



**Gästehaus der Universität Hamburg**  
Rothenbaumchaussee 34  
D-20148 Hamburg  
Phone: +49 (0)40 414 006 0  
Fax: +49 (0)40 414 006 22  
gaestehaus@uni-hamburg.de  
www.gaestehaus-uni-hamburg.de



## Metamorphoses of a Hostel



2003 - 2013

1963 - 2013





# Metamorphoses of a Hostel



2-3	<b>Table of Contents</b>
4-5	<b>Interview with Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck</b>
6-15	<b>Profiles</b>
16-23	<b>Interviews</b>
24-25	<b>The unknown guesthouse</b>
26-29	<b>Metamorphoses on the Management and Advisory Boards</b>
30	<b>Publishing credits</b>

**2003 - 2013**

**Interview with Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck, Chairman of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft, who has devoted himself to the Guesthouse since 1978.**

*Is the University of Hamburg Guesthouse a service provider in the higher education landscape?*

In principle, yes. It offers foreign visitors, mostly researchers and lecturers, a way to live in appropriate accommodations and work in peace right in the city centre, near the university's major facilities.

*But the service only covers temporary accommodation and conference room rental?*

We have to make sure we cover our costs because we don't receive any public funding. The house and grounds belong to the university, but the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft non-profit has leased both. If we were a hotel business, we would also need more staff and that would make the offer much more expensive. Our revenues come from the rents from guests and from leasing the ground floor, the International Centre for Scholarly Exchange (IBZ), which we make available for events and also use ourselves. It also has a kitchenette. We cannot afford to maintain a restaurant business offering meals. The organisers usually hire a catering service. The foundation organises about 20 of its own events a year: the monthly 'social hours', the discussion evenings with house guests, lectures, concerts, and private views featuring Hamburg artists. Both residents as well as friends of the Guesthouse are invited to these events.

*Can you describe your view of the philosophy of the Guesthouse?*

On the one hand the idea is to offer Hamburg University guests an attractive place to stay while they are in the Hanseatic city – a 'temporary home' where they are looked after. This is one of the foundation's services and is a priority for us. On the other hand, we want to be visible in the city of Hamburg, too. We try to offer as attractive a programme as possible as part of our efforts to promote academia and culture. We want other people, especially younger ones, to be interested in the university as well. We want to show them another, rather unknown side of the university.

*How do you publicise the Guesthouse?*

We're always looking for new ideas for publicity and promotion in order to become better known in Hamburg. At events we distribute questionnaires to gauge the interests of visitors. We believe that satisfied, happy guests will come back and will tell others about their stay with us. We want to be a fixture in the social life of Hamburg, not just in the academic landscape. We want to be a place for everyone, because we are not an elite secret society. The Guesthouse gives you privacy for events and meetings, but right in the middle of the city and with a beautiful garden. We are a great alternative to the run-of-the-mill, rather inhospitable venues offered by some hotels.

*You have been looking after the house since 1978. What are the highlights of the last ten years?*

Life on the ground floor in the IBZ rooms. It has become more colourful, and not just because of the changing exhibitions by Hamburg painters (laughs). The newly upholstered sofas and armchairs, the newspapers, the soft classical music in the background, the freshly

## 2003

**18 June 2003:** Anniversary – 40 years of Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft

At the anniversary celebrations in the IBZ premises, 'Das Silberne Tympanon' medal was awarded to Peter Fischer-Appelt,

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. mult., President of the University of Hamburg from 1970 to 1991, for his outstanding promotion of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft – University Guesthouse



brewed coffee – all of these invite guests to linger. Anna-Maria Karl's hospitality, industry expertise and charming presence has brought a spirit to the house that cannot be valued highly enough. She's a real star. Not to forget her experienced team. Together they have managed to maintain, expand, preserve and nurture a bond with the guests, including with former guests. As General Manager, Anna-Maria also advises the foundation's Board of Directors with a great deal of wisdom and innovation.

*The Guesthouse has been transformed in recent decades from a university club with a restaurant in the 1960s and '70s, to a place with lectures and discussion evenings, concerts and private views after its renovation in the 1980s. Where to next?*

We will continue along this path. There is a lot on offer in Hamburg. Our goal is to find new visitors, especially younger ones, for the foundation events at our house. Young newly appointed professors should have the opportunity to organise events in the Guesthouse rooms. However, young professors are now under especially high pressure and have big workloads, so that they can hardly find time for events. For some time, newly appointed professors who live in our house have received a voucher for an academic event that they can organise in our rooms.

*The Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft hosts the academics who live here, as well as events in the building. So the term 'hostel' doesn't really do it justice...Why use the term 'hostel' for the Guesthouse?*

The term 'hostel' originates from the fiery spirit, wit and unique personality of the late professor of chemistry Wolfgang Walter, who introduced the term as a member of the foundation's Board of Directors. He followed the development of the house with great interest from the beginning, and was then a member of the foundation's Board of Directors for 20 years until his death. He wrote the first part of this brochure. There, you can read that in the first 40 years of its history, the house still didn't have a stable commercial basis, so the quality of the facilities didn't come up to the standards of a 'guesthouse'.

*Why have you tirelessly volunteered your time for the Guesthouse since 1978?*

Because the University of Hamburg Guesthouse is a wonderful facility. And I have probably always had a strong social conscience. I enjoy the multidisciplinary encounters a great deal. And actually I quite like to play host. Unfortunately I live outside Hamburg. I'd prefer to live very close to the Guesthouse. I just love this place. I was especially pleased by a letter from a guest who wrote the Guesthouse was 'the pearl of the university.' I've been retired since 2004, and since then the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft and its Guesthouse has been my most passionate hobby. Volunteering to work for the Guesthouse is a gift for me.

Publication of the brochure  
'Metamorphosis of a Hostel'

The university's Marketing GmbH  
moves into the basement as a new  
tenant.

Acquisition of conference  
technology for the IBZ\*

\*with funds from the 'lottery savings  
account' at the Haspa bank

**Last name:** Karl

**First name:** Anna-Maria

**At the Guesthouse since:** 1999

**Job:** General Manager; She is the heart and soul of the Guesthouse.

**Things I like (about my work):** My guests, especially the children. It's always very interesting to hear about what our guests do in their academic careers. I like the 'social hours', the private views and the discussion evenings we host here. It's especially nice when guests get involved. I like – no, I love – my team! And my team members love the Guesthouse, too, which is why it's so much fun to work with them.

I like being able to develop and build something long-term, and being able to bring ideas and a lot of imagination to my work. And that I can fill in the guesthouse with life. This is only possible because the foundation's Board of Directors supports me, trusts me and gives me the necessary freedom. I never stop being excited and inspired by working in an old building with such a long history and so full of surprises. For example, a wonderful mosaic was discovered under the carpet in the foyer.

The children's library in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor lounge is my pet project. There are so many beautiful children's books in the world! So when guests ask what they can bring from home, I ask for a children's book from their country. In this way we are building up a small international library for our youngest guests and the guests bring a small piece of their culture with them. Thanks to the guesthouse I have friends all over the world.

I love flowers and decorations, the Guesthouse garden, good food, tasteful interiors and everything that is beautiful. I also like Japanese sweets.



## Anna-Maria Karl: the heart and soul of the Guesthouse

**What I don't like:** Saying goodbye.

**Hobbies:** Writing, my white-themed garden, cooking, entertaining guests, yoga, travel.

**What makes me happy:** Happy guests, my family, friends and my work at the Guesthouse. And that we managed to renovate the Guesthouse thanks to Germany's economic stimulus package.

**My motto:** Happiness doubles when you share it.

## 2004

Renovation of Apartment 302

Renovation of the ventilation system in the lecture room\*

WiFi in all apartments and

**Last name:** Lorenzen-Sapori

**First name:** Sonja

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2002

**Job:** Assistant General Manager - responsible for IBZ events.

**Things I like (about my work):** Contact with the international guests. Doing something nice for the guests and being rewarded with a smile. Coming up with the right ideas, the right solutions for guests. I like to solve problems and I like being a bit of a travel guide for the guests. I like the challenge of looking for and finding the right thing for guests.

I like our new house and our garden. And I love pasta, wine and earrings.

**What I don't like:** I don't like working on the accounts, but fortunately Meike Frank and Joana Schulz are much better at that than I am.

Because I like friendships, I don't like either superficiality or ignorance; I can get really uptight about that kind of thing.

**Hobbies:** My daughter, my husband, our dream home with our beautiful garden.

**What makes me happy:** Wine and pasta – that's perfect happiness. And making other people happy.

**My motto:** Together we are strong!



**Sonja Lorenzen-Sapori: solves every problem**

## 2005

Wolfgang Walter, Prof. em. Dr., Vice Chairman of the Executive Board since 1985, dies.  
Prof. Dr. José A. C. Broekaert is elected as his successor on the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft Board.

New house prospectuses and website redesign

Purchase of a professional catering-trade dishwasher\*

**Last name:** Frank

**First name:** Meike

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2008 – and I enjoy this job every single day

**Job:** Administration, reception, including checking that everything is in order in the apartments before guests arrive.

**Things I like (about my work):** The international flair and contact with our guests from around the world. The diverse range of tasks and tackling new challenges every day – it's never boring. The friendly working relationship with the whole team. And that we always have a good laugh and a lot of fun at work.

Oh, and I like scarves (as you can see) and beautiful things in general. Also wrapping gifts for our guests. And sweets – there's always time for them!

**What I don't like:** Unreliableness.

**Hobbies:** Exercise (preferably outdoors), music, films, and jewellery – which I make myself.

**What makes me happy:** Sun, wind and water: being able to just take a deep breath and enjoy nature! My family, friends and life in the country. But still Hamburg too, where I was born, for walking around, going out, the cinema and concerts.

**My motto:** Live your life with laughter and you've already won the race!



**Meike Frank:** enjoys her work every single day

2006

Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft is legally recognised as a non-profit foundation again after amending its articles of association.

Renovation of Apartment 102

New carpets in the club rooms\*



## Joana Schulz: prefers roses to fish



**Last name:** Schulz

**First name:** Joana

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2011

**Job:** Administrative right-hand woman

**Things I like (about my work):** People at the Guesthouse treat each other with great courtesy, both the staff and the guests. Friendliness and good manners are very important here. I like it when guests drink coffee in the lounge and I'm working nearby – it has a living-room feel to it.

I like shoes, preferably with really high heels. And I love roses.

**What I don't like:** Something that really won't do for someone from Hamburg – I don't like fish.

**Hobbies:** Enjoying life.

**What makes me happy:** Butterflies, roses, beautiful weather, chocolate – good food in general.

**My motto:** Take everything with a sense of humour.

Ilse Emmy Stalman (†), was an enthusiastic participant at Guesthouse events and in her will bequeathed a generous

donation to the Foundation for tastings at events.

The donation will be used for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

**Last name:** Wachtel

**First name:** Maria

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2003

**Job:** Head of housekeeping: "The Guesthouse garden is mine." She speaks perfect German and Russian.

**Things I like (about my work):** Having my clan at work - my daughter, my niece and my nephew's wife work here. And we are all very motivated, because our work here is the Guesthouse's calling card. Anna-Maria Karl's open, friendly nature ensures that the guests and staff feel at home here and that everything goes smoothly. I especially love the garden and all the flowers. And I like strong colours.

**What I don't like:** Disorder. Pale colours.

**Hobbies:** Dancing, listening to music, photography, reading (Konsalik, German thrillers and love stories). Sport: running, cycling, biathlon and football, especially watching it, and the atmosphere on the terraces at FC St. Pauli matches. And I go to all of my grandson's football matches.

**What makes me happy:** That I'm healthy. Hamburg.

**My motto:** Today will be even better than yesterday – I tell myself this every morning when I look in the mirror.

**Last name:** Wachtel

**First name:** Marina

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2010

**Job:** Housekeeper. She also speaks perfect German and Russian.

**Things I like (about my work):** I like cleanliness. That's why I love to clean and clean up. I particularly like cleaning the kitchen, as you can really see the results.

And I like listening to loud pop music (but only do so rarely).

**What I don't like:** Horrible, cold Hamburg weather (drizzly and windy).

**Hobbies:** Cleaning the house.

**What makes me happy:** Sharing meals with my family. When someone calls me unexpectedly.

**My motto:** Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today

**May 2006:** The Manuscript Cultures Research Group of the Faculty of Humanities moves into the ground-floor premises, replacing the Narrative Sciences Research Group of the Faculty of Humanities (permanent tenant since 2002)

**08 Jun 2006:** 'Das Silberne Tympanon' medal for outstanding support of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft University Guesthouse is awarded to Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA

Replacement of upholstered furniture in the club rooms\*



**Marina Wachtel:**  
Cleaning is my life

**Maria Wachtel:** The garden is mine

'Marketing for the Guesthouse' research project  
(Life Sciences Faculty of the University of  
Applied Sciences, Hamburg, Director: Prof. Dr.  
Christoph Wegmann)

**Last name:** Dumler

**First name:** Olga

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2010

**Job:** Housekeeper. Stands in for her aunt, Maria Wachtel. Responsible for the lounge. She speaks perfect German and Russian.

**Things I like (about my work):** That everything goes so smoothly in the housekeeping team and we all get on so well. I like – no, I love – cleanliness more than anything else. When I stand in for Frau Wachtel, I like having a thorough overview.

I like sunsets, waves and red lilies.

**What I don't like:** Being alone, because I get very sad. I also don't like rock music and spinach.

**Hobbies:** Reading (novels and thrillers), my diary and knitting.

**What makes me happy:** when my children are happy. A piece of chocolate.

**My motto:** Live and let live.



**Olga Dumler:** She likes to have a thorough overview

**2007**

Renovation of Apartment 104

New glass tables in the club rooms \*

Painting all the exterior windows of the house

**Last name:** Denk

**First name:** Natalia

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2011

**Job:** Housekeeper; Natalia also speaks German and Russian.

**Things I like (about my work):** I like it when it's tidy. And if it's also clean, then it's even nicer.

I like flowers, especially orchids, as well as vegetables and music. And I like my work at the Guesthouse.

**What I don't like:** Sitting at home. Ironing and dirty glasses.

**Hobbies:** Orchids. Bike rides with the whole family. Cinema. Going to the ice cream parlour with the family.

**What makes me happy:** My family and my friends. Chocolate. Sitting on the terrace with tea or a cocktail on summer evenings.

**My motto:** Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today.



## Natalia Denk: Order and orchids

In February the 'Hamburger Abendblatt' ran a full-page feature about the Guesthouse.

Publication of papers in memory of Prof. em. Dr. Wolfgang Walter (†), former Vice Chairman of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft,

upon the initiative of the Chairman, Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck

**Last name:** Sander

**First name:** Nicolas

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2001

**Job:** Like my brother Jürgen, a part-time caretaker at the Guesthouse. My main job is as a fireman and paramedic.

**Things I like (about my work):** The charm and the character of the Guesthouse and its international guests – it's a house with a personality, something you only find in old buildings. Over the years, I've become one with the building technology from the basement to the 4<sup>th</sup>-floor lounge. The house and I have really got to know and love each other during this time.

**What I don't like:** Gardening – I'm very happy to leave it to Frau Wachtel.

**Hobbies:** My motorhome and my own house, where I build and tinker around every spare minute; I keep my own garden very spartan.

**What makes me happy:** My little boy, my main job as a fireman and paramedic with the fire brigade in the Rotherbaum district of Hamburg, which is where the Guesthouse is located (my brother Jürgen also works here).

Helping people is the greatest thing in life – apart from my young son.

**My motto:** There's no such thing as "can't be done" – and that goes for every situation in life.

**Last name:** Sander

**First name:** Jürgen

**At the Guesthouse since:** 2009

**Job:** Like my brother Nicolas, a part-time caretaker at the Guesthouse. My main job is fireman and emergency paramedic.

**Things I like (about my work):** Meeting people from different countries. And I can constantly brush up on my English here. I like working independently and the fact that I'm free to arrange my working hours. And I have a very short commute. The friendly attitude of everyone here in the house is unique.

I like all the activities in the house – be it the lawn, sweeping up, or changing a light bulb.

**What I don't like:** Hypocrisy and cumin (but I do love garlic).

**Hobbies:** my motorhome, travelling, motorcycling - and my dog, a Labrador Retriever, my house and garden.

**What makes me happy:** My family. Beautiful weather. Being on holiday without a mobile phone or the internet and then just living for the moment, one day at a time. And my job as a fireman and emergency paramedic at Hamburg Airport.

**My motto:** You have to take life as it comes! Or in short: it is what it is.

**Nicolas Sander:**  
At one with the Guesthouse

**Jürgen Sander:**  
Takes life as it comes

### 'Stolpersteine' (Stumbling blocks)

Every stone a person, every stone a remembrance. A project by the artist Gunter Demnig that remembers the extermination and expulsion of Jews, Sinti and Roma,

homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and the victims of political persecution and euthanasia under the Nazis. On 28 March 2007, two 'Stolpersteine' are embedded in front of the Guesthouse.

All that is known about the lives of Julius and Amalie Hirschbaum, nee Simon, is that they were arrested in 1938 and taken to Fuhlsbüttel concentration camp, then deported to the Minsk concentration camp in 1941



## Sven-Christian Lüdemann: Exotic tastes

**Last name:** Lüdemann

**First name:** Sven-Christian

**At the Guesthouse since:**

2001

**Job:** Student assistant. He arranges the seating at events, serves as a waiter and helps out in the office, too. He is also studying mathematics and sociology.

**Things I like (about my work):** The international guests from various fields. And then from time to time at such events I meet a public figure. For example, during one Guesthouse event I met Helmut and Loki Schmidt, the former Chancellor and his wife. That was incredible.

And I like sports and travelling.

**What I don't like:** That it's always the same catering service providing the food at the events.

Birch pollen is my archenemy (because I'm extremely allergic to it).

**Hobbies:** Digital panoramic photography. Running (half-marathon and marathon) and cooking, especially Indian.

**What makes me happy:** Good weather (no rain and few clouds) and good food (a cake is never a bad idea, and I also like exotic food).

**My motto:** It's all okay!



and murdered. The Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft is sponsoring additional 'Stolpersteine'.

## Interviews

### Thalia Symeonidis and Ellie: Never lonely thanks to the Social Hour

The Armenian-Greek hotel manager is spending a year at the Guesthouse with her Greek husband and their four-year-old daughter Ellie. Her husband teaches Greek and Latin at the University of Hamburg, while Thalia and Ellie enjoy the city. Thanks to the Guesthouse they don't feel isolated, even though they don't work or speak German, says Thalia. "Having somewhere you belong to is very important when you are abroad. And the Guesthouse really gives us this feeling."

She knows what she's talking about: the multinational family lives in Washington D.C., and Thalia's husband teaches at Harvard. "The monthly social hour in particular is a good chance for me to meet people. After all, everyone here in the house is in the same situation - away from home and alone." She's already made some friends here, she says happily.

Sometimes a spontaneous chat over coffee with the Guesthouse team helps alleviate loneliness. In the spring when the sun came back out again after a long period of bad Hamburg weather, Ellie and her mother were particularly desperate for sunshine. "We wanted to go out and bumped into Anna-Maria and Meike who were coming from lunch. They spontaneously invited us for coffee on the bench in front of the Guesthouse. More and more guests joined us, and it became a spontaneous little party that made us all feel great," Thalia recalls fondly. "The perfect start to spring," she says, and Ellie nods in enthusiastic agreement.

### Prof. Dr. Joaquim Castañer: Once a guesthouse guest, always a guesthouse guest

It's the Spaniard's first time at the Guesthouse: "But I'll be back for sure," says the lecturer in corporate and commercial law from Barcelona. He is here conducting research at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) for three months, and aims to write two essays and work on his new book. He lives in the Guesthouse for three reasons:

"First, a hotel would have been too expensive for me. Secondly, I really like being able to cook myself some dinner even late at night." And thirdly, he says the Guesthouse was recommended by friends, all of whom raved about it. Now he'll be the one raving about how good it is to his wife, because in the summer he'll be back with his family. "I will also tell my wife that I can't imagine a better place to stay in Hamburg." And he says Hamburg is certain to be more pleasant than Barcelona in the summer. He plans to use the long days, when night never seems to descend, for trips to Lübeck, Bremen and Lüneburg. Joaquim Castañer particularly appreciates the fact that he has also met MPI researchers at the Guesthouse. As a result, he is well connected during his research stint at the MPI, and is sure that these connections will help him later as well. "I'm getting to know here people that I would never have met in a hotel," he says.



Thalia Symeonidis and Ellie

2008

New furniture for the IBZ\* Renovation of Apartment 304





Prof. Dr. Joaquim Castañer



Prof. Dr. Eva Kaminski and Prof. Dr. Keiichi Kawate

### **Married couple Assist. Prof. Dr. Eva Kaminski and Prof. Dr. Keiichi Kawate: A Guesthouse marriage**

Eva Kaminski and Keiichi Kawate are a married couple. If you ask them, where they live, Eva, a Pole, says: "I live between Krakow, Hamburg and Japan." And Keiichi, from Japan, says: "I live between Tokyo, Poland and Hamburg." Eva calls Hamburg their adopted home. And when she really thinks about it, their 'marital home' because they have spent every August for the last eight years together in Hamburg. They also live together throughout the year, but with interruptions. Asked if it isn't hard to suddenly spend a month living together in an apartment, they both laugh and say that they can always withdraw into their studies. Besides, Eva confesses, "even when we're apart, we sometimes eat together" – via Skype and the iPad.

Eva Kaminski is a Japanologist at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Keiichi Kawate is a historian specialising in the Weimar Republic and teaches at the Tōkyō-Gakugei University in Tokyo. In the summer he conducts research in the Hanseatic city while also providing support to Japanese students attending summer school, while Eva does research. The main reason the couple always stay at the Guesthouse is the team and the atmosphere the staff creates. "That's the most important thing for us," says Keiichi. They are self-confessed enthusiastic fans of the Guesthouse.

After eight "monthfuls of married life" at the Guesthouse, the couple also know which is their favourite apartment: "It's on the second floor at the back of the house, where you have a wonderful view of the gardens and can see the squirrels play," says Eva, who especially loves the bay window. "I enjoy working there, with windows on all three sides. It's just wonderful." She also likes the apartment's facilities. "There's a large desk with a comfortable chair, the lamp provides good light and it's quiet. You don't always get this as a matter of course." If the couple fancy a brief change of scenery while they are working they go and drink coffee together in the lounge on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

In person. Without iPad or Skype.

## 2009

11 Mar 2009: 100<sup>th</sup> Social Hour

The IBZ kitchenette is modernised\*

01 Aug 2009: Anna-Maria Karl (General Manager) celebrates her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as part of the Guesthouse management team.

**Eva Amurllah Nisa, PhD: safety, tranquillity and proximity to the university**

The Indonesian anthropologist is carrying out research at the University of Hamburg Asia-Africa Institute, initially for a month, but she is already organising her next stay, which will last a year. During this time she wants to write a book. "I will definitely be able to stay in the Guesthouse for six months, but Anna-Maria Karl has promised to help me find another apartment."

At the Guesthouse she particularly appreciates the proximity to her institute. "I can easily walk there." The Guesthouse is also practical for her next stay because she will then have her six-year-old daughter with her. And another important aspect is that, "The area is very safe." Eva specifically inquired with the University of Hamburg security service. "I may sometimes have to work at the institute until five in the morning," she says. "Five minutes later and I'm home. This is pure luxury." She has lived in student dorms before, but found it too noisy. "Here in the Guesthouse it's always very quiet, which I really appreciate." While the anthropologist does walk a lot, she doesn't walk everywhere. "When I had to take a bus for the first time, I needed help, but Meike Frank helped me straightaway and showed me the public transport website [www.hvv.de](http://www.hvv.de)," she says.

## Interviews

**Prof. Dr. Boris Kashtan: The suitcase has to go on the secretariat's scales ...**

The professor of geophysics from the University of St. Petersburg was once again invited to spend two months in Hamburg at the University of Hamburg and the Wave Inversion Technology Consortium. Boris Kashtan particularly likes to "walk and work" in Hamburg. The Guesthouse is a quarter of an hour's walk from 'Beim Schlump' street, where the Institute of Geophysics has its offices in the 'Geomatikum', one of the high-rise buildings.

At the Guesthouse, he appreciates the good organisation and cleanliness. "But the TV is terrible," he says, laughing. "I don't mean the programmes – the screen is too small. It's impossible to watch a football match." The geophysicist likes to work in his apartment. "I like the old house a lot better than the new building at the institute," he says. "I once lived on the fourth floor under the roof. Because it was a very hot summer, the Guesthouse provided me a fan." There is rarely air conditioning in Hamburg, because it almost never gets really hot.

From time to time, his wife accompanies him to Hamburg. "You have to have a very good relationship when you live in such a small space," he says, tongue in cheek. He and his wife have even travelled to Italy from their Hamburg base, and he still remembers that Sonja Lorenzen-Sapori lent him maps of Italy and Venice at the time. The geophysicist can't stop praising the team: "Whenever I leave I can use the scales in the secretariat to check the weight of my suitcase – and am quite often astonished. If I wait until the bag is weighed at check-in, it's usually too late," says the humorous Russian.

Complete renovation of the facade and the painted stucco on the front walls of the house, draining of the back walls of the building



Eva Amurllah Nisa, PhD



Prof. Dr. Boris Kashtan

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Başak Baysal: The Guesthouse is my holiday camp**

Başak Baysal has regularly spent one to three months per year at the Guesthouse since 2006. "And whenever possible I join the social hour," says the assistant professor of law from the University of Istanbul. At one of the social hours, she met a Japanese professor – and is now working on a book with him. "The Guesthouse is a real meeting place," says Basak. "Sometimes it feels like Facebook here," she says.

"It's wonderful that friends I've met at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) also live here in the Guesthouse," she says. From time to time they organise a party or cook together. "At weekends Anna-Maria Karl leaves us the key for the IBZ International Meeting Centre on the ground floor where we can use the big kitchen." So two years ago the assistant professor organised a Turkish evening with specialties from her home for friends. A 'travel group' also came into being as a result of these evenings together: "We visit each other in Spain, Portugal or Italy," says Basak.



Assist. Prof. Dr. Basak Baysal

The Guesthouse has become a home for the Turkish woman – a home in Hamburg where she is surrounded by friends, or as she puts it: "It's a bit like a holiday camp." By this she also means that if she is not working late at the MPI she meets her friends for a cup of tea in the evening in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor lounge.

"Sometimes we meet there in pyjamas, because the lounge is so cosy."

**Dr. Natasa Hadzimanovic and Dairo Esteban Pascual Méndez: Married thanks to the Guesthouse**

Natasa, a Swiss woman with Serbian roots, and Dairo from Cuba will never forget the Spain vs. Russia football match during the 2008 European Championships. It's not that they remember the outcome of the game. They also can't remember the restaurant where they watched the game. However, they both remember the date: "It was the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2008," they say in unison. The two legal scholars went to watch the match with a group from the Max Planck Institute, but only had eyes for each other. They had never met before. It is hardly surprising that they then took the underground together, but they were both all the more amazed when they found they both had to get off at Dammtorbahnhof and then realised they were also staying at the same address: Rothenbaumchaussee 34, the University Guesthouse. And they were even more surprised when they found they both lived on the fourth floor and that their apartments were next-door to each other. "I had previously repeatedly read the name and wondered if I should call round to brush up on my Spanish a bit," says Natasa. And Dairo says: "What's funny is that I had been thinking the same thing." They then spent two hours talking in the corridor. "He quoted poetry and paid me compliments," she remembers, and beams a smile, while he chips in saying: "I pulled out all the stops."



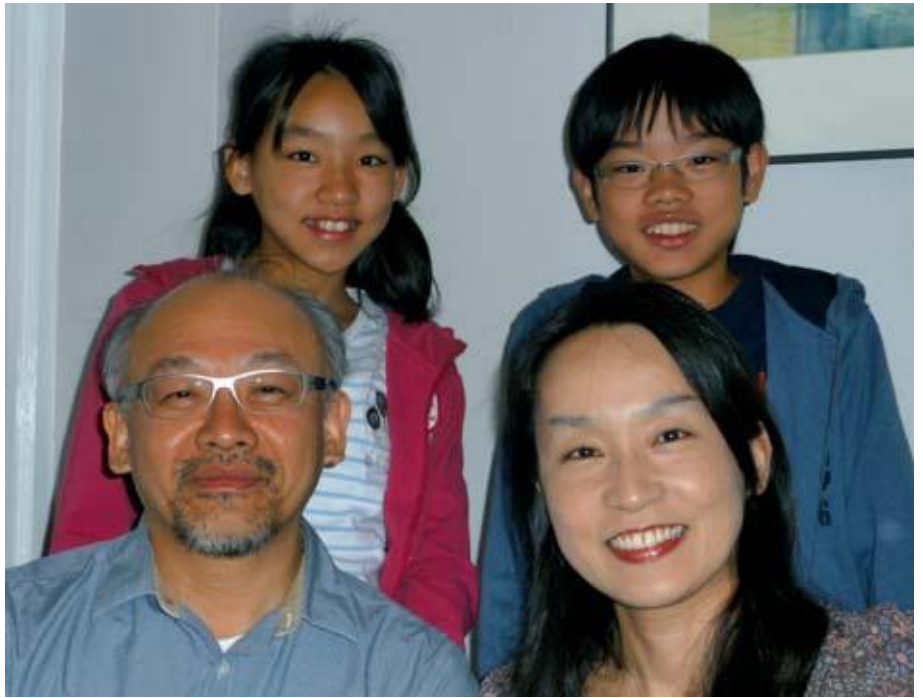
Dr. Natasa Hadzimanovic and Dairo Esteban Pascual Méndez

When Natasa moved to a different apartment two days later, Dairo was immediately at hand to help with the move. "At that time I still didn't know where this was going," she says. He, however, knew from the first moment he saw her that, "This woman is going to be my wife." They both continued to live on the fourth floor, her favourite floor, "Because here you can visit each other via the balcony. Each time he came to me like a cat past our neighbour's balcony." Very soon afterward, the couple only needed one apartment. Three years later they got married and now live a stone's throw from Rothenbaumchaussee 34. Hamburg, Switzerland, Serbia, Cuba – but they both lost their hearts at the Guesthouse.

**14 Apr 2010:** Official inauguration of the lounge. It is a 24/7 meeting place and recreation area, inviting guests big and small to linger, read, make acquaintances and socialise, borrow books, relax, meet with friends, and drink coffee or tea.

**19 Apr 2010:** 'Das Silberne Tympanon' medal for the promotion of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft University Guesthouse goes to architect Dipl.-Ing. Uwe Hohaus (posthumously) and the

Hohaus Hinz & Seifert GmbH  
Architekturgesellschaft



## Interviews

### The Nakata family: Summer holidays in Hamburg

For many years now, the legal scholar Kunihiro Nakata has used the summer holidays to work in peace and quiet on writing an essay or a book. And also to escape the heat of Kyoto. He does not want to go without his family - his wife Chinatsu, daughter Mai and son Koki. "And I very much enjoy getting to know Japanese colleagues here in Hamburg at the Max Planck Institute, because Japan is a big country, and you don't automatically know each other." He's made some interesting acquaintances at the Guesthouse as well. For instance, he met the Turkish legal scholar Basak Baysal at the social hour and they are now planning to jointly organise a jurisprudential event in Istanbul. "As a Japanese legal scholar, how else would I meet a Turkish legal expert?" asks Kunihiro. The Japanese enjoys social encounters in the ground-floor or 4<sup>th</sup>-floor lounges. On the rare occasions he stays at the Guesthouse without his family, he says a coffee with Anna-Maria Karl helps the loneliness.

The Nakata family is quite adamant about staying at the Guesthouse. "It's always like a trip to an old home," Kunihiro says, and his wife Chinatsu agrees. For them summer holidays in Hamburg are always something special. Also for the children. If you ask them what they love about Hamburg, the children don't need to think twice: "I like the toy stores," says Koki. "And I like currywurst and German food," says Mai. But Chinatsu also likes to cook for her family. The Nakatas have found Japanese products in Hamburg at an Asian shop. They got the address from the information folder in their apartment. "But Japanese people are always exchanging information among themselves about what's where," says Kunihiro. For instance, he not only met a Turkish colleague at the social hour, but also got an address for the essential ingredient of Japanese cooking: miso paste.

Renovation of Apartment 113

Renovation of the counter in the IBZ\* small lecture room

**July 2010: Children's food and grocery stores – illegal parking lights up children's eyes:** children buy and sell here, and the youngest are great chefs - thanks to incorrectly parked cars.

\*with funds from the 'lottery savings account' at the Haspa bank



Prof. Dr. Angela Lupone

**Prof. Dr. Angela Lupone: A regular who loves the 4<sup>th</sup>-floor lounge**

Angela Lupone can safely be called a ‘friend of the Guesthouse’. A professor of law at the University of Milan, she has repeatedly conducted research at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) and has been a guest at Rothenbaumchaussee 34 for almost 30 years. In all these years, this ‘regular’ has witnessed the positive development of the house at first hand. She is especially enthusiastic about the new lounge on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor: "Even my 18-year-old daughter likes it, especially the kitchen area for children and the grocery store. She would have loved to play in it as a child." When her two children were young, Angela’s in-laws also lived at the Guesthouse, and took over babysitting.

The Italian knows Hamburg like the back of her hand. "Because I know the city so well, I always look forward to the tips posted in the lift." As a result she didn’t miss a cruise ship lying at anchor in Hamburg harbour or any fireworks on the Alster. "The letters to the guests in the lift are also great because you are addressed directly, as a guest." And of course she reads the guest folder each time she arrives to see if there is any new information. "I’m also curious by nature," she says of her interest in the Guesthouse and city. Her eyes light up when she talks about the emails she exchanges with the team throughout the year. "They send a photo of Hamburg or the social hour every now and then - that is just wonderful."

She says she also finds reading the newspaper down in the lounge very inspiring for her work, "But I don’t just read the newspaper, I’ve borrowed books before, too." At the moment ‘The Gathering’ by Anne Enright from the lounge is lying by her bedside table. "A book I’ve wanted to read for a long time," she says – and again her eyes light up.

Toys for the youngest guests were purchased with a grant from the fund of fines collected by the Hanseatic City of Hamburg (a non-profit foundation).

A lot of shopping and cooking has been going on in the Lounge ever since.

## Interviews



### **Melanie and Prof. Dr. Alexander Szimayer: We've stayed in nearly every apartment**

Alexander Szimayer is a newly appointed professor of business administration at the University of Hamburg. First, he lived alone in the Guesthouse. It was a good month later before his wife travelled the 600 kilometres from Kaiserslautern. "It all happened very quickly, because suddenly – and earlier than I thought – I had a position at the University Hospital in Eppendorf," Melanie, a physiotherapist, recalls. "But Anna-Maria Karl immediately got everything ready for me." And her husband recalls:

"In the beginning you slept in a small spare bed. That was a hard test for you."

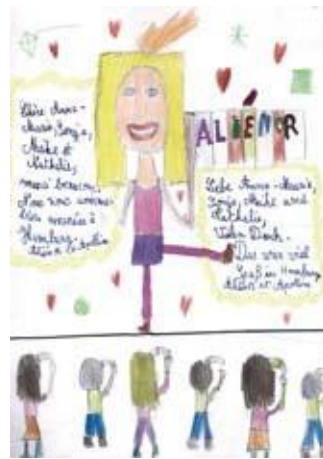
At first, the Szimayers searched for an apartment in Hamburg, but then finally decided on a house – a house that first still had to be built and a lot went wrong during its construction. "We wanted to move in on 31 December. The day before, we realised that our

new home had water damage," says Alexander. "I thought we were homeless, but Anna-Maria Karl was able to help us. The help provided in this house is tremendous, at any time of the day or night." The couple do not tire of mentioning that they are eternally grateful for being able to stay at the Guesthouse instead of a hotel. "We would have had to both stay in a 20 square metre room at the Hotel Koller," he says. For him the apartments are a bit like a holiday flat. Until the Szimayers are able to move into their new house, they are moved around repeatedly and have become real Guesthouse nomads. "Although we have never moved between floors, we've moved apartment five times," says Melanie. "Maybe that's why the nice housekeeping ladies know us by name," she says with a smile and immediately corrects herself: "No, no one is just a guest here – you always are known by name."

**2011** The Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung helped to fund the thermal insulation of the rear facade of the house and energy improvements in five apartments (213, 313, 114, 214, 314) with federal money. The foundation commits 72,000 Euros of its own funds for the renovation.

Newly appointed professors who live in the Guesthouse now receive a voucher for organising a free academic event at the IBZ.

24-25 The unknown Guesthouse



New website, the Foundation gets its own homepage

New alarm system in all apartments and hallways

IBZ lecture room repainted\*





# 2012

The more than 100 year old mosaic in the floor of the lobby is revealed.

Lighting situation in the lecture hall improved\*

New, ergonomic furniture and lighting in the office

\*with funds from the lottery savings account at the Haspa bank

**Board of Directors**

Chairman	<b>Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck</b>	until 13 Feb 2018
Vice Chairman	<b>Prof. em. Dr. Wolfgang Walter †</b> <b>Prof. Dr. José A. C. Broekaert</b>	until 29 Mar 2005 until 28 Nov 2016
Treasurer	<b>Dr. K. Klaus Krämer</b> <b>Ltd. Reg. Dir. i. R. Frank Laubert</b>	until 28 Nov 2012 until 29 Nov 2017

**Advisory Board**

Chairman	<b>Univ. President Dr. Dr. h. c. Jürgen Lüthje</b> <b>Univ. President Prof. Dr. Monika Auweter-Kurtz</b> <b>Univ. Vice President Prof. Dr. Karl-Werner Hansmann</b> <b>Univ. Vice President Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Siegfried Stiehl</b>	until 30 Sep 2006 until 30 Jun 2007 until 31 Jul 2007 until 31 Jul 2013
Members		
Humanities incl. Theology	<b>Prof. Dr. Barbara Vogel</b> <b>Prof. Dr. Birgit Recki</b>	until 19 Sep 2008 until 19 Sep 2014
Natural sciences	<b>Prof. Dr. Michael Gewecke</b> <b>Prof. Dr. Angelika Brandt</b>	until 03 Jul 2003 until 02 Jul 2014
Medicine	<b>Prof. Dr. med. Hasso Scholz</b> <b>Prof. Dr. med. Johannes Rueger</b> <b>Prof. em. Dr. med. Adolf-Friedrich Holstein</b>	until 28 Oct 2005 until 28 Oct 2011 until 28 Oct 2014
Legal, social and economic sciences	<b>Prof. Dr. Karl-Werner Hansmann</b> <b>Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Wolfgang Weber</b> <b>Prof. Dr. Rolf von Lüde</b>	until 28 Oct 2005 until 28 Oct 2008 until 28 Oct 2014

**October 2012:** Sonja Lorenzen-Sapori (Assistant General Manager) celebrates her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as part of the management team.

The Guesthouse has a new permanent tenant: the financial department of the University of Hamburg's Humanities faculty takes over the rooms formerly

occupied by the faculty's research group on manuscript cultures.

## Metamorphoses on the Executive and Advisory Boards

by Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck

'Metamorphosis of a Hostel' written by Prof. em. Dr. **Wolfgang Walter**, affectionately known as the 'blue booklet', traces the development of the foundation and Guesthouse during its first 40 years.

As a member of the University Club Board of Directors, Wolfgang Walter had already been in active contact with the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft before becoming Vice Chairman of its Board of Directors on 29 May 1985.

From the beginning he is was responsible for providing decisive impetus in the blossoming of the Guesthouse's own academic and cultural life – jointly supervised by Board of Directors and management. This greatly enriches the Guesthouse experience and has ensured a large, informal circle of 'friends of the Guesthouse' with who bring their own special interests and topics to lectures, discussion evenings, concerts and private views (art exhibitions). Over the years, quite a number of enduring personal relationships have developed among these friends and the Guesthouse's international guests.

After Prof. Walter's death in 2005 his chair on the Board went to Prof. Dr. **José Broekaert** – a natural scientist like his predecessor – who took over the organisation of the events Prof. **Walter** founded. Today, the management contributes significantly to compiling ideas for these events. Prof. **Broekaert** regularly represents the Board of Directors at the Social Hours, thereby maintaining the ties between the guests and the Board of Directors. His quiet, amiable nature and outstanding reliability have a very positive effect on the entire work of the Board of Directors – even in turbulent and difficult times, such as in the Guesthouse's dealings with authorities and ministries during its energy-efficient renovation in recent years, which have not always been easy. He is also a reliable presence at the openings of academic panels and art exhibitions.



Prof. em. Dr. Wolfgang Walter †

Musical events are also held regularly at the IBZ, which as Wilhelm Busch so inimitably put it, "... are often bothersome, because they are accompanied by noise" – so from the early 1980s the Chairman's penchant for early music and his personal ties to the corresponding chair at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre and its professors proved a boon: their shared goal when hosting concerts in the lecture hall was not to disturb the guests who lived above – and often worked in the evenings – with loud instruments like the piano, which was used at first. Instead, the less intrusive instruments of baroque and earlier music came into their own in the rather small room, a real treat for audiences due to the close proximity. Soon, a tradition of concerts given by advanced students and graduates, especially in harpsichord, flute, strings and church music, developed and has found an ardent following among the Guesthouse's residents and friends.

# 2013

**January 2013:** Maria Wachtel celebrates her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as part of the Housekeeping team

Renovation of Apartment 307

The stucco decoration on the ceiling of Apartment 307 is uncovered

**May 2013:** 150<sup>th</sup> Social Hour

The Guesthouse's appeal for guests from the University, other universities in Hamburg and other research institutions such as the Max Planck Society, with its focus on foreign and international civil law, lies in the personal living comfort and the type and intensity of support offered – all the advantages and limitations of a 'home' without the convenience of a hotel – as well as by the way the rooms are taken care of, including regular cleaning and changing of the bedding by the cleaning team. Not least, the appeal is also made memorable by the special dynamic that the management creates in the living area and the IBZ. The many returning guests bear witness to this.

All this depended and depends largely on the fact that smart economies and persistent work for an attractive, individual, but financially sensible and sustainable design ensures that this attractive old building is preserved and constantly improved – thanks in large part to **Dr. K. Klaus Kraemer**. From 1990 on, he served as treasurer on the Board of Directors. He brought to this position a wealth of experience and connections with the economic, financial and construction world, which he consistently used for the benefit of the foundation. This included establishing ties with accountants and auditors who are especially dedicated to the Guesthouse and with whom a solid framework for planning and audit documents could be drawn up. This gives the treasurer and General Manager a constant insight into the development of the Guesthouse as business, and has long become a durable arrangement. He was also able to recruit Mr. Uwe Hohaus, an



Prof. Dr. José A. C. Broekaert

architect with a wealth of experience in renovating and preserving old Hamburg buildings, for the Guesthouse. Even after the death of the founder, Mr. Hohaus's firm continues its successful work here with lots of ideas, down to choosing quality-conscious craftsmen for work on and around the building. Kraemer rightly encouraged investments in the solidity of the building and the attractiveness of the facilities of the various areas including those for administration, housing, meetings and events. At the same time, he tenaciously built up reserves and guarded them wisely in order to be prepared for the unexpected at any time given the age of the building.

**Dr. Krämer** retired from office after 22 years on 30 Nov 2012. He was succeeded by **Mr Ltd. Reg. Dir. i. R. Frank Laubert**, who has great experience in University foundation matters and has had very close and successful ties to the Guesthouse as its legal consultant for decades.

**12 Jun 2013:** Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Celebration in the IBZ of the Guesthouse with guests from

the University, guests and friends of the Guesthouse, and staff members. 'Das Silberne Tympanon' medal for the promotion of the Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft University

Guesthouse goes to Dr. K. Klaus Krämer, Treasurer of Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft from 1990 to 2012. Repayment of all bank loans by the end of 2013 and option of partial paydown of a mortgage, which benefits the University



The foundation's academic and cultural activities and the funds used for them increased to such an extent that – in combination with an amendment or rather extension to the articles of association welcomed by both the foundation and university – they satisfied the tax office sufficiently for the foundation to be granted charitable status again.

This was thanks to **Dr. jur. Florian Asche's** great experience in this field and argumentative skills.

At the end of this year, all bank debt, much of which dates back to the major renovations in 1985/86, will have been repaid. This means that the mortgages of the owner, the University of Hamburg, can be cleared to the extent justifiable. Thus, the foundation has greatly multiplied the assets of the university over the years. As a token of its special appreciation, Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft awarded **Dr. Krämer** the 'Silberne Tympanon' medal at this year's anniversary celebrations.

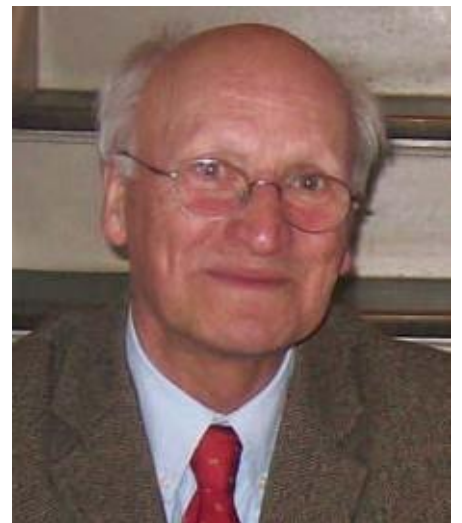
Allow me to conclude this summary of the past ten years in the metamorphosis of our hostel with some rather matter-of-fact, but telling and very gratifying figures.

We hosted:

**150 Social Hours,**  
**14 concerts,**  
18 lectures,  
**18 discussion evenings,**

**Ten apartments and a studio were fully renovated.**  
**The new lounge was created,**

**Measures to upkeep the building included**  
**3,443 sqm of newly laid carpet and**  
**1,788 kg of paint for the walls.**



Ltd. Reg. Dir. i. R. Frank Laubert

Friends of the Guesthouse and participants at events also regularly make donations to Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft. We would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank-you!

## Publishing credits

**Publisher**

Stiftung Weltweite Wissenschaft  
Gästehaus der Universität Hamburg

Rothenbaumchaussee 34  
D-20148 Hamburg  
Telefon: +49 (0)40 414 006 0  
Fax: +49 (0)40 414 006 22  
gaestehaus@uni-hamburg.de  
www.gaestehaus-uni-hamburg.de

**Text**

Regula Zehnder,  
Prof. em. Dr. Jobst B. Mielck (p. 27-29)

**Design**

Tom Gahleitner Design

**Title photograph**

Anna-Maria Karl

**Photo credits**

Tom Gahleitner: p. 31; Frank Laubert: p. 29 bottom;  
Gästehaus der Universität Hamburg management: p. 26;  
Reimo Schaaf: pp. 6-15, 24-25, 27, 29 o.; Regula Zehnder:  
pp. 5, 16-23

**Printed by**

Schüthedruck GmbH

**Last updated:**

12 Jun 2013

2003 - 2013

