzell exist? I think Waldzell exists to give us all the opportunity, to be present at, and to assist as midwives, in the birth of the future. I think what Waldzell offers us, in the conversations that take place in a very compressed time, are glimpses of the future. Some of the things that I saw and noticed are glimpses of the future and clues, suggestions, on how to bring the future closer.

Paulo Coelho said just now, "If we want to see the future more clearly, we have to ask the right questions." Thom started his remarks by saying, "Architecture starts with questions." Anton Zeilinger said, "The question you ask, according to quantum physics, will determine the outcome of the experiment." We all need to be working and asking the right questions. A friend of mine in Sweden, Leif Edvinsson, has told me about a field of study, called quizzics, the art of asking the right question, the right way.



Wittenberg, Welser-Möst, Tenzin Palmo, Tenzin Dolma, Rohan

One challenge for all of us is to practice the art of quizzics, so we get better at asking the questions that will create the future that we want to inhabit.

The second thing that I learned this year was that if you want to see the future, all of us have to get outside of our comfort zones. For Tenzin Palmo, this may have been the moment when she decided to go to a cave to live, and move into a place that was outside of her comfort zone. That was the time when she was the happiest in her life. Jonathan Wittenberg said to all of us, when he left his comfort zone of his own Jewish community, he encountered Palestinians and Muslims, and learned more about his own religion than at any time when he was ministering to his own Jewish community.

The lesson from Waldzell, I think, is that we have the most to learn from people who are the least like us. That is true whether we are talking about our religion or our professional discipline.

The third thing that we learn about the future is that it only emerges through the process of deep conversation. All of our speakers told us that we construct the future, we create the future through the stories we tell each other. The future is a narrative that we can agree on.

Paulo has written books; 90 million of his books are being read by 270 million readers and these are stories designed to help people create a future that they want to live in as individuals. Peter Senge says that we create our stories and then our stories create us. That is a very helpful idea. If we bring together people from all different disciplines, which are represented here, and construct a narrative about the future we want to live in, we could possibly create a story that has space in it for all of us.



Martin Rotheneder, Paulo Coelho

The next thing I learned from listening to our speakers was that while each one of them is an expert in his or her own field, the future will be created at the boundaries of these disciplines. The future will be created where art meets business and finds a way of working together, where science meets religion, as David Goldberg was suggesting and finds a way for a conversation where they learn from each other, where philosophy meets art, and the circle starts over again of a conversation among and between disciplines where we learn about the best that each has to offer. In a beautiful moment of self-portrayal, Franz Welser-Möst described himself as an amateur philosopher. So we have one of the greatest conductors in the world who is offering us philosophy. We have from Tenzin Palmo a brief discourse on the nature of medicine

and how Buddhism and clear-mindedness does not automatically mean a healthy body. The world does not work that simply. Craig Venter, in a moment of poetry, speaking as the foremost scientist in the world on DNA, offers us his thoughts on global ecology. These speakers are creating new contexts by the merging of ideas and skills, reframing problems, so that we do not see issues and threads of conversation as problems, but as new connections. The art of creating the future is the art of innovation, the art of making new connections by crossing boundaries.

Finally, what I learned from the moment I arrived at Waldzell was that the future will emerge as we resolve dialectical oppositions. The future that will be created by us will not be an “either-or” future; it will be a future of “both-and”, a future where there is both individual action and collective action. I was privileged to hear Paulo Coelho and Tenzin Palmo have a discourse over where inspiration comes from. Where do you draw inspiration? Do you draw it by going within and mining the depth of your own soul or do you go out into the world and see through experience what inspiration can come to you? The answer of course is, it is not an “either-or” choice, it is a “both-and” choice.

The future will be both discipline, but also freedom. Franz Welser-Möst says, as a conductor, his job is to give his musicians as much freedom as they can accept so that they do what he wants. The future will come, as Peter Senge said, through this dialectic of transformation through conservation, where you have both the best of the past and the new innovations of the future.

Yesterday, as I looked at the presentations of our speakers’ lifetime achievements, it struck me that it is not an accident that the symbol to the Waldzell gathering is a Moebius strip, because a Moebius strip appears to have two sides until you look at it carefully and you realize it only has one side. That is the resolution of dialectic opposition into a one-sided space that combines things that appear unable to be brought together.

That leads us to the bigger question, not why we have Waldzell, but where is Waldzell headed. It struck me at the round table that we are very privileged to listen to men and women who have made an enormous difference in the world through their lives. Even a living legend like Christian de Duve modestly says, "Well, I have not made much of a difference, but let me describe some of the things that I might have had some of an impact on;" and they are very powerful, they are very important. So we witnessed the kinds of contributions that these men and women have made and I think it requires us to ask a question of ourselves.

That is for those of us who attend the Waldzell conference, "What kind of a difference do we intend to make with our lives?" The "Architects of the Future" are certainly one step toward formalizing that question. Hopefully, this group of talented young people will continue to ask that question and work through the proposition that they have gifts to give. I am asking you now, "How will you choose to do it?"

What else can we imagine for Waldzell? Can we imagine the creation of a Waldzell community that lives on 365 days a year or will this just be an annual conference? Can we imagine ways to keep these deep conversations alive among the people who attend, or will all of us be passive listeners, who go home at the end of two days and say, "That was a very interesting experience. I got to listen to ten very smart men and women, now I am going to go back to work."

These are questions that should not be left just to Andreas and Gundula and to the sponsors who make it possible for us to come here. Each one of us, who chooses to attend the Waldzell conference, needs to decide for ourselves, "Do we want to participate in making a home for the future, here in Austria, here at this Abbey, here at Waldzell?" This is a question you may not be ready to answer here this afternoon right now. I would suggest, as Paulo said, "The future depends on the questions we ask."

I will leave you with the question: "Are you going to participate in making a home for the future by your actions or does this conference simply end when we go home?" Monday morning is the time to start answering that question.

Portrait

Alan M. Webber was born in St. Louis, Missouri and attended Amherst College. After a short trip into politics, Webber was recruited to the Harvard Business School as a senior research associate. Soon, he became appointed associate editor of the Harvard Business Review, and, one year later, he was made the managing editor of the magazine. In 1992, he left HBR to start his own magazine. With Bill Taylor, his editorial partner, Webber launched Fast Company and remained at the helm of the magazine until 2002/2003.

Fast Company was named start-up of the year and launch of the year. They won the "National Magazine Award for General Excellence

and Excellence in Design." Webber and his colleague and co-founder were named Editors of the Year for their work on the magazine. Fast Company became the fastest growing business magazine in the history of the United States. At present, Alan Webber is preparing a new project: "Blue Letters" - an idea club for business leaders around the world.



The „Waldzell Collection“

The Topics of the Waldzell Meetings 2004 - 2008

Waldzell believes that every individual has the capacity to influence the world in a positive manner. The annual “Waldzell Meetings—Global Dialogs for Inspiration” at the Abbey at Melk are the first step toward the realization of our vision. These gatherings are particularly designed to inspire decision makers of today and tomorrow to contribute to the creation of a better world.



Andreas Salcher, David Goldberg, Gundula Schatz

The Topics of the Waldzell Meetings 2004-2008

10-12 September 2004

The Launch—The Search for the Meaning of Life

The purpose of the first Waldzell Meeting was to focus attention on the topic of the search for meaning, something that touches all of our lives. By presenting the life-stories of three Nobel laureates, the world's leading researcher on human happiness, the inventor of the birth-control pill, as well as recognized spiritual authorities and artists of world stature, we sought to offer new and valuable lines of sight into what it takes to create and live a meaningful life. The Waldzell Report 2004 summarized the four key questions of the meeting:

- To what extent can an individual influence history?
- Are there limits in science and who sets these limits?
- How do we conceive work that is meaningful?
- Does God still provide meaning, or does each individual build their own world?

The presenters and participants arrived at a realization during the course of the gathering: The attempt to shape the future is one of the most powerful ways to give meaning to one's life. Influencing the future gives each individual great joy and is a prerequisite for the overall progress of mankind toward a more humanitarian world.

From this discussion came the theme for the Meeting 2005: *“Blueprints for the Future.”*

9-11 September 2005

Blueprints of a Future with Meaning

In keeping with the theme of the gathering, we sought to find individuals who had developed ideas, created new insights, or embodied critical values that would shape the future of mankind. For example, by deciphering the human genome, Craig Venter has opened up vast new horizons for mankind in medicine, health, and the overall quality of life. Peter Senge, the foremost authority on systems thinking in work and business, has pioneered the field of organizational learning. Nobel laureate Christian de Duve has enormous wisdom in the area of the origin and evolution of the human species. Anton Zeilinger's views on quantum teleportation and quantum physics raise critical questions about our understanding of cause and effect and the nature of reality as revealed by modern science. Tenzin Palmo, an inspirational religious figure who has created a nunnery and school for aspiring young Buddhist women, Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, whose work exemplifies efforts to find common ground among and between the great religions of the world, and conductor Franz Welser-Möst, who has created a masterpiece of an orchestra in his duties with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra and made classical music accessible and enjoyable for millions of people, all demonstrate the cross-boundary learning and exploration that exemplifies a life based on creating meaning for oneself and others. Together they demonstrate the blend of art, science, and spirituality which is the special domain of Waldzell.

At the same time, Waldzell 2005 recognized that the future belongs to the young. Therefore, we brought together 18 “Architects of the Future” under the guidance and leadership of world-famous author Paulo Coelho. These 18 young people, who have already accomplished much at this point in their lives, were given the opportunity to network with each other, and to work intensely with the speakers at the

gathering; the expectation is that their experience at Waldzell will both inspire and instruct them to achieve even more for the good of the world.

One of the fundamental insights of the Meeting 2005 was that the greatest challenge facing the world today is the challenge of change; great changes are already happening all around us, more changes are on the way. To create a better future, we must find ways to guide and direct change in positive directions. This recognition gives shape to the Meeting 2006.

8-10 September 2006

The challenge of change: Can individuals change the world?

We are already in the process of inviting speakers for the Meeting 2006 who can offer insights into the work of making change happen—in the arts, sciences, business, and politics. Their stories, and the insights of masters of change who can comment on how change takes place, will frame a discussion about the power of the individual to create, channel, and direct change in a world that is already in the throes of history-making change. What can an individual actually do? What does it take to make change happen? What do we understand about the actual process of creating change? Where are the biggest challenges that lie ahead? These and other questions will be taken up at the Meeting 2006.

7-9 September 2007

God versus Evolution: Does our life serve a higher purpose?

Our efforts to shape the world according to our will have made us the most powerful residents of our planet. Thanks to our scientific achievements we are able to decide on the destiny of all life on this planet. Due to the new methods of genetic engineering, for the first time in history, mankind now has the potential to interfere with evolution and to help shape it. Both religious individuals and people critical of progress feel threatened by the possibility that human beings set themselves up as master of Creation. The growing fundamentalism in many religions, which even leads to suicide attacks in the name of God, also shows how dangerous it is to ignore people's spiritual needs.

The Meeting 2007 will therefore be entirely dedicated to the dialog between the great religions and the knowledge of science. In the end, everything points to the question whether there is a higher plan or whether everything is a result of evolution's principle of contingency. The selection of the speakers will correspond to the significance of this important topic.



Albert Rohan, President des Waldzell Committee

2008

Knowledge and Spirituality – A Summary

After four years, it will be time to strike a first balance of the Waldzell Meetings. We will therefore invite all speakers of the years 2004 to 2007 to this meeting. Without anticipating the result, you can expect that the balance between knowledge and wisdom is common thread running through all the central themes of Waldzell.

The knowledge of our species and the power that comes with it has grown tremendously within the last millennia, while our wisdom, unfortunately, has not increased in the same measure. The Waldzell Meeting 2008 will take a stand and steer the attention of those who carry responsibility in the world on the pressing questions of the future. The Waldzell Meeting 2008 wants to inspire the participants to make their distinctive contribution for a better world and in the dialog with the "best minds" to discuss possibilities of how exactly it will be defined. For very few forces in human existence are as powerful as a common vision.

Additional Projects by Waldzell

While the Waldzell Meetings are explicitly aimed at international decision-makers from the economy and media, Waldzell also offers projects which are open to all interested people who are prepared to make their contribution for a better world. We try to remain true to our three principles - thinking globally, striving for dialog and giving inspiration - in these projects as well.

The Waldzell Dialogs

In addition to the Waldzell Meetings the Waldzell Institute organizes the free and publicly accessible “Waldzell Dialogs”. Three Waldzell Dialogs have taken place so far.

Waldzell Dialog I - “The Pilgrimage”

A reading with Paulo Coelho on 22 September 2004 in Melk Abbey.

Waldzell Dialog II - “Science and Spirituality”: The Limits of Science and the Secret of Creation between Quantum and Genes”

A dialog with Paulo Coelho and Anton Zeilinger on 23 September 2004 at the University of Vienna

Waldzell Dialog III - “Paulo Coelho and the Architects of the Future“

On 12 September 2005, Paulo Coelho presented along with the “Architects of the Future“ the central topics of the Waldzell Meeting 2005 in the Gartenbau-Cinema in Vienna.



Erwin Pröll, Paulo Coelho

The Waldzell Pilgrimage

To particularly promote the effect of the Waldzell project regionally and provide everyone with the concrete possibility of embarking on, or continuing along, their own paths to self-determination, the Austrian section of the Road to Santiago between Göttweig Abbey and Melk Abbey was revived. The Waldzell Pilgrimage was officially opened by Paulo Coelho and head of provincial government Dr. Erwin Pröll on 12 September 2005.

Interested persons have the opportunity to experience the fascination of making a pilgrimage, which is inspiring more and more people in our modern world, without going to great efforts. In an approx. 44 km long spiritual journey on foot, special stations provide information about the entire Road to Santiago.

The Founders of Waldzell

The Waldzell Institute was founded by Gundula Schatz and Andreas Salcher in spring 2003 and is situated in Vienna.

Gundula Schatz has been involved in the natural sciences and modern technologies for many years. Upon successful completion of her degree in biotechnology with a special emphasis on genetic engineering, she was active in the area of new technologies for the Federal Ministry of the Environment as well as Tech Gate Vienna and Technology Park. Subsequently, she worked in one of Austria's most renowned Patent Law firms and, up to November 2005, she was engaged in politics as Vice-Governor of the 1st district of Vienna.

Today, she is intensively interested in the ancient wisdom of humankind and in the possibility of harmonizing it with modern sciences. She is counselor of the Austrian Business Ethics Network and a member of the Global Council on Conscious Economies, Corporate Responsibility and Economic Justice. In February 2005, she became ambassador of the World Wisdom Council.

Andreas Salcher holds an MBA and PhD in management from the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, has attended an executive program at Harvard University and visited Tibetan monasteries, and conflates mankind's ancient foundations of wisdom with modern concepts of management.



Speakers of the Waldzell Meeting 2005 with the founders

Salcher's consultancy firm has been developing extraordinary workshops and seminars for international enterprises for many years. He has often been invited to present his innovative concepts as a speaker at management conferences in Europe and in the U.S.

After a personal meeting with Sir Karl Popper in 1993 in London, Andreas Salcher became co-founder of the "Sir Karl Popper School," the Austrian school for highly gifted children, where he is still active as an honorary vice-president. For the past 12 years, Andreas Salcher has also been engaged politically as a member of the Provincial Government and Speaker of the Cultural Committee in Vienna.

Contact: Waldzell Institute

Dorotheergasse 22/2/4
1010 Vienna
Tel.: +43 - 1 - 513 81 92 - 0
Fax: +43 - 1 - 513 81 92 - 4

Email: office@waldzell.org
Website: <http://www.waldzell.org>

Acknowledgments

The Waldzell Meeting 2005 could only have been realized through the generous and valuable support of its sponsors and partners. We would like to extend our most heartfelt thanks to you, and in particular to the following enterprises and persons:

The Main Sponsors

Erwin Pröll
Head of provincial government Lower Austria

Christian Konrad
Austrian Raiffeisen Group

Roland Falb
Roland Berger Strategy Consultants

Andreas Zakostelsky
Raiffeisen Capital Management

Emil Mezgolits
Austrian Lotteries



Donors

Wittmann Möbel

Coca-Cola

Weingut Bründlmayer

Saab Austria

The Media Partners

ORF

Die Zeit

Format

Kurier

News

Woman

The Marketing Partners

Cicero

Creative Club Austria

Create Connections

Waldzell Report 2005

We thank Hans-Jürgen Manstein, owner of the Manstein Publishing Company, and Martin Bartenstein, Federal Minister of Economics and Labor, for supporting the Waldzell Report 2005.