



ROBERT PUNKENHOFER

PH.D. (Karl Franzens University), M.A. (New York University)
artistic director of *viennaartweek*

Austrian

Born on the 7th of July, 1965

1 son (13 years old)

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ROBERT PUNKENHOFER

I. Career History

A. Highlights: Business / Public Sector / Institutions

03/2005 – present Austrian Federal Economic Chamber / Foreign Trade Department

1. Director of the Expo Office Austria

World Fair 2005 in Aichi/Japan

World Fair 2008 in Zaragoza/Spain

World Fair 2010 in Shanghai/China

Responsible for budgetary management (6.5, 4.3 and 16 million euros, respectively), the direction of all activities and content related programs for the Austrian presence at the Expo, including construction work, exhibitions and daily operations (with a staff of up to 50 employees), and heading the communication and event management effort related to the key topics of public policy, tourism, culture and business. With 1.7 million visitors, the Austrian presence was voted one of the most successful national contribution to the Expo, and it also ranks as one of Austria's most significant public relations projects to date in Asia (e.g., receiving over 300 televised minutes in coverage by Japanese and international TV stations, including on Good Morning America / ABC News).

2. Project Director / Major International Events

EULAC Business Summit 2006

With the participation of 200 key business leaders each from the EU and Latin America, the 2006 EU-LAC Business Summit in Vienna was called the most successful economic initiative conducted during Austria's EU presidency by then Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel.

Österreichische Exporttage 2007 und 2008

A key achievement with respect to content and organization was managing to reposition the summit as Austria's most important business event on the topic of globalization, a success underscored by a guest list that included over 1,800 national CEOs and export managers, as well as numerous high-ranking ministers and secretaries of state (compared to approx. 400 previously).

3. Project Director / Creative Industries

Established a new office dedicated to internationalizing Austria's creative industries sector, complete with a comprehensive service offering that extends to information management, networking and financial instruments and subsidies for companies active in the fields of design, music, architecture, fashion, film and multimedia.

10/02 – 03/05 Austrian Design Foundation, Vienna

Managing Director

Director of business affairs and design programs for the daughter company *Perform Design GmbH*. Within a mere 6 months, the multiple initiatives launched resulted in a relocation of company headquarters from Graz to Vienna and integration into a network of international design centers in London, Tokyo, Milan, Frankfurt and New York. By implementing an aggressive and innovative communication policy, both internally and externally, the company quickly assumed leadership in developing new ideas for the Austrian design and industry sector.

09/94 – 08/97 Austrian Foreign Trade Offices in Mexico City, New York and Berlin
Deputy Trade Commissioner for Mexico, USA and Germany

09/98 – 09/02

- Provided comprehensive support – in the form of consulting, business partner acquisition and assistance with negotiations – to Austrian companies for executing their internationalization strategies.
- Developed and maintained highly specialized consulting networks within the assigned countries.
- Authored numerous industry/trade publications and market studies.
- Designed and implemented diverse special events (e.g., road shows, investor seminars, ministerial visits, participation at exhibitions and trade missions).
- Intensive lobbying on behalf of Austrian companies on issues concerning trade policy and the Foreign Direct Investment Regime.

09/97 – 08/98 Casinos Austria International AG, Vienna

Project Manager

- Managed strategic marketing activities and new project development/acquisition, with a primary overseas focus on Latin America.
- Project management leading up to, and eventually winning, the bid for a hotel/casino project in Mendoza, Argentina, in partnership with Accor. Raised project financing in the amount of USD 22 million via local and international banks.
- Concluded the management contract with Casino Las Leñas, Argentina

09/93 –08/94 Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, Vienna

Trainee of the Austrian Foreign Trade Organisation

Completion of a comprehensive work and training program focusing on both micro- and macroeconomic aspects of international business transactions, performed within the applicable departments of the Federal Economic Chamber, the OeNB (Austrian central bank), Bank Austria, FGG and the Hernstein Management Institute.

B. Highlights: Art / Design / Architecture

06/96 - present ART&IDEA, Mexico, New York, Berlin, Vienna

Founder and Managing Director

- Director of business and artistic affairs for this internationally oriented consulting firm and contemporary art space.
- Positioned the company as an international leader on the interface between art, design and architecture, for serving both private and public sector clients.
- Established ART&IDEA as one of the most important institutions in Mexico, and throughout Latin America, in the field of contemporary art.

Brief Summary of ART&IDEA since its inception:

- Organized over 70 exhibitions involving some 300 artists from Mexico, the USA, Germany, Spain, Japan and Austria.
- Continually outstanding press coverage in the national and international media, including in Artforum, Flash Art, ARTnews, Art Review, Art Press, The New York Times, Art Nexus, Parnass, Springerin, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Handelszeitung Schweiz, Manager Magazin, Best of Falter, Der Standard, Die Presse, El Pais, Reforma, etc.
- Part of an internationally renowned network that includes Princeton University, New York University, Cooper-Hewitt/National Design Museum, Art in General, the Bröhan Design Foundation, EOOS and the Houston Contemporary Arts Museum.
- Clients/Sponsors: Panasonic de Mexico, Bacardi, Jumex, Selection Finance, Rockefeller Foundation, Fondo Nacional de Cultura, Dorotheum, Soravia Group, Austrian Foreign Ministry, Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Education and Culture.
- The latest company information is available on the website: www.art-idea.com

01/2005 – present viennaartweek

Initiator and Artistic Director of viennaartweek, an annual one-week event for 500 national and international art experts that is conducted in cooperation with all Viennese art institutions, and with over 90% of the 450,000 euro budget sourced privately.

08/2001 – 01/2003 Graz 2003 – Culture Capital of Europe

Curator for "Island in the Mur", including responsibility for the original concept, the architectural program, budgeting and the artistic supervision, of the 5.5-million euro project "Island in the Mur" (Insel auf der Mur) in cooperation with Vito Acconci. It served as the main attraction during Graz's reign as the 2003 Cultural Capital of Europe.

09/2001 – 12/2004 DIE ZEIT Art Edition

Curator, including the original concept and realization, of an annual "Christmas-wrapping-paper" Art Edition (circulation approx. 500,000) for the leading German weekly DIE ZEIT, a project in collaboration with the Biennale participants Marko Lehanka and Kara Walker as well as Uli Aigner, Emiko Kasahara, Do-Ho Suh, and others.

02/1998 – 06/2007 International Art Fairs

On numerous different occasions, participation in the “Cutting Edge” or “Special Projects” programs of international art fairs such as Arco Madrid, ArtForum Berlin, SCOPE New York and Miami, and BaleLatina in Basel, Switzerland.

II. Education:

01/92 – 08/93

New York University, NYC, USA

SEHNAP/Stern Business School/Institute of Fine Art

Master of Arts in Arts Administration with a specialization in museum management

09/84 – 12/91

Karl Franzens University, Graz, Austria

Faculty of Law

Ph.D and LL.M with a specialization in international comparative law

01/90 – 10/90

Universidad Católica Andres Bello, Caracas, Venezuela

Faculty of Law, Postgraduate Studies

Research Assistant at the Institute of International Private Law

10/90 – 07/91

Karl Franzens University of Graz, Austria

Earned academic certificate in **Export Management** (with honors) from the Export Academy

09/80 – 06/84

Bischöfliches Gymnasium, Graz, Austria

Matura in modern languages (with honors)

- Completed various **several-month-long internships** at the **Guggenheim Foundation** and **Exit Art, New York** (Financial Development, Public Relations, Artistic Programming), and the **Lycée Honoré Romane, France** (Language Assistant).
- Completed **continuing education** courses in such subjects as international project management, executive leadership, professional selling, change management and financial development (among others, at **Harvard Business School**, the **American Management Association** and the **Hernstein Institute**).
- **Languages:** German (native) / English, Spanish and French (negotiating level skills) / Italian, Portuguese and Russian (basic knowledge)

III. Additional Information/Experience:

- **Vice President** of *Art Cluster Vienna*, the umbrella organization for all Vienna art institutions.
- Supporting **member**: *Guggenheim Foundation* and *New York University Graduate Council*.
- **Editor** and **author** of numerous professional articles, and **books** such as *Unternehmensgründung USA*, Springer Publishers, and *Vito Acconci: Building an Island* and *Art&Idea – Connecting Different Worlds*, both published by Hatje Cantz.
- Regular **lecturer** in the USA, Mexico, Germany and Austria on the topics of *art management* and *international business development*.

IV. What motivates me:

I love the challenge of developing a cutting-edge project together with artists, designers, architects, musicians or other creative individuals, and then realizing the idea with financially strong partners from either the private or public sector. Because the two worlds – i.e., that of the artist vs. that of private or public sector stakeholders – are generally so completely different, my chosen motto is “**connecting different worlds.**” In the end, I also believe that describes what I have done best throughout my career.

Meaning is more than Money

As a guiding philosophy, the above statement underscores the fact that I value opportunities where I can create something new, and within an environment of decision-making autonomy, much more highly than opportunities that offer only a higher pay check. At the same time, I have always enjoyed the entrepreneurial challenges that go with every project, and I pride myself in being able to say that winning over financial partners and meeting budgetary targets count among my strengths.

Doing the Impossible

The more friends or colleagues tell me that a project is not feasible, be it due to budgetary, content-related or time constraints, the more fun I have in proving them wrong. A few examples of where this has been the case: When I decided to start a new gallery in the heart of Mexico City against overwhelming odds, when I cooperated with one of the planet’s most radical artists to complete an artificial island in Graz, when I and my team managed to have Austria’s presence at the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan, up and running within only 15 months time, and when I succeeded at implementing the *viennaartweek* – the first time ever that *all* of Vienna’s art institutions cooperated on a single project.

Big Times – Great Spaces

To fashion something big out of literally nothing is another challenge that drives me. Of course, it needs to be a very innovative idea with the potential for making a large impact in order for me to consider it successful – and personally rewarding. Good examples here are developing and realizing the “Island in the Mur” project, as well as setting up and seeing through the 2006 EU-LAC Business Summit in Vienna’s Belvedere Palace.