THE ISOCELLER

THE ISOCELL MAGAZINE
01|2017 ISSUE

25 YEARS OF ISOCELL

GOOD THEN, GOOD TODAY

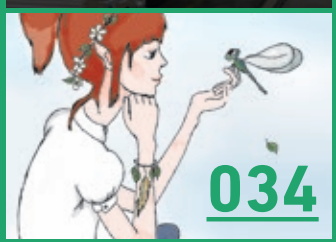
BUILDING ON GUT FEELING

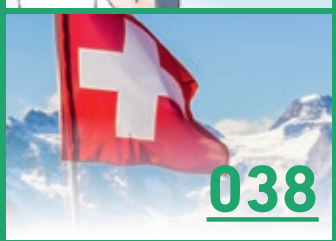
ALTERNATIVE BUILDING PHYSICS AS THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

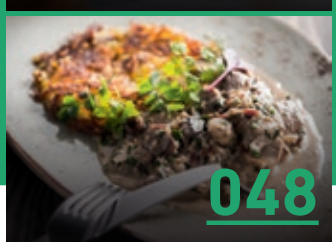
THE MOST COMPACT FACTORY IN THE WORLD

REVOLUTION WITH A SYSTEM

ISOCELL







CONTENTS

IMPRINT:
Publisher: Isocell GmbH
Gewerbestraße 9
5202 Neumarkt am Wallersee

Layout and graphics:
Kernkompetenzen GmbH and ad.hroß KG
Printing: Gutenberg-Werbering GmbH
Photography: Isocell GmbH, Kernkompetenzen, Peter Baier, TU WIEN/Weissenseer, Arlene Joobes/Reisinger, VITRA AG, sps÷architekten, Shutterstock

25 YEARS OF ISOCELL. GOOD THEN, GOOD TODAY.

As you grow older, you spend more time reminiscing. But what does reminiscing really mean? It means thinking back to the early days, before letting your thoughts wander back to the present or future.

Archive images with the motto "Back then we were already good; today we're even more innovative": ISOCELLERS blowing in cellulose

We, the team at ISOCELL, are now 25 years old. And we have decided to use the third edition of the ISOCELLER to look back and reminisce about all the things that have helped us, then as now, to be successful — and to make us very happy.

For example, take Tanja Blechinger. She became an ISOCELLER back when the company was still in its infancy. In a personal portrait, she tells us what it really means to be part of the ISOCELL family. And why this family is the reason why, despite our growth, things haven't truly changed over recent decades.

However, there are also areas where a lot is changing, where innovation is important. Machine technology is a good example. Herbert Kriechhammer is an expert on blow-in machines and discusses technical quantum leaps and the company's first attempts in this field, which somehow weren't so different from the solutions our customers use today in their factories. Our most innovative, fully automatic solution is currently located in the southwest of Germany at the premises of timber engineer Florian Fluck. He tells us why he is more than happy with the device.

One of our founding fathers — Wolfram Reisinger — is also highly innovative. In a detailed conversation, he tells us why he recommends relying on gut instinct. We also look to Switzerland, where we are indeed an old hand, but are nevertheless feeling youthful as we form part of a cooperative trinity.

However, this edition is not solely about us. For this reason, we have also chosen to present some of our partners, such as the architect Simon Speigner and the timber engineers at Weissenseer — and we let Anton Kraler from the University of Innsbruck explain how he removed wood workers' fear of science.

We also take a closer look at the secrets of the furniture designers at Vitra, whose success story began 60 years ago. Another company that, like us, was good back then, just as it is today.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the ISOCELLER.
See you in the next edition!

Gabriele Leibetseder

PORTRAIT
TANJA BLECHINGER

A FAMILY RECIPE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

When Tanja Blechinger joined ISOCELL she was an apprentice, and company founder Anton Spitaler's only colleague. Today she is the company's longest-serving employee — and head of the material planning department. A portrait.

Every morning there is a small fight at ISOCELL. Really, a fight? OK, that's a rather negative word. Instead, let's call it a friendly contest between two people who know the company better than most, because they have been here the longest. It is an argument about who arrived at work first. The opponents: Managing Director Anton Spitaler and the head of material planning, Tanja Blechinger.

"I'm usually the first to arrive," Blechinger smiles. Every day she gets to work early, around six o'clock in the morning, about an hour and a half before the rest of the office staff. "I'm an early bird and I like the peace and quiet. In this way, I can prepare myself perfectly for the challenges of the day," she says. The fact that she goes home earlier accordingly is not a problem, since the company operates on a strong basis of trust. Like many ISOCELLERS, Blechinger is more than just an employee. She has been there since the last year of her apprenticeship: "The company has been around for 25 years, I've been here for 24 of them."

As the longest-serving employee, she has perhaps contributed more to the development of the company spirit than anyone else — it is a spirit that ISOCELL has never lost.

"Our growth was tremendous. At first there were two of us, and we sorted parcels in the garage. There was a telephone and I used to live on the first floor of the company building," says Blechinger. "But if I compare today with those days, things haven't really changed so much." She explains what this means: "It may sound cheesy, but for me, ISOCELL is a family today and was the same back then." It is this ISOCELLER ethos that the company is known for and which is lived from the inside out.

"Today we are still on familiar terms with most of our customers. This hasn't changed over the last 25 years. We wouldn't have it any other way.

We simply have a casual approach, which I guess simply makes us likeable and above all genuine." The corporate climate, she says, has continued unchanged to this day. The small enterprise may have grown into a large company operating in several countries, but it has always remained the same at heart. Blechinger explains it thus: "Despite the growth, the family and personal character has never been lost. We are still flexible today and do not subscribe to officialdom."

Well OK, a few things may have changed. When Blechinger joined the company, she was not just the only full-time employee, her field of work was also different. She was initially responsible for a wide range of areas from accounting to tendering, but was gradually joined by more and more colleagues with clearly defined work areas.

Today, she has a senior role as head of material planning. Whereby the term "head" doesn't quite sit right with her. "Well," she smiles modestly as the subject is broached. "Someone has to wear the leader's hat. Actually, it's like this: a hierarchy has never existed here, and there still isn't one today. But somebody has to lead the way for the other people in the department.

I do this in material planning." In addition, Blechinger is responsible for the sealing materials, i.e. adhesive tapes, sheathing membranes and vapour barriers. "We have our own phone extension and often deal directly with customers," she says. And then she reminisces a little:

"Not much has really changed there either. Except that, we do a bit more by email than before, naturally. And we hardly get any faxes now, let alone letters." Letters? "Yes," she laughs. "There was a manufacturer who actually placed his orders by letter."

"Our growth was tremendous. At first there were two of us, and we sorted parcels in the garage. There was a telephone and I used to live on the first floor of the company building."

The unannounced private visits by the boss at the weekend are also a thing of the past. "Back when there just two of us in the company, if he couldn't find something he would sometimes drop by at the weekend. After all, I used to live in the company building. But it didn't bother me, I liked to help him."

She still enjoys working at the company. Again, although it sounds a bit cheesy, it is simply the truth. "It really is true that there was never a day when I wasn't happy to come here. For me there will never be a better company. And I also say this quite openly, not just for this interview. I always say: It's hard to find an employer like ISOCELL."

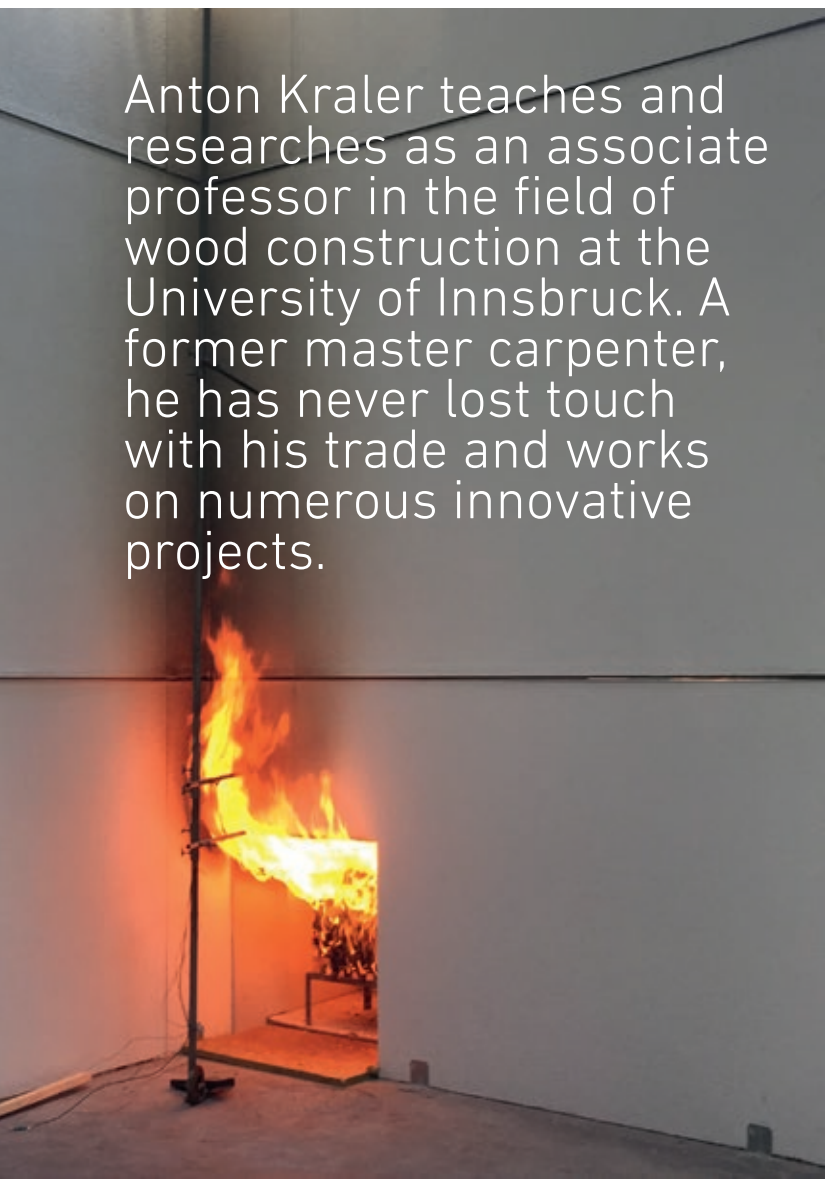
She clearly means it, and this feeling is reinforced each and every day. For example, at six o'clock in the morning, when the argument resumes: Blechinger or Spitaler? Who was first to work this morning?

For example, at six o'clock in the morning, when the argument resumes: Blechinger or Spitaler? Who was first to work this morning?

THE WOOD WORKERS' FEAR OF UNIVERSITY

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

Anton Kraler teaches and researches as an associate professor in the field of wood construction at the University of Innsbruck. A former master carpenter, he has never lost touch with his trade and works on numerous innovative projects.



During and after the large-scale fire tests on the façade

A conversation about improving sound insulation for multi-storey wood construction as well as a pioneering façade project for thermal redevelopment.

Mr Kraler, you began your career as a carpenter's apprentice and made your way to a teaching position at the university via master school, the HTL (secondary technical school) and architectural studies. You became a member of the University of Innsbruck's newly founded chair in wood construction. How would you describe your work?

Our chair has three main areas of focus: design, sound and fire protection. My specialist area tends to be sound insulation. Here, we research ways to decouple components and design new means of connection, which requires close cooperation with structural engineers and noise insulation planners. Recently, however, I have also become increasingly active in the field of fire protection.

Your dissertation was about "Sealing and sound insulation in wooden buildings". What were your findings?

It was about quality-enhancing measures relating to sealing and sound-proofing, since these areas are most frequently affected by irregularities, yet there was practically no research on this subject at the time. We inspected several buildings, which had been inhabited for several years, in terms of sealing and sound insulation. The specific background was that, at Schützenstrasse 57 in Innsbruck, we were tasked with building the first four-storey wood construction in the Tyrolean state capital. The exciting thing was that the ceiling construction of the building was only 34 centimetres thick and we had to try to assemble the component layers in a way that complied with the strict Austrian noise protection criteria. This was a major challenge and led to a series of investigations.

Back then, multi-storey wood construction simply had a very bad reputation in terms of sound insulation. Why was wood considered to be so poor in this regard? The problem people were using the same materials and layers as for concrete construction. Obviously, you can't do this if you only have one-fifth of the weight. In the meantime, much of what we found out ten years ago has become standard practice. For example, the use of gravel filling instead of a light insulating layer.

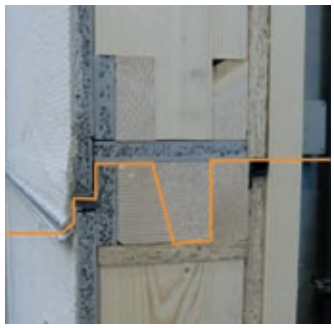
To what extent does your work focus on actual practice?

My work has been primarily experimental in recent years. At first, we had to take away the wood construction companies' fear of the university. Their industry tends to contain small or medium-sized companies, which have grown slowly, rather than large industrial enterprises. In order to convey the message that the wood workers' ideas are very important to our research, we had to visit many firms and host networking events and training sessions.

BOOK TIP:

Ewald Kammeringer and Anton Kraler: "Sound insulation and sealing in multi-storey wooden buildings": results of the "Schützenstrasse 57, Innsbruck" residential building research project
Paperback (2008)

Installing the façade



Seam detail with dividing line

The finished façade

PROFILE

Dr Anton Kraler teaches and researches at the University of Innsbruck on topics such as building acoustics, sealing and quality assurance, as well as quality monitoring using measuring technology (blower door, thermal imaging and sound measurements). The trained carpenter wrote his dissertation on the subject of: "Sealing and sound insulation in wooden buildings"

"Working in quality assurance was a great way to talk to installers on the building sites and explain why things are built in particular ways."

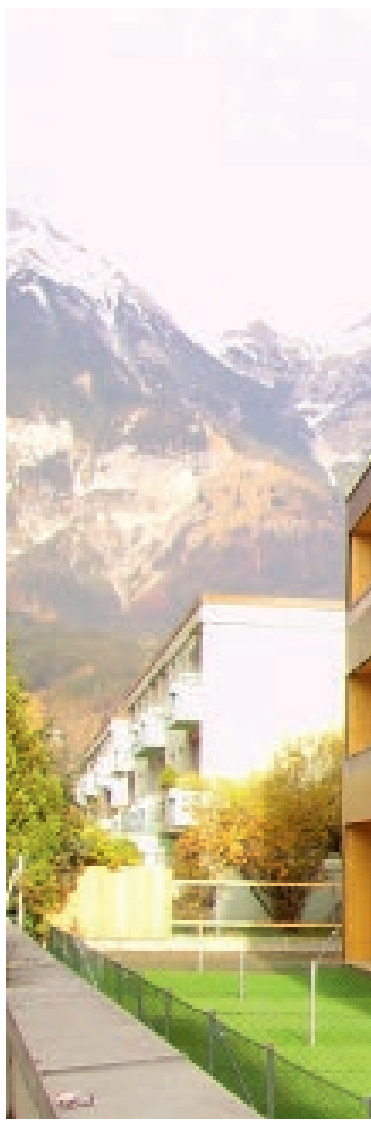
How can you specifically explain your work at the experimental level?

For thirteen years, I've been performing quality assurance for htt15, the Tirol wood construction team, which has created its own quality guidelines.
This work has been a good way to get onto building sites and talk to fitters on the spot. And it was a good way to explain why things were built in certain ways — especially in the area of sealing, which was initially a big issue. From this, a kind of academy has developed. At first, we trained the technicians and bosses, and now also the employees. At the same time, we often brought these specialists to the laboratory at the university to show what wood or a screw can actually do and what materials are used. We always experimented a lot. But you also specifically participated in the project in Schützenstrasse together with the building company.

How exactly?

For this project, we built the measurement boxes for the sound insulation. The advantage was that the box gave the building company the critical information while still in the development stage. So, this was effectively a form of training in advance. In any case, our approach is very experimental and practical. Incidentally, this four-storey project in Innsbruck was additionally supported by the region's housing research department, which ultimately ensured that the results were accessible to everyone.

At present, you are not only active in noise insulation, but also increasingly in fire protection. A current project deals with prefabricated façade elements for the renovation sector, in which cellulose is used, among other materials. How did this come about?



On the one hand, colleagues from our wood construction department are involved in a "Smart Cities" project organised by the European Union, which is looking at ways to reduce energy consumption in buildings by half. The pilot cities are Innsbruck and Bolzano, and the idea was to use wooden façade elements. While there was no specific development that formed part of the project, it was more a case of using these materials together with the residential builders. The second project was more important from our scientific point of view. It bears the title "Dok'In Holz". My colleague, Clemens Le Levé, held a doctoral post, which was funded 50/50 by the Ministry and companies, in order to systematise the use of prefabricated façade elements in redevelopment projects. For this purpose, a system connector and a certified fire-protection system for building façades were developed. A special feature here is that the cavities are insulated with cellulose, and also, that it is a completely plastered façade, which only needs to be assembled. There were also some additional considerations: for example, it can be installed without scaffolding, which is very important in urban areas. In addition, you have a short construction phase with a reduced traffic burden, as well as less noise and dust.

THE PROJECT IN SCHÜTZENSTRASSE
The first four-storey wooden construction in the Tyrolean state capital, Innsbruck

Will this façade project be put into practice?

The demand is very high. Of course, at the beginning the pure manufacturing costs are higher. This has to do with the fact that there are fewer suppliers and the builders don't have much experience with the new system, which leads to a certain "anxiety margin". However, we are already in the process of developing the whole system for the high-rise sector. This is, however, only possible on a project-related basis because A2 materials, i.e. non-combustible materials without wood content, are required there. Fire tests to prove that even combustible materials (wood) can function as construction materials have already been planned and are about to be carried out. The usage rights for the façade system connector have already been handed over to a sales company. I truly believe, however, that this system has a chance in the future — not least because the materials used mean a massive reduction in CO_2 during demolition.

Is cellulose also a topic in your research?

Actually, it is, and repeatedly so. For the simple reason that it is one of the most frequently used materials in wood construction — especially in frame construction — and it complements wood construction wonderfully.

BUILDING ON GUT FEELING

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

Wolfram Reisinger is one of the founding fathers of ISOCELL. In our interview, the application engineer and standardisation committee member explains why he doesn't understand many home builders, and why alternative building physics are the secret of his success.

Mr Reisinger, you have been with ISOCELL's field service for 25 years. As well as being a renowned expert in building physics and a regular guest on standardisation committees, you are also well known for providing innovative solutions that don't always agree with the textbooks. How did all this come about?

I have always been a man of practice. When I built my house 20 years ago, I had a wooden skeleton construction built by an ISOCELL customer. I did the rest myself, as you learn the most that way. At that time, I had little understanding of building physics — wherever there was a cavity, I blew it full with ISOCELL. Through discussions with experts, such as architects and carpenters, I came to realise that there are generally accepted engineering rules, i.e. standards that cannot be easily ignored, since compliance with them is decisive when determining liability in the case of disputes. However, today I can safely say that I have managed many building projects which by no means corresponded to the standards — and are still functioning perfectly to this day. The simple reason for this is that our blow-in insulation material can do much more than was previously generally known. Then, around 2002, a new rule for sub-roofs was published, which I simply could not comprehend from a technical viewpoint.

"I have always been a man of practice."

PROFILE

Wolfram Reisinger is one of the founding fathers of ISOCELL and works in the company's field service. He is responsible for the south of Austria as well as Slovenia, Croatia and Italy. He is also an expert in building physics, a regular member of standardisation committees and also a member of the Passive House information community (IG Passivhaus).

So, I applied to Austrian Standards and asked to join the working group that came up with this rule. My application was successful and I'm still active in this working group today.

One of their passions is sealing, a topic that has long been neglected. Why?

There was no reason for us to raise the issue, because 30 or 40 years ago there were hardly any building defects. Then the level of prosperity increased, and the demand for comfort along with it. Who in the past would have been able to afford to heat all rooms, and to 24°C? So, the windows had to be sealed, otherwise there is a draught. The thickness of insulation increased along with energy prices and environmental awareness. At the same time, the number of defects increased. At the beginning, the main reason was insufficient sealing of the building envelope itself. I have been part of this development from the very beginning. These days, many people realise how important sealing is. I now spend a third to a quarter of my time clarifying planning details and yes, unfortunately also dealing with defects. These problems affect both lightweight and masonry constructions — and the advice of many self-appointed experts ensures that this keeps happening more and more often. It ultimately doesn't matter which type of construction is chosen. Unless you think properly about the planning and work to a concept, there will be nasty surprises — at the earliest during the blower door test, and at the latest when the people move in. Before the cause of the defect is identified, few people are aware that problems with sound transmission, excessive heat input, drafts, heat loss, and even cold floors are often due to a lack of proper sealing. High-quality, well-engineered sealing is a cost factor, but it pays off. Unfortunately, people often invest in other areas that are far less important.

"These days, many people realise how important sealing is. Unfortunately, people often invest in other areas that are far less important."

For example?

In my home region, Styria, the prices for house building have risen by 64 per cent in seven years. By the way, this is good for my house, because property values have also risen (he laughs). No, seriously: I recently discussed a price increase with a major customer. He said that the price of his services is actually decreasing, however people aren't interested in a building's interior values, and instead only focus on its visual appearance. They'll spend up to 50,000 euros on windows and doors. If I convert this, it works out as about one-fifth of the total building cost. An opposite example: my house has eight balcony doors and over 30 openings. The windows and doors cost me — in Passive House quality, incidentally, just like the rest of the house — considerably less than 20,000 euros. They were made by a carpenter, well designed, but not expensively oversized, frameless or with aluminium coating. As an industrial project, it would have been even cheaper. Very often, apples are compared with pears. Our insulating material, for example, the cellulose insulation, is always offered as follows: expertly processed and blown-in with great precision and without any waste. However, when a house builder compares our price with the insulation packs on sale at the DIY store, of course there is a difference. Bad decisions have often been made as a result.

Wolfram Reisinger, a pioneer of the Passive House and airtightness measurements (blower door test)

"High-quality, well-engineered sealing is a cost factor, but it pays off."

You were a pioneer not only of the Passive House, but also of airtightness measurements, the so-called "blower door tests". When did ISOCELL actually start this?

Actually, very early on. We carried out the first test in 1995. It was still very uncommon at that time. We had invited an expert from Germany, who showed us how the procedure works. I still remember my first test with a major customer. I proudly told him that we now offer it and he wanted to market it and present it. Soon afterwards, we carried out a measurement in East Styria. I started the device and as the fog blew away I wanted to explain the air currents to the builder there. It turned out he was a pilot and knew a lot more about such things than I did. He smiled politely during my explanation and I must admit, I learned a lot from this measurement. (He laughs). I didn't ask for any money at the time. These days, we've long established ourselves as experts in this area. Through our pioneering work, we've gained more experience than most other companies in the industry.

We carry out several hundred measurements a year, making us one of Europe's largest service providers in this sector. I'm a self-certified sealing technician myself. Apart from the scale and simplified handling of the equipment, the test itself hasn't really changed much since then.

You were a pioneer in bringing the area of sealing into the realm of energy-efficient building envelopes. What developments in the industry do you expect in the foreseeable future?

Things will get thinner, which is very beneficial for wood construction. If I have an average detached family home today, I can either save money when buying the land or create more living space by reducing the wall thickness from 70 to 35 centimetres. ISOCELL is currently working on ensuring that the insulation values, which have been obtained for various projects in field trials, are also included in the calculation programs. In this context, cellulose is being sold far below its true value. In addition, personal comfort requirements cannot be reduced in order to save energy, and in addition, the energy used during the production of construction materials is becoming increasingly important when evaluating their performance. The same amount of CO_2 that is stored in an average detached family house constructed from wood and insulated with cellulose, would be generated during the production of the bricks for a house built with masonry. Nevertheless, the "Lambda Value Olympics" has no end in sight. For example, much research is being carried out in the field of vacuum insulation. Logically speaking, the thinner the insulation and the lower the heat transfer, the better. The fact that every heat bridge and any flanking component will be a major challenge is being overlooked in the initial euphoria. If new products are introduced to the market, there are of course new challenges for building physics because the products have to be coordinated. It takes time to implement innovations in existing systems, otherwise you end up with defects costing millions. At ISOCELL, we invest a great deal in applied research in order to minimise the risks at the development stage. But often it is simply the normal cycle — whenever something new comes onto the market, additional work will always be necessary during redevelopment projects, which people like me are asked to examine.

Is there a lack of know-how?

If I can give an example: there is conventional medicine and alternative medicine. For me there is building physics, i.e. what is taught at school or university, and also alternative or even modern building physics, in which I feel comfortable. The basic requirements for the use of "alternative" building physics are extensive practical experience, new calculation methods, insights into research projects and a constant exchange of ideas with international experts in this field. The Weberhaus designed by the architects at Ronacher is one of the best examples of this — a former farmhouse with stone walls, which was designed to become an "energy-plus" building. The plan was to preserve the centuries-old stone wall as a façade on the ground floor. This was a problem, because interior insulation is considered problematic by most building physicists. Many calculations and tests were carried out, which determined that it doesn't actually work properly. However, I always believed in it — and we finally approved the project after another three-month test by the university of applied sciences in Carinthia (FH Kärnten). All the building physicists left the project. We used cellulose insulation, magnesite-bonded Heraklith board as a plaster base, and loam rendering. And we created a working design. However, this has happened to me more than once.

Go on...

I can think of another example. Graz city council's construction director built a house. This was ten years ago. He wanted a butterfly roof, which means ventilation from the outside is not technically possible. Here, too, I approved a design which, according to conventional building physics, should have resulted in defects. At some point, I got a call that there was a defect in the form of bubbles on the roof sheeting. We headed to the site. A tinsmith, a carpenter, two experts and the builder were there.

When I built my house, I had a skeleton construction built by an ISOCELL customer. I did the rest myself. Wherever I saw a cavity, I wanted to insulate it.

"Through our pioneering work, we have more experience in this field than most other companies in the industry."

The tinsmith was late and so we stood there — me, the autodidact, together with two graduate building experts, both nearing retirement and armed with an incredible depth of expertise, as well as the builder himself. Then one of the gentlemen asked me reproachfully how I could have approved such a design, and I began to explain that my reasoning was that the state-of-the-art technology... however, I got no further because he interrupted me. He said that state-of-the-art technology was of no interest to him, only the generally accepted rules of engineering, the standards. I emphasised that ISOCELL would naturally pay for any damage if we were responsible, which I did not believe was the case. Then we bet a bottle of red wine on the cause of the damage before the tinsmith opened the roof. And indeed, our construction was fine; the problem was caused by a completely different issue: the foil roof had a material defect. We had done everything right. I was then asked to send the experts some documentation, because they thought they might have to rewrite entire textbooks. We drank the wine, but we never heard from those experts again. Projects like this were one reason why we started the five-year research project "Analysis of high-insulating flat roofs as well as rotational flows in wall structures" with the university of applied sciences in Carinthia. We built structures years ago, which could not possibly work according to the established expertise, yet are now standard practice. But this is also part of ISOCELL's success story.

THE MOST COMPACT FACTORY IN THE WORLD

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

The company Weissenseer from Carinthia was once a small timber construction firm. Today, its expertise is in demand as far away as China. Its system is revolutionising its business.

The world-leading L.I.S.I. house by Weissenseer is located in the "Blaue Lagune" (Blue Lagoon) in Wiener Neudorf
© TU Wien

Mineroom Leoben:
Sole contractor Swietelsky & Weissenseer
Planning AAP Architekten
© AAP Architekten

FURNITURE UPCYCLING
© Kitzberger

It could have turned out very differently. Christof Müller was in America and was planning to study architecture there. But then the tourism industry discovered the picturesque Weissensee lake in Carinthia. His father, a second-generation timber engineer based nearby, was suddenly confronted with a large number of tenders. Office work, however, held no interest for him.

"The office? For my father, that was his left trouser pocket for receipts and the right one for expenses," laughs Christof Müller. With the father not wanting to tackle the new developments, the son decided against a permanent jump across the pond and headed home — and joined the Weissenseer company. He was just 21 years old at the time. As the third generation of his family to lead the company, he expanded its workforce to 34 employees based on a conscious decision — to grow the traditional wood construction company into a modern provider of highly insulated timber houses. For Christof Müller, it was an obvious evolution. "At the time, I was thinking about my experiences in America, about how easy it is to build a house over there. While over here, every house builder wants different dimensions. This is far too complicated." As building technology continued to evolve, the company's path into residential ventilation and the Passive House became a short one. "When we built our first Passive House 20 years ago and insulated it with 40 centimetres of cellulose, we had to really believe in what we were doing.

The production hall at Weissenseer: the company's core competency is Passive House production and covers the areas of family houses, residential and office buildings as well as industrial buildings

It was something completely new, although it made sense and was almost logical for us," Müller recalls. To this day, the company has remained true to the Passive House Standard and cellulose.

And after the evolution, the revolution followed in 2008. At the company's new location in Greifenburg, the self-proclaimed "most compact factory in the world" was created. The world's first Passive House production facility was built on more than 3,200 m² of floor space — naturally, in Passive House design. The production hall has the volume of 55 detached houses, yet consumes the equivalent energy of two.

However, that was not the only driving force, as Müller explains: "From the outset, we wanted to build our production facility in such a way that it can be recreated anywhere in the world." Next, the firm headed to China. The Chinese central government passed a law that will promote environmentally sound construction from 2017 onwards. The Asians discovered Müller's company via a project partner, and the company is now able to convey its expertise in alternative, energy-efficient construction to the Far East. In September 2016, the construction of a show house was started, which was used to train Chinese technicians on site in Carinthia.

BACK-GROUND

Christof Müller is the third generation of his family to head the Weissenseer company. Based in Greifenburg, the company was founded in 1930 and started out as a traditional carpentry firm. Today, Weissenseer is home to the self-proclaimed "most compact factory in the world" and is a specialist in wood construction systems. The company employs 34 people and has an annual turnover of around EUR 13 million. In 2013, Weissenseer became the world leader in eco-homes thanks to the L.I.S.I. project.

Weissenseer
Holz-System-Bau GmbH
Weissenseerstr. 1
9761 Greifenburg
Tel: +43 4712 93 239
www.weissenseer.com

"We are involved in a joint venture. This is a big project. In the future, our partner company will be able to build up to 600 houses per year. "Weissenseer manages a part of the production planning and development, and also provides the material and the necessary machines. A similar project will soon be launched in Kazakhstan. How did they get these orders? "We now have a giant network. I basically just spend my whole day networking," Müller grins sarcastically.

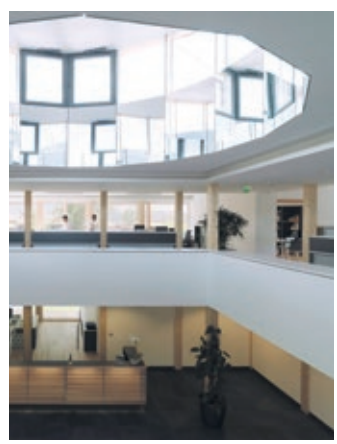
Under him, everyday life at Weissenseer is different from the first decades of the company's history. Need another example? "I remember that my father didn't work in the summer due to a building ban. So, he worked through the winter. These days, of course, we work all year round."

And the workload will not decrease. Not least because, from 2020 only "nearly zero energy buildings" can be built in the EU. "We're growing automatically. We're even going to introduce a second shift," says Müller, before adding: "There is a limit here in Carinthia." But as a project partner, he says, the rest of the world is a different story. China and Kazakhstan are the firm's most recent conquests — perhaps the next target will be America. Then, for the time being, the circle would be complete for the former architecture student. But who knows whether things will turn out quite differently?

MINEROOM LEOBEN

For the student accommodation mineroom in Leoben, Weissenseer was awarded the "GOLD" award by the Austrian climate protection initiative (klimaactiv) in 2017 © BOKEH Designstudio

The Weissenseer office in Greifenburg with the "kfdw" — the most compact factory in the world



The interior spaces of the company building are characterised by an open atrium

STRONG PARTNERS
SPS THALGAU

HUGELY INNOVATIVE

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

The architect Simon Speigner implements prototype projects based on the Passive House Standard. An ecological building designed by him became a pilgrimage destination for planners from all over the world. At his office location, he now runs an in-house hydroelectric power plant.

If your great-grandfather and grandfather were lumberjacks and your father was a carpenter, it seems almost inevitable that you'll also end up working with wood. Simon Speigner became an architect — and decided to use wood early on due to his family history. "It was also logical to work with wood because of our focus on ecological construction," he says. Also, it soon became clear that building with Passive House technology would make a lot of sense.

The company building of sps ÷ architekten was naturally built to the Passive House Standard. A loam storage heater provides heat and the in-house hydroelectric power plant supplies the equipment with electricity

He could certainly embellish his story with details of all the prizes he has won. The Salzburg regional energy prize, timber construction prize of Upper Austria and Styria, architectural award of the state of Styria, state award for architecture and sustainability, and a few more. With Simon Speigner, however, you get the feeling that he prefers to let his work speak for itself.

His big breakthrough came with the "Samer Mösl" Passive House, the first large-scale Passive House residential complex in Austria with 60 residential units spread over 4,500 m². An 8.2-million-euro project, which after its creation became a "pilgrimage destination for international planners", as the newspaper, Salzburger Nachrichten, once wrote. And for many reasons: the building's timber framework was erected in just ten weeks, and thanks to the Passive House Standard, it is also economical in operation. Only indigenous wood was used, along with 24-cm cellulose insulation. There is fresh air ventilation, the 200 m² solar energy system on the roof provides the hot water and the remaining roof surfaces are green. Even the rainwater is reused — for irrigation of the green areas.

Speigner also remained faithful to this project during the larger projects that followed. "At present, we take part in many competitions," says Speigner, "which results in work on municipal buildings. But we also do a lot of planning for detached, single-family houses."

The Salzburg regional energy prize, timber construction prize of Upper Austria and Styria, architectural award of the state of Styria, state award for architecture and sustainability... However, Simon Speigner has always let his work speak for itself.

Having studied architecture in Graz and Vienna, Speigner has run his own architectural practice since 2001. The company sps ÷ architekten, which he currently heads, has existed since 2006. Even though he has pushed through the Passive House Standard throughout his career, an interesting detail remains: "We've never managed to build a certified Passive House. The builders weren't prepared to do this because they never wanted to pay for the certification," he says, smiling. And he reveals something else: "Passive Houses always had a bad reputation, so we always used to create Passive Houses, but did not call them that." He smiles again.

The fact that Simon Speigner has already made a lot of progress in his professional career is not only revealed by his awards and completed projects, but also by his company's growth. When his office became too small in 2011, Speigner did not simply move into a new building — instead, he fulfilled a dream for Christine and Franz Gastager while simultaneously creating a new workplace. On the site of a decommissioned sawmill, approval had been granted for a small power plant, which was awaiting implementation. "The deal was that we would build the power plant and they would give us the opportunity to build an office on the property. "Today, the Fuschler Ache small-scale hydroelectric power station can supply up to 100 households with electricity. "We not only cover our own power requirements for the office, but also run our three electric vehicles." However, Speigner does not need all this power. "We only consume around a sixth of it, and are therefore also the sponsor of Salzburg AG, as I always say, because the surplus goes into the grid and is paid for, although the feed-in tariff is currently very low."

Because there is a bit more space on the ground floor of the new office building, events are also held there; the so-called "Culture power station oh 456" is a space for lectures, discussions and music events. On the roof of the building there is also a solar power plant. Another particular innovation is the site's heating system. "There is no longer any conventional heating in our office. We have a loam storage heater, which keeps the temperature at a pleasant level by means of an electric current. As soon as the office is running with computers, lights, etc., the energy can be switched off. It works. And it's fun to watch."

PROFILE

Simon Speigner is the Managing Director of sps÷architekten in Thalgau, Salzburg. Speigner studied architecture in Graz and Vienna and has won numerous awards: the Salzburg regional energy prize, timber construction prize of Upper Austria and Styria, the architectural award of the state of Styria and the state award for architecture and sustainability.

sps÷architekten ZT GmbH
Riedlstrasse 8
5303 Thalgau
+43.(0)6235.20 007
atelier@sps-architekten.at
www.sps-architekten.com

For Speigner, it is also an example of where developments might be headed. "In the long term, we will build houses with heat storage systems, because the cars will also be dependent on the electricity grid. And energy will flow in both directions, just as it does with the heating in our office." It would come as no surprise to learn that Speigner is designing some of these future homes himself — or that he will soon complete some new showcase projects.

The in-house hydroelectric power plant (above) supplies electricity for up to 100 households. Simon Speigner made his name with the flagship "Samer Mösl" residential complex (left)

GOOD THEN, **GOOD TODAY**

THEN AND NOW
ISOCELL BLOW-IN TECHNOLOGY

A TECHNICAL QUANTUM LEAP

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

Herbert Kriechhammer is an expert in blow-in technology at ISOCELL. In our interview, he explains how new, modern blow-in machines are successfully combating bottlenecks in prefabricated house production...

GOOD THEN, **GOOD TODAY**

THEN AND NOW
ISOCELL BLOW-IN TECHNOLOGY

...and why demand for blow-in systems could soon become even greater.

Mr Kriechhammer, in the prefabrication of wooden frame elements, the trend in insulation is increasingly moving towards plant-based production. Why?

There has been a lack of innovation in this field. The pre-assembly of wooden frame components using machines that cut, nail, saw or even varnish has already been common practice for a while. But the insulation was always treated differently. Especially in the prefabricated segment, it was usually the case that insulation mats were laid by hand.

Herbert Kriechhammer, head of blow-in technology at ISOCELL

Depending on the product, these materials had to be cut with a cutter or a saw, which resulted in a considerable amount of additional work. In many cases, it was precisely the insulation which caused a production bottleneck. With our blow-in technology, we can now also automate this area. This is a technical quantum leap.

What are the advantages?

First of all, we save time. We also have perfect quality control and a dust-free solution. It also saves personnel and is no longer so dependent on the human factor. One mustn't forget the personnel requirements when it came to adding the insulation.

What do you mean by that, exactly?

There was very strong fluctuation among the employees in this area because it requires comparatively few qualifications. In many places, it was even difficult to get people at all. We're not talking about a shortage of skilled labour, but rather a lack of labour in general.

This is a general trend anyway — more and more machines, fewer and fewer people.

I also see this issue as doubled-edged. Machines will not be able to do everything, as this would make many things difficult again. But this development is absolutely welcome in this particular area. Also, because the work was very demanding and also the health aspect should not be underestimated when working with mineral wool. We are now able to use an ecological, sustainable insulation material in fully automated production. This really all speaks for the technology and progress.

ISOCELL has been developing and researching blow-in technology for a long time. How did this technological leap come about?

Actually, we've been working on this subject for 20 years. We've also been using various machines for a long time. For example, there are solutions with lances whereby a hole is drilled on the face. This is still done by customers and it works, but it has the disadvantage that elements have to be temporarily stored. Fifteen years ago, we also built simple tracks which we drove over the elements as we insulated them. This also worked, but it wasn't ready for series production. In 2000, we developed the first bridge solution. It worked quite well, however the factory which housed the prototype unfortunately burned down. As early as 2006, we commissioned a similar solution at the company Holzbau Gutmann in Hilders, Germany. They came to us at that time and realised that lances and nozzles were not ideal for them. Again, it was a good solution, again absolutely functional, and yet once more it was too early to go into mass production. About five years ago,

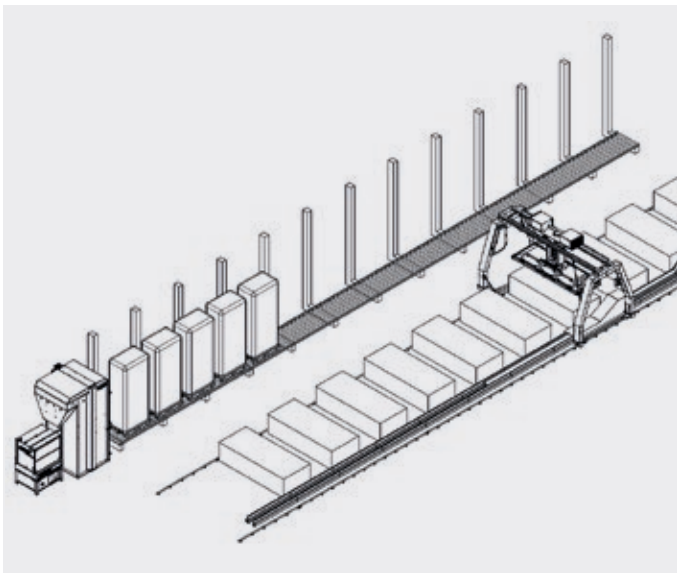
A BRIDGE SOLUTION IN USE

Blow-in technology is steadily evolving. Today's solutions include innovative, fully automated machines — and make the work of the timber engineers easier

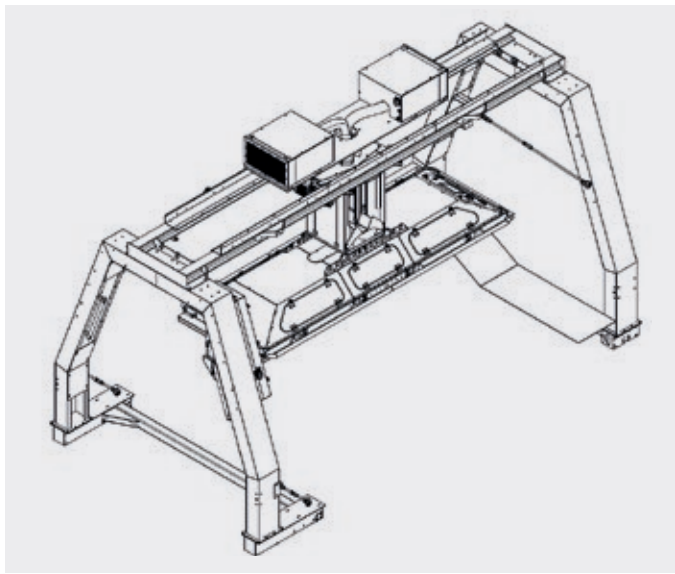
GOOD THEN, **GOOD TODAY**

THEN AND NOW
ISOCELL BLOW-IN TECHNOLOGY

KNOW-HOW IN DEVELOPMENT

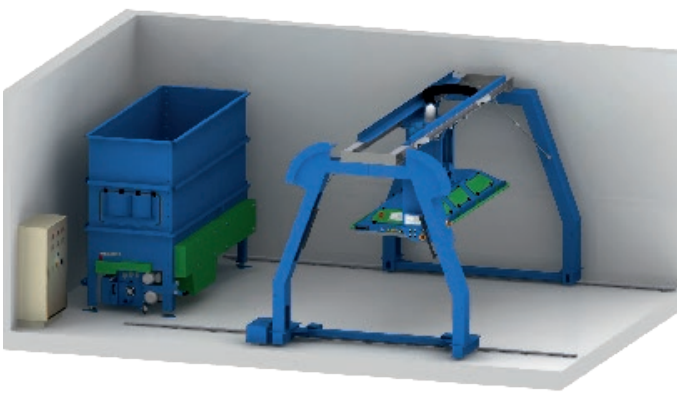


Example of a production hall with a baling line...



...and a bridge solution that blows in cellulose

THE SO-CALLED BRIDGES ENSURE A PRECISE INSERTION OF THE INSULATION MATERIAL FROM ABOVE



The blow-in machines enable customer requirements to be met in great detail

For the workers in the production halls, their work is made much easier by the ISOCELL devices

however, this topic become more important and was stepped up even more. At the same time, the technology has developed further. The competition also contributed to the increased pace of development. Since then, ISOCELL has already installed more than 50 systems, from fully automatic to simple solutions that work with a small machine instead of a bridge, whereby the blow-in plate hangs from a crane. And all 50 have proven themselves very well in practice.

How individual are these machines, now that they can enter series production?

The machines are different almost everywhere. This starts with their design and continues with their construction in the production hall. If someone wants a system from us, we create a tailor-made solution based on the space requirements and conditions on site. We are lucky that we have a machine engineer who can work very individually — no matter what the requirements are.

How does maintenance work?

This is, of course, an important issue. A lot can be solved via remote maintenance, but naturally there are service calls at varying intervals. We have a maintenance contract with most customers.

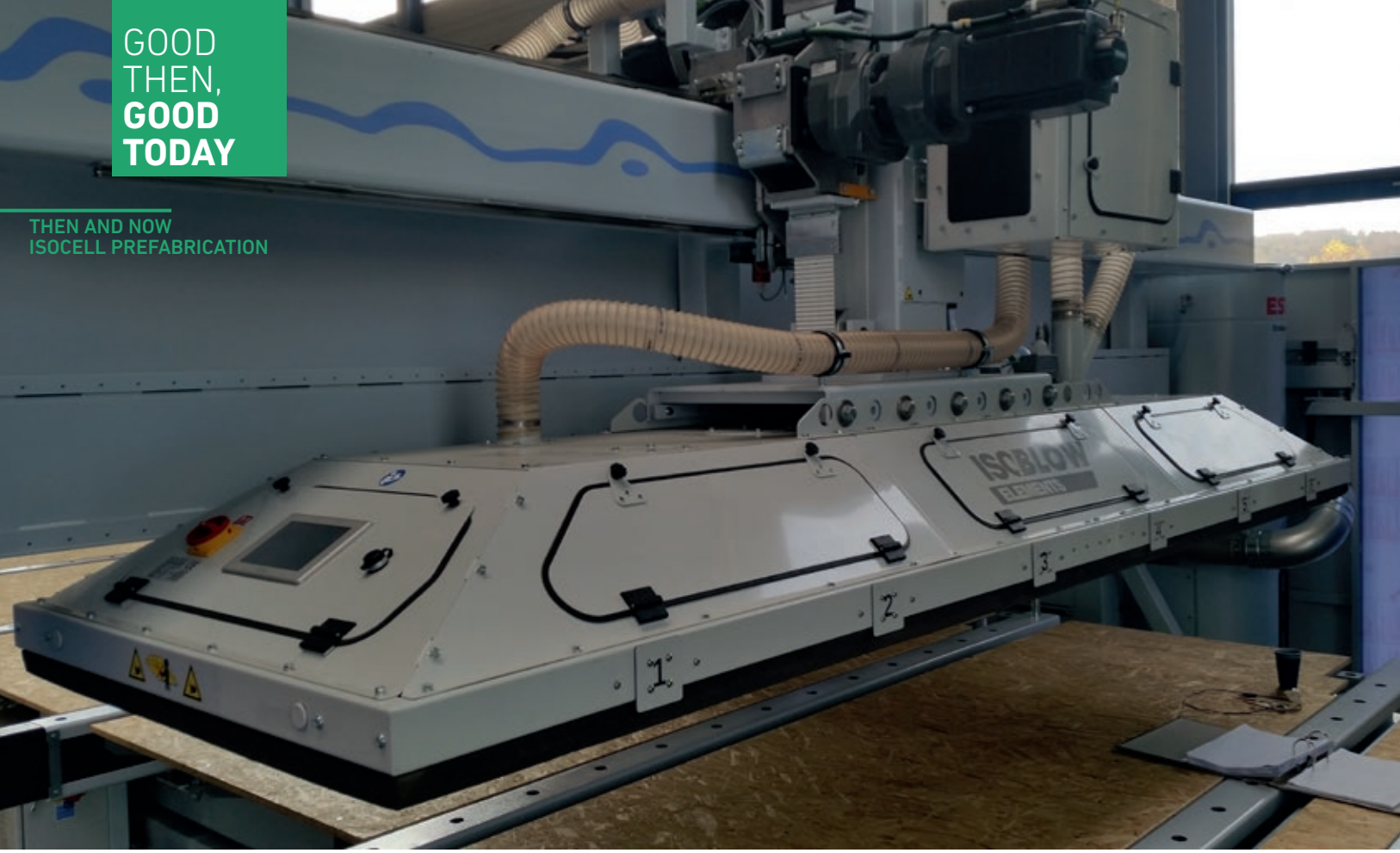
Are you now at the end of the development cycle?

No, not at all. We always have a device in the training room at ISOCELL headquarters. The plan is that each device stays there for about a year before it is replaced by the next generation. There will still be a lot going on. The trend is, of course, very strongly towards full automation.

Will blow-in insulation become the industry standard?

Yes, we see blow-in insulation as the future, because it has substantial advantages. For example, you aren't dependent on the insulation thickness and the geometry of the element. Wherever air can go can be insulated. This is more difficult with mats. The individual construction method is also gaining in importance. For this, you have to store different mats and plate gauges, and then there's the waste and therefore disposal, it all has be considered. And don't forget the handling: each mat has to be moved several times by hand before being installed. I visit timber firms frequently, and the one thing that none of them has is an over-abundance of space. If you consider all the benefits and the faster processing with this technology, as well as the good quality of the fibre, which has improved massively over recent decades, then you have an ideal insulation material. Not to mention the issues of ecology and sustainability — the trend is strongly in this direction.

We are now able to use an ecological, sustainable insulation material in fully automated production. This really all speaks for the technology and progress.



"SPECTACULAR AND INNOVATIVE"

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

The most modern blow-in system produced by ISOCELL is located in the south-west of Germany. Fluck Holzbau GmbH recently commissioned a system capable of fully automatic insertion of insulation. Managing Director Florian Fluck talks about a tailor-made investment in the future.

"It all started with an enquiry: We had always insulated with mineral wool ever since our company's founding in 2003, but one customer absolutely wanted cellulose. So, we started looking into this insulation material. It didn't take long for us to stop using mineral wool altogether. I acquired our first blow-in machine in 2006. It was operated exclusively on the building site. We then grew rapidly and soon had over 30 employees with around 1,500 completed projects. We then wanted to go a step further...

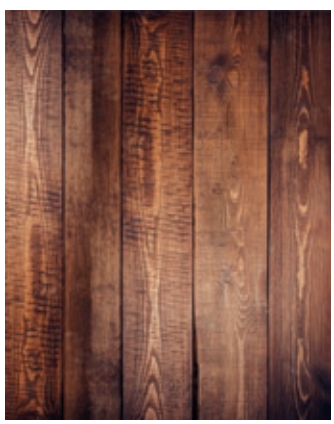
We sold the old site and created a new company headquarters in a green meadow. We wanted to invest properly there for the future — both in know-how and capital. We approached the company Weinmann and asked about a multifunctional bridge. However, I didn't want a normal system, I wanted the insulation to also be applied fully automatically. And so, it became the blowTEC solution from ISOCELL and Weinmann. The machine is not only spectacular and innovative, it also really makes sense. A normal multi-function bridge has a long service life. Our system dispenses with a major work step which, for the last ten years, we couldn't perform until we reached the building site.

At our new location, we now have ideal conditions for effective production. We also installed a large baling line in the cellar. We drive a pallet truck to a hopper, the pallet insulation material then comes into the storage facility without the use of a forklift, and is then blown upwards to production as required.

After the first few weeks, we are more than satisfied. The machine is currently working even faster than we are getting new work. It sometimes sits idle as a result — but this ultimately speaks for the device's performance."

FLUCK HOLZBAU GMBH
Alemannenstrasse 48
D-78176 Blumberg
Phone: +49 / 77 02 / 60 800 60
Fax: +49 / 77 02 / 60 800 61
E-mail: info@ fluck-holzbau.de
www.fluck-holzbau.de

FLORIAN FLUCK
Managing director, carpenter, building engineer, state-certified manager




1-99
Jahre
Zellulose.
Zaubert das Leben grüner.
Wie entsteht aus einer Zeitung ein Dämmstoff?
Papier

A (CHILDREN'S) BOOK FOR ISOCELL.

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

How a small fairy explains cellulose insulation.

"I absolutely love to draw, preferably by hand. I could imagine the fairy straight away. Her character corresponds to my attitude towards life. This work was wonderful." Linda Dinhobl, illustrator

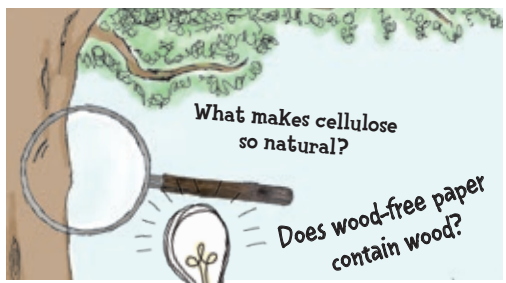
"As a mum with a 5-year-old son, sustainability is important to me — I always wanted to write a children's book in addition to traditional advertising. The fact that it became a story for both younger and older children is all the better." Nina Kern, author

"This book was a very unusual and challenging project from a technical point of view, but it was also a great success for me. As for the result, you can congratulate the client, the creative types and all those involved in making it a reality! "
Gerhard Bergmair, Gutenberg printing house

Some things are planned for a long time. Some develop continuously. And some are simply there.

SO SIMPLE THAT EVEN A YOUNG CHILD CAN UNDERSTAND IT.

A publication about cellulose that is not only exciting for children.



ONCE UPON A TIME... THERE WAS A GOOD IDEA.

The idea was to create a children's book about cellulose. And then, as if by magic, one appeared. "Please tell the story so simply that a young child can understand it," was the request by Gabriele Leibetseder to the marketing team at Kern Kompetenzen. The result was a very special publication about cellulose, which not only appeals to children.

"Cellulose is an organic substance that can be touched and felt, and with which we are very familiar. We also wanted to illustrate this in the book. That's why it contains a lot of information that you can digest by yourself," says Nina Kern, who was responsible for the concept and text. As the mother of a 5-year-old son, simplicity and clarity, as well as a playful approach to this previously dry topic, were a major focus for her. Stylistically speaking, one thing was clear from the very beginning — it had to be illustrated.

The right person was quickly found. Linda Dinhobl is an illustrator who immediately fell in love with the project, which corresponds to her own essence and life philosophy. "You can't often truly say that you're absolutely convinced by a project. But for me, the cellulose fairy book is a reflection of what makes up a lot of my personality: a love of illustration and books, a sustainable lifestyle and good stories."

There was only one small problem — the time constraints, because the manuscript grew more and more extensive and the printing and configuration fell into the Christmas holiday period. This book was also a very special project for the Gutenberg printing house in Linz. It is interesting fact that books of this kind are not frequently produced in Austria. As is so often the case, they are mostly outsourced to China. Better prices, cheaper raw materials, lower identification. This was out of the question for Isocell — the book had to be produced in Austria. The fact that the printing house that won the bid was also called Gutenberg, like the inventor of the modern letterpress, was not merely a coincidence. "Many people poured their heart and soul into this project. There was so much to consider, so many things had to be precisely planned and coordinated. Many colleagues were even on call during public holidays. For such a beautiful project, you're happy to do that," says Gerhard Bergmair of the Gutenberg printing house. The results can be seen and read, and the first printed copies were ready in time for BAU construction fair in Munich in mid-January. All participants unanimously agree that they have never learned so much from a project, and that they were most impressed by the creators' courage to explore such new avenues of communication.

And precisely this courage is being rewarded. The second edition is about to be printed and we will be hearing and seeing a lot more from the ISOCELL fairy in the future. The first videos will be broadcast in May. We'll keep you up to date at www. zellulose.at.

and they lived happily ever after…To be continued.

1. Hand drawing

2. Digitisation

3. Colouring

THE THREE SWISS GUARDS

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

Each issue of the ISOCELLER focuses on a different country in which ISOCELL has an established market presence. This time we take a look at Switzerland — a country with an ISOCELL trinity.

We all know that Switzerland is a country unlike any other. Situated in the heart of Europe, it is famous for its permanent neutrality, cheese and chocolate. And even if Switzerland is one of the smaller countries on a global scale, hardly any other nation can boast such a variety of regional languages.

Indeed, in 1999 Article Four of the Swiss Federal Constitution states that there are four national languages — Swiss German, French, Italian and Romansh, whereby most Swiss speak German.

1. The Pioneers

Ivan Schwarz also speaks German. He and his brother have been in the building materials trade for more than 40 years and took over the business from their father. They were the ISOCELL pioneers of their country. "We received our first pallet of ISOCELL products back in February 2002," recalls Ivan. Besides the trade in cellulose, wind and airtightness is their passion. SIAG also lent a helping hand during ISOCELL's first trade fair appearance in Switzerland. "We have been working intensively together ever since, and for one simple reason: ISOCELL products have many advantages and a well-rounded range." SIAG is mainly active in Central Switzerland. However, in order to cover the entire country with its many facets, the company soon needed additional help. In the form of Christian Klotz, for example, who began distributing ISOCELL products in 2006. Today, he and Clemens Etter make up the team at ISOCELL Schweiz AG, which used to be based in Appenzell, but has now found a home in Zuzwil, between Winterthur and St. Gallen. From there, they serve the whole of Switzerland and are always available for their partners, including SIAG. "Cellulose has proven very popular, so it was almost essential that we establish an ISOCELL location here as well," explains Klotz. "Our customers appreciate the fact that we are actually here, on the ground, whether as a direct contact in general or for a specific purpose, because we can easily visit the building sites in person." There is also an ISOCELL warehouse at the location in Eastern Switzerland, which houses cellulose blow-in machines that are used for training, as well as spare parts.

"ISOCELL products have many advantages and a well-rounded range."

ISOCELL PIONEERS IN SWITZERLAND: SIAG SCHWARZ

Iwan Schwarz

René Schwarz

René Schwarz with Anton Spitaler and Clemens Etter at the ISOCELL exhibition stand in Switzerland

Iwan and René Schwarz are congratulated on their company's 40th anniversary by Gabriele Leibetseder from ISOCELL

"The trend towards sustainability and ecology is omnipresent in Switzerland. Another reason why ISOCELL Schweiz AG was able to establish itself quickly and successfully in the country."

2. ISOCELL Switzerland

It is unsurprising that Switzerland already has a long tradition of wood construction. A tradition with consequences of the positive variety — for example, it is a construction method that has been subjected to standardisation processes for quite some time. "Wood construction is very advanced in terms of standardisation and design," says Klotz about the SIA standard, which is used in his home country. The Swiss requirements for fire protection and building height are also different to those in other German-speaking countries, such as Germany or Austria. "For example, we build higher, multi-storey wooden structures," says Klotz. Passive Houses and Eco-Plus houses are also a big issue. The trend towards sustainability and ecology is omnipresent in Switzerland — another reason why ISOCELL Schweiz AG was able to establish itself quickly and successfully in the country.

ISOCELL SWITZERLAND IN ZUZWIL

Clemens Etter

Christian Klotz

ISOCELL SCHWEIZ AG
Herbergstrasse 29
CH-9524 Zuzwil
Tel: +41 (0) 71 544 47 20
www.isocell.ch

3. The Expert

But ultimately, Switzerland is still Switzerland. And so, there are also regions where ISOCELL products are just as popular, but other needs must be satisfied. Language requirements, for example. And that's why there are people like Christian Löffel. A former colleague of Christian Klotz, he is essentially the ISOCELL expert at the building materials merchant Isotosi in Western Switzerland, a region in which mainly French is spoken. "Western Switzerland is different, there is a different culture," he explains. "People think and act differently. The relationship with customers there is even more important than usual." Klotz first began blowing in cellulose twenty years ago, back when he was still working at a carpentry firm. He still sees great potential in Switzerland. "I always explain it like this: when I started using cellulose, only sandal-wearing alternative types were interested in it. Today, tastes have changed. And cellulose is on its way to becoming an insulation material for everyone."

Thanks to ISOCELL Schweiz and its partners at SIAG Schwarz and Isotosi, i.e. the three Swiss guards of the ISOCELL family, cellulose is also well on its way to achieving this goal throughout the Swiss Confederation.

ISOCELL EXPERT AT THE BUILDING MATERIALS MERCHANT ISOTOSI IN WESTERN SWITZERLAND

Christian Löffel

And cellulose is on its way to becoming an insulation material for everyone. "

DESIGN, THAT FITS

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

The success story of the furniture manufacturer Vitra began 60 years ago with a simple project. Today, the company is the best proof of how having the courage to keep developing can make more than your name in the industry.

This story begins with a journey. In 1953, the Swiss Willi Fehlbaum is in the USA with his wife Erika. While there, he discovers some exhibits by Charles and Ray Eames, and is thrilled. Above all the Plywood Chair, a particularly ergonomically shaped, stylish chair, captivates him. He makes a decision. He wants to bring this furniture to Europe, to manufacture and distribute it here.

He obtains the licences from the American furniture manufacturer Hermann Miller and his company, originally founded in 1950 as a shop-fitting business, is soon ready to conquer the European world of office furniture.

Strictly speaking, the endeavour begins in 1957 with a simple project — exactly 60 years ago, the Fehlbaums start producing Eames furniture for the European market. Soon, however, Vitra no longer wants to rely on the licensing deal alone and begins exploring new avenues. In the mid-1960s, the famous Panton chair is the fruit of the firm's partnership with the Danish architect and designer Verner Panton. A seat with no rear legs, manufactured from a single piece of plastic. Rolf Fehlbaum, who took over Vitra from his father in 1977, will one day say in an interview: "This was our breakthrough moment when we achieved our own great design." In the 1960s, the company took the unusual yet brave step of working with architects, and is still benefiting from this innovative courage today. But it then grew even bolder: In the 1980s, Rolf Fehlbaum ended Vitra's partnership with American furniture manufacturer Hermann Miller — and the company made its ultimate breakthrough. "Previously, we had only managed Switzerland, Germany and Austria, while Herman Miller had the rest of the world. In the mid-eighties, the company's international development began with its own identity."

Rolf Fehlbaum sees Vitra as a "cultural-economic project". By the time the Vitra Design Museum was built at the firm's new production location in Weil am Rhein in Germany, the large-scale office furniture manufacturer had become more than just a commercial enterprise.

Verner Panton, Rolf Fehlbaum, Manfred Diebold and Josef Stürmlinger: the very first pioneers

"MONOBLOC — A CHAIR" IN THE VITRA DESIGN MUSEUM IN WEIL AM RHEIN, OPEN UNTIL 18 JUNE 2017, DAILY FROM 10:00–18:00

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN
Once primarily an office furnishing expert, in recent years Vitra has set new priorities — and is increasingly focusing on residential designs for the home. Vitra collaborates with a number of different designers

The VITRA CAMPUS in Weil am Rhein includes the company's manufacturing, logistics and administrative buildings. The Vitra Design Museum is also located there

On the one hand, its main economic components were interior fittings for public buildings such as the German Bundestag and Munich airport, as well furniture supply for offices and private households. On the other, it had become a brand that crossed industry boundaries with a reputation as a researcher and mediator for design. More than 6,000 objects can be found in the Vitra Design Museum's warehouse.

Each year, more than 350,000 people visit its exhibitions, which are held in buildings designed by leading architects such as Frank O. Gehry and Zaha Hadid.

Rolf Fehlbaum guided Vitra into these and other spheres, before handing over the reins in 2014 — to his niece, Nora. She wants to push ahead with the developments started in recent years, which have seen Vitra discovering the residential sector in addition to public buildings and office blocks.

Under her leadership, a decision was made which shows that, despite its success, the company has not forgotten its roots. In 2016, a renaming ceremony took place in the architectural park on the Vitra AG campus in Weil am Rhein. One of the streets was renamed "Ray Eames".

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Vitra was founded in 1950 by Willi and Erika Fehlbaum and is still based in Birsfelden near Basel. True to the company's traditions, its production facility is also located in Weil am Rhein, Germany. Rolf Fehlbaum continuously expanded his father's company before passing the reigns to Nora Fehlbaum. Vitra has over 700 employees and generates more than EUR 200 million in sales per year.

Willi Fehlbaum with Charles Eames

It can be found on Spanish beaches, at African hairdressers, outside fast-food booths and in German gardens: the Monobloc. Although its lightness makes it practical, this predominantly white chair, which is made from a single piece of plastic, is anything but elegant. And yet the current exhibition at the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein is dedicated to it. "I don't want to convince anyone that the Monobloc is beautiful," says collector and designer Jens Thiel, who proposed the exhibition. "Its beauty lies more in its qualities. It is light, stackable, weatherproof, washable, virtually unbreakable, and it hardly costs anything. What more could you want from a piece of furniture? In this respect, it really is the best furniture in the world!" Three billion examples of the "best furniture in the world" are reportedly in use across our planet.

VITRA INSPIRATION

MILANO 2015 A diverse selection of designer chairs by Vitra

Star architect Frank Gehry was responsible for the FACTORY HALL

BALANCING TOOLS One of the many sculptures in the architectural park on the Vitra Campus

The building alone suggests great art: the VITRA DESIGN MUSEUM

In the mid-eighties, the company made its final breakthrough and began to develop internationally with its own identity.

THE ZÜRI FROM THE MÜHLVIERTEL

A former farm, whose history dates back to the 19th century and which became a guesthouse in the early 1990s and also an inn in 2001. This is the Weindlhof in Mauthausen: the gastronomic home of award-winning chef Christian Siebenhofer, who conjures up an unexpected regional dish for the ISOCELLER.

Editing: **THE ISOCELLER**

AWARD-WINNING CHEF CHRISTIAN SIEBENHOFER FROM THE WEINDLHOF

Originally from Vienna, Siebenhofer embarked on a typical gastro career, delighting diners in Berlin, Ischgl, Lech am Arlberg and Linz with his culinary art.

Awards from Gault Millau, 87 Falstaff points, the Michelin's Bib Gourmand and many more besides. Somehow, Christian Siebenhofer just can't stop winning awards — simply by doing the one thing he is passionate about: serving up treats for the palate. And, in doing so, relying on regional produce. Mühlviertler beef, Mostviertler sheep's cheese, trout from the nearby Gusental — Christian Siebenhofer cherishes and cultivates his direct contact with producers from the surrounding area. The Upper Austrian Mühlviertel region has a lot to offer — to the benefit of both the chef and his customers. "This philosophy certainly requires more effort, but you can really taste the hand-picked quality," says the decorated chef.

Originally from Vienna, Siebenhofer embarked on a typical gastro career, delighting diners in Berlin, Ischgl, Lech am Arlberg and Linz with his culinary art. He opened the Weindlhof with his wife, Birgit, in the heart of the Mühlviertel region. They take great pleasure in their restaurant and the accommodation in the guesthouse — and are even more delighted by their establishment's popularity.

For the ISOCELLER, Siebenhofer set about preparing a truly international dish; strips of fried veal known as "Zürcher Geschnetzeltes". An age-old Zurich dish that is deeply rooted in the history of Switzerland's largest city. However, here's something that most of Zurich's 400,000 residents might not know: their beloved "Züri-Geschnetzeltes" (as it's known in Swiss German) is in fact not particularly old, and actually originates from Austria. Its first mention in a Swiss cookbook as "Geschnetzeltes nach Zürcher Art" was in the "Golden Kochfibel" cookbook written by a certain Rosa Graf, published in 1947.

Christian Siebenhofer cherishes and cultivates his direct contact with producers from the surrounding area. The Mühlviertel region has a lot to offer — to the benefit of both the chef and his customers.

The recipe has thus been widely known for 70 years. However, when looked at more closely, the story of this great Swiss classic in fact leads food lovers to Austria. The cookbook author Alice Vollenweider discovered old, similar recipes in cookbooks from Switzerland's eastern neighbour. And dating back as far the 19th century. 19th century? Correct, a time when the Weindlhof was still a farm. And so perhaps the farmers surrounding Christian Siebenhofer's kitchen were serving up Zürcher Geschnetzeltes long before him.

Fresh ingredients and regional products are particularly important to Siebenhofer.

3

1. Freshly grated, raw potatoes
2. Fresh mushrooms, not cut too small
3. Infuse with white wine
4. Let the liquid evaporate
5. A pan full of tasty "rösti" (fried grated potatoes)
6. Garnish with seasonal herbs

6

ZÜRCHER GESCHNETZELTES WITH RÖSTI

RECIPE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Ingredients:

600 g veal fillet
120 g brown mushrooms
Salt
Oil or clarified butter
4 shallots
50 streaky bacon
1/8 l veal jus
1/8 l single cream
Chopped parsley
Some lemon juice

rösti ingredients:

600 g potatoes (waxy, boiled and peeled; ideally from the day before)
4 tbsp. clarified butter
2 tbsp. shallots (finely chopped)
Salt

Geschnetzeltes: cut the fillets against the grain into even strips about three to four millimetres thick. Wash the mushrooms and cut finely. Salt the fillet, fry briefly in the fat, briefly swirl, remove from the pan and set aside. Remove the fat, melt the butter into the meat residue, add the mushrooms, shallots and the finely chopped bacon. Add the cream and the veal jus, reduce. Add the lemon juice and parsley, place the meat in the sauce, briefly swirl and serve. The meat should not be well-done!

Rösti: grate the chilled potatoes with a rösti grater. Heat the fat in a non-stick pan, lightly fry the shallots and pour them out of the pan. Fry the potatoes in the same pan, turning until crispy. Shortly before serving, add the shallots and salt, fry until cooked.

The Weindlhof
Kirchenweg 12
4310 Mauthausen
www.weindlhof.at
Inn:
Tues – Fri,11:30 to 14:00 and 18:00 to 24:00
Guesthouse: Mon – Fri or by arrangement
Phone: +43 (0) 72 38 26 41