**“Creative Austrians”**

Statement by

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**I. [AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM WARSAW: WHO WE ARE]**

The Austrian Cultural Forum in Warsaw has been in existence for 52 years now. Today, with our support nearly 400 cultural and scientific events a year are taking place in Warsaw or elsewhere in Poland.

The Austrian Cultural Forum maintains close relations to publishing houses and scientific institutions as well as to museums, galleries, theaters and NGOs. Within its premises, the Austrian Cultural Forum very regularly organizes events ranging from exhibitions, to lectures and concerts.

We consider ourselves a platform and a facilitator of artistic, scientific and innovative initiatives between Austria and Poland. Beyond that, the Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw is a meeting place and as such enables the open discourse on subjects of societal and European relevance, with the participation of personalities from Poland, Austria and all over Europe.

I cordially invite you to take with you one of our current program brochures laid out at the entrance and I look forward to numerous meetings in Warsaw or elsewhere in Poland.

**II. [AUSTRIA: INCREASINGLY INNOVATIVE**]

Austria is increasingly innovative: As the first Member State of the European Union, it has passed an Open Innovation Strategy. This Strategy aims at bringing to bear and uniting all parts of society in a quadruple helix of innovation: Government, Science, Economy and – as a new element – arts and culture.

Austria is situated in the center of Europe. Its advanced economy has always been strongly orientated towards exports and the outside world. And, last but not least, centuries of successes in music, architecture, visual arts, literature and other fields highlight the significance culture has always had in this country.

To use this excellent starting position and long-lasting cultural heritage for innovative solutions also in the future, it is essential to connect culture, art and society as strongly as possible. In order to do so, the program “Creative Austrians” was launched by the Austrian Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.

In this context, with its numerous cultural partner institutions all over Poland, the Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw intends to serve as a bridge-builder – for bridges not only across countries, but also from the present into the future: By contributing to the development of creative and innovative solutions.

**III.** **[CREATIVE ECONOMY: THE ROLE OF ARTISTS]**

In recent years, the categories “art” and “creative-economy” are merging and there is an ever-growing exchange between them. And naturally, also economy plays a role: On the one hand, art depends on funding, even if on a small scale. On the other hand, also economy is in need of new approaches and innovation artists and creatives have to offer.

Not only is this approach of artistic pioneering promising, it also is necessary: Technology delivers us not only entirely new possibilities, but also questions humanity and being human as a whole. New technologies start to exceed our needs and desires and sometimes have their price: Be it ecological or other. We as a society need to make sure that our real needs and priorities as human beings do not get left behind. In this context, artists and creatives appear particularly well-poised to develop models and initiatives for a digitalized society oriented towards the common good.

Therefore, within “Creative Austrians”, not only artists, also innovative companies, creative industries and entrepreneurs are presenting their ideas. The goal: Art should be thought of wider than usual. We find art not only in museums, galleries, at concerts or audio recordings, in the cinema or in literature: Art literally shapes all of our life. How are cities built, products designed, houses structured? How do we interact with others, work, live? Creativity plays a role everywhere. The intention of the “Creative Austrians” initiative is to think all those fields together – to “think big”.

**IV.** **[“Creative Austrians”: PROJECTS]**

The publication accompanying the program “Creative Austrians” gives a range of promising young artists and creative entrepreneurs space to share their project ideas. The goal is clear: To question held-dear habits, rethink the way our society works and engage in new discourses. By combining theoretical frameworks and practical applications, space for something new and innovative opens up. This space can be local and on a small scale, or it can be the entire world.

The concrete projects encompass such varied fields as creative workshops for social disadvantaged persons, open technology-labs as future-centers for rural areas, waste-cooking and shopping without packaging waste, as well as methods for protecting harvests and drinking water and a mini-powerplant for everybody (for more details, see annex).

What unites all of the project entries is their pioneering way of thinking. They want to go further than our established routines and everyday-lives. Our publication provides a discursive framework to present their projects and put them into correspondence, offering an overview of the enormous scope of what is happening in the pioneering creative scene of Austria.

**V. [“Creative Austrians” PROCESS/Austrian Cultural Forum WARSAW]**

Within the project “Creative Austrians”, the Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw aims to extend its well-established role as a platform for cultural and scientific exchange. We intend to underline our role as a catalyst for creative processes at large. Thus, we want to increasingly facilitate networks for dialogue between creative pioneers in Austria and in Poland.

On the one hand, the Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw intends to present “Creative Austrians” and their projects I briefly described above to Polish audiences and to potential Polish counterparts.

On the other hand, the Austrian Cultural Forum is offering its centrally-located premises in Warsaw as a meeting point for creatives from Poland and Austria.

And finally, it is my intention to open our varied cultural events in Warsaw and elsewhere in Poland to creatives in the broader sense. This will result in new creative networks, mutual exchange and innovative synergies between Austria and Poland - and beyond.

END OF STATEMENT

**ANNEX:**

**CREATIVE AUSTRIANS – concrete projects**

**1: Creativity and spirit of the time**

**Manu Luksch
- Art checks the inspectors. Filming against surveillance**

* **movie-maker & „artivist“**
* Lives in Vienna & London
* Deals with Big Brother, data abuse, control-society (cameras, quantified self, etc)
* Film-project „Die Jagd nach dem Datenschatten“ (hunt for the shadow of data) (2007) which only uses CCTV-surveillance-footage
* [www.ambienttv.net](http://www.ambienttv.net) : in the middle of art, technology and criticism of society. Demonstrate the effects of surveillance cameras on the life of people.
* <http://www.ambienttv.net/content/?q=faceless>
* ON-GOING PROJECTS [**http://ambienttv.net/content/?q=projects**](http://ambienttv.net/content/?q=projects)

**Michaelias (Micha Elias Pichlkastner)
Media Art and the relation human to machine**

* **Artist and movie-maker, post-production, motion-design & composition, media art**
* Communication in the internet age, loss of the importance of physical body
* audiovisual installation: “Replica”. Deals with the loss of information through medial transfer and a change of human perception. Based on his own experience with a long-distance relationship (Skype-communication).
* Most recent installation: “Drip”. About water and its effect on human beings: [**http://www.michaelias.com/work/drip/**](http://www.michaelias.com/work/drip/)
* <http://michaelias.tumblr.com/>

**“Bedroom Exodus” (Jerome Becker, Florian Sammer, Lukas Vejnik)
Concepts for a sleep-cultural revolution in public space**

* **Research collective (team of architects)**
* Analzye the social-historical developments & cultural developments of sleep.
* Want to start a “sleep-cultural revolution” (different approach, power-naps, sleeping in public rooms, …) because we live in a society with chronically not enough sleep.
* Architecture- & design-project “Bedroom Exodus” [**http://bedroomexodus.com/**](http://bedroomexodus.com/)

**Florian Satzinger
Character design: The paperwalker or “the fantastic journey of John Starduck”**

* Animation movie-series  “John Starduck”: adventures of a duck into space
* Worked also for Walt Disney & Warner Bros
* Weblog where he shares bits and pieces of his characters and inspirations:
* [**http://paperwalker.blogspot.com/**](http://paperwalker.blogspot.com/)

**2: Creativity & Society**

**Marlies Pöschl
“And other stories”: Cultural analysis at the cut surface of film, art and society**

* **movies, installations, photographs, texts and performances, visual arts**
* Mostly films (“L’Ecole de Simili”, “The Machine Stops”, “Sternheim”)
* Topics: education, communication, construction of identity, language, migration
* Film-sets as places of social interaction
* Life abroad (France, China, Iran) inspire her projects
* Newest movie: “Cinema Cristal” [**http://www.marliespoeschl.net/post/156041575755/cinema-cristal-2017-video-hd-colour-stereo**](http://www.marliespoeschl.net/post/156041575755/cinema-cristal-2017-video-hd-colour-stereo)

**“Use Potential” (Julia Bachler)
Social empowerment through a database of refugee skills**

* Collect skills and knowledge of refugees in a database
* Encourage them to actively shape their environment and get back some independence
* Basis: questionnaire that refugees fill in after entering the country
* [**https://citiesintransition.eu/interview/use-potential**](https://citiesintransition.eu/interview/use-potential)

**Astrid Hainzl
Too little women in management boards: Which mechanisms are responsible?**

* university assistant at WU (economic university) Wien & gender-researcher
* Why are there so few women in boards of management?
* Research of social action patterns that hinder women to achieve leading positions
* Forschungsarbeit: “Die Reproduktion des männlichen Aufsichtsrates – Homosoziale Praktiken in der Evaluierung von Kandidatinnen und Kandidaten”
* [**https://www.wu.ac.at/en/diversity/team/hainzl/**](https://www.wu.ac.at/en/diversity/team/hainzl/)

**Elisabeth Marek: “The creative fillip”**

* **Creative workshops for social disadvantaged persons**
* graphic artist; founder and manager of creative-workshops
* Rooms for people in hard life situations to engage culturally
* Time off with the power of creativity
* For example for refugees, workless, kids & teenagers from troubled families
* [**http://creative-fillip.com/**](http://creative-fillip.com/)

**Martin Hollinetz: “Otelo”
open technology-labs as future-centers for rural areas**

* Develop networks to develop new ideas also outside of the big cities
* Otelo: Offenes Technologielabor (open technology-lab)
* Experiments with Virtual Reality and mobile human powerstations (electricity from fitness center) x^1
* 22 locations in Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain
* Bring technology and kids together (“Kinder erleben Technik”)
* [**http://tedxcarthage.com/speaker/martin-hollinetz-2/**](http://tedxcarthage.com/speaker/martin-hollinetz-2/)
* [**http://otelo.or.at/**](http://otelo.or.at/) **(german)**

**3: Creativity & Responsibility**

**David Gross: “Wastecooking”
With “artivism” against the waste of food and xenophobia**

* **documentary filmmaker, activist**
* Movie shows the waste of food (>150.000 tons of good food thrown away in Austria)
* “artivism”: art in the middle of art, politics and activism
* September 2013: free supermarket in Vienna with rejected food from other shops
* free cooking courses
* **refugee.tv:** transcultural cooperation & teamwork.
* 2016: Media Summit of former refugees who work in film & TV
* [**http://www.wastecooking.com/**](http://www.wastecooking.com/)
* [**http://refugee.tv/**](http://refugee.tv/)

**Andreas Lunzer: “Lunzers Maß-Greißlerei”
Shopping without packaging waste**

* Only organic food (“bio”) from regional origin
* “Zero Waste”-approach: customers bring their own pots and bottles to avoid garbage and food-waste through oversized packages
* Shop is located in Vienna, but there are now also initiatives in Linz and Graz
* [**http://mass-greisslerei.at/**](http://mass-greisslerei.at/)

**Markus Enenkel: “Satida”
app which warns about future draught and hunger-catastrophes**

* Worked at TU Wien, Columbia University
* SATIDA: “Satellite Technologies for Improved Drought Risk Assessment”
* App uses satellite-pictures as well as local socio-economic data to create prognosis for areas that are at risk of extreme heat, drought and aridity
* In order to save lifes and prepare
* [**https://satida.net/**](https://satida.net/)

**Gerhard Fraundorfer: “CornProtect”
Protection of corn-harvest with pest control with sexual pheromones**

* **CEO of “LITHOS Industrial Minerals GmbH”**
* Developed ecological “exterminator” against vermins, especially the western corn rootworm (small bug). It is based on a sexual pheromone which confuses the male rootworms
* This helps to protect corn crops, which were seriously in danger in some regions

Pheromones are carried on zeolith (volcanic stone)

* [**http://lithosnatural.at/en/cornprotect**](http://lithosnatural.at/en/cornprotect)

**4: Creativity & Economy**

**Andreas Weingartner: “s::can”
Clean drinking water with innovative light-measure-method**

* CEO & founder of s::can Messtechnik GmbH
* Optical technic, which measures absorption of a light-ray in water
* Usage for water networks in cities and purification plants
* [**http://www.s-can.at/en/**](http://www.s-can.at/en/)

**Kristina Tsvetanova: “Blitab”
Tactile Tablet-PC for blind persons**

* CEO and CoFounder Blitlab Technology
* Better integration of blind and visually impaired people into digital everyday life (smartphones, tablets, other touchscreen-devices)
* Tactile tablet-surface which can show braille as well as graphical information which can be felt when touched
* [**http://blitab.com/**](http://blitab.com/)

**Michaela Maresch & Gerald Brencic: “COMMOD-Haus”
sustainable module-house to “take-away”**

* Invented in Graz
* The required flexibility on job market leads to increased need of mobility.
* Instead of buying a property and staying there for all time, they want to encourage (young) people to rent ground and just buy the house – which they can take wherever they want, if they have to.
* Modular structure with container as foundation makes this easy.
* Only natural and recyclable materials: wood, cellulosis, straw, brickearth etc.
* Other product “Beach Box”: small house for the beach, same principle
* [**http://www.commod-house.com/**](http://www.commod-house.com/) **(German only)**

**Simon Niederkircher & Michael Galhaup: „simon“
A mini-powerplant for everybody**

* Company “homemade.enegy GmbH”
* Create own electricity with the power of the sun - even for people who don’t own their own house but are just renting a flat
* Photovoltaic unit which can be used at window-glass, balcony or garden
* Powerplant is 14kg, 138x69 cm, up to 150 Watt
* [**http://simon.energy/**](http://simon.energy/)