**HC Newsletter - January 2021**

Dear Friends of Austria!

As we all embarked into a new year with hopes of finding relief from the pandemic that placed such a burden on all our lives, we still have to be vigilant, careful, respectful while trying to keep the optimism. This is also true for our friends and families in Austria. The pandemic is also raging in Austria, where hard lockdown restrictions are paired with the beginning of the vaccination roll out.

 Lech in Arlberg Region – one of the most spectacular winter resorts in Tyrol/Vorarlberg -hit hard by the necessary scaled down operations.

But there is a light at the end of the tunnel, here and in Austria and around the world …. It is a scientific miracle that we have this safe, effective vaccine so quickly, that normally would take years to develop. “And to have this, that we know is safe, that we know works, that can not only help yourself but your family and everybody around you.” (Gov. Jay Inslee).

**NEW: MANDATORY PRE-TRAVEL CLEARANCE: New Travel restrictions for all Travel to Austria beginning January 15:**

As of January, 15, 2021, 12:00 am (CET), travelers **must register** online **before entering Austria** (Pre-Travel Clearance - PTC) at [www.oesterreich.gv.at](https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/en/themen/coronavirus_in_oesterreich/pre-travel-clearance.html). Following information must be provided:

Last and given name, Date of birth, Email Address, residence address in Austria, or address of quarantine, Date of entry and date of departure, means of transport / vehicle used for entry (optional), Countries visited in the last 10 days.

Entry ban for US citizens and other Non-EU countries unless they qualify for one of the exemptions (e.g. living in same household with Austrian citizen).

For all travelers entering Austria: mandatory 10 days quarantine during which period the accommodation may not be left. Quarantine may be terminated upon presentation of a negative result of a molecular-biological or antigen test for SARS-CoV-2 taken no earlier than five days after entry, or for the purpose of departure from Austria.

For more information: <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/austrian-consulate-general-los-angeles/news/>

**Consulate General of Austria in Los Angeles**: Due to the Public Orders of the local authorities, the Austrian Consulate General had to suspend its public hours until further notice. The office remains open for emergency services for Austrian citizens.

 **Honorary Consulate of Austria in Seattle** is resuming limited public hours with January 25, 2021.

**NEWS FROM AND ABOUT AUSTRIA**

**Saturday, December 26, 2020**: the third **hard lockdown** got into effect and is now in place until at least February 7. Curfew around the clock, all shops are closed besides groceries, pharmacies and drug stores. Lockdown for restaurants at least until March. This challenge can be the breaking point for many, especially smaller, local restaurants and shops.

 **Sunday, December 27**: **first vaccinations** (Pfizer/Biontech) were administered in coordination with the whole European Union. EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen described the coordinated start of the vaccinations as “moving moment of unity”. For more details on the vaccination plan in Austria: www.impfung.at

 **January 1: New Year’s speech** form Austria‘s President Alexander VanDer Bellen: besides good luck and health the President also wishes „Courage to Dream”: “Right now is the time to dream how we can improve the world, without fear of dreaming too big, to envision a flourishing economy without conflicting a blooming nature but as goals complementing each other, mitigate glaring opposites between being well taken care of and being on the run, between rich and poor, and to break the trend of aggression and irreconcilability”.

 **January 4**: The **Austrian-American Society** (ÖAG, www.oag.at) celebrates its 75th birthday. Guess, where the first office location of the ÖAG was? Right at the Hotel Sacher! They sure began their work in style and kept it going since.

 **January 6: Day of the “Three Kings”:** children in Austria dress up as the Three Kings, go from door to door and sing carols as the so-called “star singers”. The aim of this tradition is to collect donations for charity organizations, and to bring a blessing into the homes of the people. This year, the children had to be creative to practice this tradition at least in some form.

 End of appointment for the **US Ambassador in Vienna**, Trevor Traina is approaching soon. Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg : „Not saying goodbye, but „auf Wiedersehen“ to Ambassador Trevor Traina, a true friend of Austria. I thank him for his tireless, innovative & successful efforts to deepen relations. “. His successor is not announced yet.

**REACTIONS TO RECENT EVENTS IN THE USA:**

 **January 6: rioters storming the US Capitol**:

**Austria’s President VanDerBellen**: “I am following with deep concern the populist prodded, anti-democracy attack on the Capitol in Washington, the heart of US democracy. The respect for the results of free elections and the peaceful transfer of government power is the foundation of democracy. I am convinced the US will protect these democratic rules even if the current president hesitates.

**Chancellor Sebastian Kurz**: “Shocked by the scenes in Washington, D.C. This is an unacceptable assault on democracy. A peaceful and orderly transfer of power must be ensured.”

**Austria’s Ambassador to US Martin Weiss**: Never in my wildest dreams - other than in a Hollywood movie - would I have imagined to see images like these from Washington D.C., the heart of the United States. This is simply unbelievable. A sad day for the USA.

**Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_P-0I6sAck>

 **January 20: Inauguration of the 46th US President:**

**Austria’s President VanDerBellen**: My most cordial congratulations to the President of the United States Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris upon their inauguration. With the re-entry to the Paris Agreement, we are opening a new chapter in our joint fight against Climate Crisis. We can only master the great challenges of our time, from Covid-19 to the Climate Crisis and restarting our economies, by working together. It is heartening to see that the US are back on board. The EU and Austria are ready to get to work!

**Chancellor Sebastian Kurz**: Congratulations to President Joe Biden & Vice-President Kamala Harris on today’s inauguration. Europe & the United States share common values, and our strong partnership is crucial to address global challenges such as the Covid-19-pandemic or climate change.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27:**

On 27 January 1945, Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration and death camp, was liberated by the Red Army.Here are some events in our area commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War:

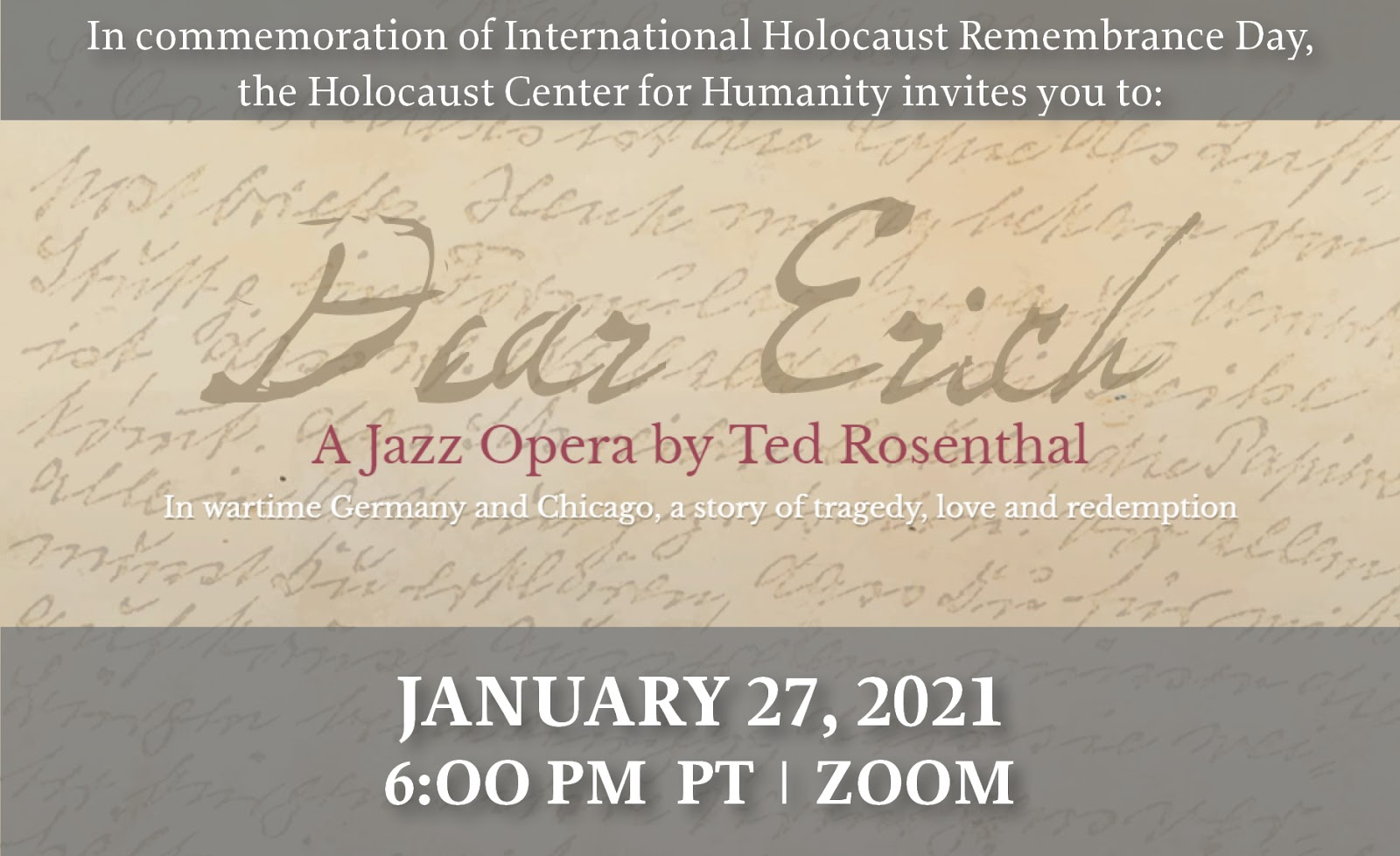
 **January 24, 5pm PST:** **“Art from Ashes”:** **Music of Remembrance** honors in an annual tradition the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp with music from victims of the Holocaust. This year’s concert includes works from Erwin Schulhoff (Voice) and Paul Hermann (cellist and composer).

For more information and link to join:

<https://www.musicofremembrance.org/concert/concert-art-ashes-january-24-31-2021>

 **Monday, Jan 25,** 16h MEZ = 7am PST: live stream: UNESCO building in Paris: artist Luigi Toscano, producer of the film and exhibitions **“Lest We Forget” (Gegen das Vergessen)** of Holocaust Survivors. Virtual presentation: <https://aboutholocaust.org/lestweforget>

Luigi’s Toscano’s work traveled around the world and could be seen also in Seattle summer 2019.

 **January 27: 6pm**: **Jazz Opera “Dear Erich”** by Ted Rosenthal, organized by Holocaust Center for Humanity Seattle. After registering at <https://www.classy.org/event/2021-international-holocaust-remembrance-day-event/e312327> you will be provided with the zoom link. This event is free to the public.

**Mozart’s 265th Birthday:**

 **Friday, Jan 29 5pm PST: "Mozart 265 from Salzburg"**

Let’s celebrate **Mozart’s birthday** with Katie Mahan:: <http://katiemahan.de/>

Due to courtesy of the Honorary Consulate of Austria in Denver we can join an evening celebrating the 265th Birthday of Mozart from the Marmorsaal, Schloss Mirabell in Salzburg, performed by Colorado native Katie Mahan! Join us Friday January 29th at 6pm MST = **5pm PST** for the exclusive concert plus zoom party!

<https://www.katiemahanhour.com/event-details/austrianhonoraryconsulate-mozart265>

 the **Goethe Pop Up** in Seattle has officially been granted an extension to continue promoting cultural exchange in Seattle throughout 2021! Congratulations!

The Goethe Pop-Up Book club is reading in January: "[Ich nannte ihn Krawatte​](https://www.goethe.de/ins/us/en/sta/gps/ver.cfm?fuseaction=events.detail&event_id=22069881)" by the Japanese-Austrian author Milena Michiko Flašar, who lives in Vienna.

…..And finally, our next virtual

 **STAMMTISCH: Thursday, January 28, 2021: 6-8pm**:

Hope you can join, bring your favorite drink and let’s enjoy time together! There is so much we can talk about, so much happened since our last Stammtisch!

Join the Zoom Meeting! For any questions, please contact Jürgen Schatzer: juergen.schatzer@gmail.com  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88351885172?pwd=b1NyWDRQYW9pSjd3cnlMMjhHYkZ0QT09](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88351885172?pwd%3Db1NyWDRQYW9pSjd3cnlMMjhHYkZ0QT09&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw2OGH3jPpnDhnPV-b1ppQ21)

Meeting ID: 883 5188 5172 ; Passcode: 614097

Bleibt gesund und viel Kraft für die nächste Zeit

Herzlichst,

Eva Kammel

Honorary Consul of Austria in Seattle

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