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Calendar 2006

Please mark your calendars for these upcoming events!

- **15 November:**
Speaker Event
- **13 December:**
Holiday Party
- **10 January:**
New year *aperitivo*

For more details on these events, please visit the **Events Calendar** on the PWA website.

Member Event Calendar

PWA members are pleased to extend invitations to a fashion accessories preview and an (almost) night at the opera. See all events in our **member event calendar**

New Members

Please join us in welcoming:

CULTURAL HERITAGE & WORKING LIFE

On 18 October, Dominique Ottavi (DO) and Tina Han (TH) discussed their cultural backgrounds and experiences in a lively panel discussion.

Background Information

TH: I am Taiwanese and was 29 years old when I came to Italy. I didn't speak a word of Italian. The company I work for is the second largest computer hardware (motherboards) producer in the world (behind Samsung) and I am their only female manager.

DO: I was born in Corsica and so there is less of a cultural difference with Italy, worked in Paris, spent a year in Colombia and then came back and went to work in a 'world of men' at Aubert & Duval. Fifteen years ago I came to Milan to form the Italian branch. Today, there are 9 of us but I am the only non-Italian. It's not many, but enough.

Q: How did your culture impact how your perception of Italy?

TH: The biggest difference is Ferragosto. When I first came here I thought it was impossible Italy has a month off! The Taiwanese parent company wants us to open so I persuade people to help out and then we do no business. Now I can't live without it and started dreaming of the next one as soon as I got back from my last vacanza! There are so many benefits to it and you can really relax and rediscover your motivation. I think it is essential.

DO: Job titles are a strange Italian phenomenon and in particular *Ingegnere*. Today it is different but 15 years ago it was like 1900s France. I asked, is my husband a man or an *Ingegnere*? I want to compete on my own competences and skills and hate the Italian obsession with titles. Well, job titles and street cleaning...

TH: Again ferie, at least two weeks are necessary

Q: What do you find worst about work here?

TH: The bureaucracy and lack of trust. I have given up trying to change Italian culture. When I came here I had to go to the *Uffici Stranieri* and Taiwan didn't even exist in their systems. They wanted to make me Chinese but I am not! They are our sworn enemies: our passport is green, theirs is red; we aren't communist, they are. Finally, when I got my codice fiscale, I found out I was from country X! Three years later, when I had to go back, Taiwan was on the list but we had now been classed as a national republic of China. So they changed my country, from X to N, and the result was that all of my pension payments were lost. I also disagree that Latin people are lazy. They focus on one thing and that one thing they do perfectly. This is different to China where people know lots of things but don't do them all well. They also have their own opinion and you need to leverage this to lead them using their own motivation.

DO: I agree with Tina about Italian workers. It seems like Italy has no rules or limits but that isn't true. You need to find out how their minds work. All want to improve themselves and, because so many companies are small, they are willing to work in partnership with you. They also have

- Vanessa Djaba-Bottoli
- Nicoletta Parvis
- Adriana Pierelli
- Leslie Previsch
- Gretchen Romig
- Elizabeth Turchi

We look forward to seeing you at our next events!

New Positions

New job or project in your life? Tell us at newsletter@pwa-milan.org and we'll announce it in this section next month.

Events in Milan

Now - 19 November, *Eurotribu*, a music festival organized by the foreign Cultural Centers in Milan and Ponderosa Music & Art, representing various genres including jazz, ethno-folk, and disco. For more information, go to www.eurotribu.com

Now - 7 January 07, *Israele, arte e vita 1906-2006*. A century of Israeli art: a comprehensive exhibit of paintings, sculptures and installations by a number of important national artists interpreting the highlights of the history and culture of those decades. Palazzo Reale, Piazza Duomo (MM Duomo), daily 9.30am-7.30pm (closed Mon; Thurs until 10.30pm), €9.00/7.50. **PWA members only**: attend a guided tour of the exhibit Sunday, 26 November at 12 pm. For reservations, email deliaweissy@yahoo.com

Now - 7 January 07, *Umberto Boccioni: pittore, scultore futurista*. A new exhibition celebrating the

aesthetic considerations that they apply in daily work. This is very satisfying.

Q: Describe the Italian work environment

DO: Close to European rules and similar to France. The quality of the people is high and they really want to work and improve themselves.

Q: Are there differences for men and women?

DO: Italy is more closed to women but it isn't actually that different elsewhere. The problems here are more related to business size.

Q: How do you go about goal-setting and objectives?

TH: I don't see a difference in how I do it in Italy to other places. However, my best customers are Israelis. They make decisions quickly and want to create a win-win situation for me and them. In Spain, Italy and Portugal they spend lots of time trying to bargain and take away my profit.

DO: We built the Italian company from scratch but had to adopt the French parent's structure. I am in the middle between the two and have to marry French rules with Italian fantasy. I think it is different when you have to enter something that already exists here.

Q: What lessons have you learned from being here?

TH: Don't work too much, work to get a better life and don't get so stressed so that it affects your health. The problems I face here are the same as in Taiwan - the business I am in changes rapidly and now we have to compete on price and cost cutting.

DO: The company I work for is an old French family business. To produce a single piece of steel takes a year. The past year has been difficult due to rising steel prices. But we produce only high tech steel that is a niche product with long lead times. The best lesson I have learned from working abroad is that you need to open your mind and see other things. It is a real opportunity to see and learn more about another culture.

Q: Before you came here, what was the best piece of advice you received?

TH: 12 years ago the Taiwanese knew little about Italy and what they thought was based on stereotypes. This distance meant I got little advice. What I would say is that you need to bend, don't expect them to bend to you.

DO: There were no plans to come here. They asked, I said yes and only asked where my plane ticket was! I was the first woman in the company, in fact the first person, to move to another country and to them, Italy was like the far east. I advise that you should move, accept the new culture and don't judge.

Q: We have been talking about work, what about your social lives?

DO: My social life is linked to my working life. I used my work network to create social connections. Balancing work and a family life is difficult for women. I don't have children but I can't say that it was driven by my work.

TH: I do not mix work and social life. Most of my friends here are Taiwanese and this could be due to culture. I don't have children, not because of work but because I didn't find the right man.

Q: Women tend not to ask. How have you asked for what you want eg for a pay rise?

TH: You need to think win-win. You can only ask for more money if you are making money for your company. The company needs to need you and you need to articulate what you need. Present the boss with your dream and given them one to believe in. If you do get any promises, get them to put it in writing.

DO: I am a bad example and don't ask enough. Aubert & Duval is an old company so it is difficult to ask and get. More so if you are a woman.

work of this important futurist and the first time both his sculptures and paintings will be shown together. Palazzo Reale, Piazza Duomo (MM Duomo), daily 9.30am-7.30pm (closed Mon; Thurs until 10.30pm), €9.00/7.50.

Every Wednesday, broadcast of the talk show *L'Infedele* hosted by Gad Lerner. For more information or to reserve your place at the live broadcast please contact Luisa Mazier (02 6268 3213 or email pubblico-infedele@la7.it), Studi Cinevideo, Via Gioacchino Belli 14, Studio F (MM Cimiano). Free entrance

Job Offers and Professional Services

What are the latest openings and services offered by members on our Professional Services Board? Check out our website!

If you know of an employment opportunity or wish to post your own professional services, please contact careers@pwa-milan.org.

PWA Newsletter

Call for articles for our upcoming issues. Please submit your proposal to newsletter@pwa-milan.org. Articles will be published at the Board's discretion.

Deadlines

December Issue:
22 November
January Issue:
15 December

Grow your network!

PWA members are encouraged to bookmark

Q: And finally, why do you stay?

Both: It is a wonderful experience!

PWA would like to extend their very great thanks to Dominique and Tina for sharing their experiences with us.

Rebecca Loades
Vice-President and Webmistress

SPEAKER MEETING

All professional women welcome whether members or guests

Wednesday, 15 November 2006

Ida Sirolli and Cristina Guarneri present
"Self-development and motivation in a changing environment"

Ida will present in English while Cristina will present in Italian

Today's business environment is characterised by constant change and increasing complexity. Employees are required to make changes that can undermine career aspirations, motivation, self-esteem, social relationships and family ties. For Italy, this is a significant shift and many people are not ready, and do not have the skills needed, to cope with this new way of working/living.

- How can Human Resources help people adjust to this scenario?
- How can employees be empowered and encouraged to design a personal career project that they are responsible for?
- How can people keep their motivation and invest in their own self development?

There are no single solutions to the questions above. However, change agents in any company need to actively address these issues, among others, if cultural change is to occur.

Our first presenter, Ida Sirolli, is responsible for harmonising development and training projects in a large Italian telecoms company. She will share her insights and experience of bringing about change in a traditional company and, in particular, draw upon her recent experiences of a large merger between two very different companies.

Joining Ida will be Cristina Guarneri, a trained psychologist and HR consultant. Cristina will relate Ida's experiences to an actual case and discuss, **in Italian**, how these lessons can be applied to other companies.

Cocktails 7-8 p.m. / Presentation 8-9.30 p.m.

Centro Svizzero, via Palestro 2 (MM Palestro, Turati; trams 2, 61, 94)
Cocktail at La Terrazza, 4th floor, while the presentation will take place on the 3rd floor.

Free for members; €20 for guests, payable by cash at the event

Members: please **register your attendance** in the calendar section of EuropeanPWN <www.europeanpwn.net>

For guest reservations, and for more information in general, please contact speakers@pwa-milan.org

the PWA and EuropeanPWN websites and to visit them often. These platforms will become what you want them to become. By interacting with others, you have the possibility to go beyond the networking activities developed during the Milan meetings! By filling in your profile, by participating in the debates in the forum, by exchanging your knowledge and competencies with others, you will have the opportunity to grow your network.

Thank You

PWA is proudly sponsored by:

- Core Cocchini Relocation srl
- The Open University Business School
- Easy Milano



We thank them for their invaluable support throughout the year.

This newsletter is kindly sponsored by Core Cocchini Relocation srl.

PWA Milan is a member of



<www.europeanpwn.net>

HOLIDAY PARTY

PWA invites you to an end of year celebration! All professional women, and their partners, welcome whether members or guests

Wednesday, 13 December 2006, 8-11 p.m.

OSTERIA ARTIDORO
Via Camperio 15 (MM Cairoli)

Join PWA for our holiday celebration at Osteria Artidoro, www.artidoro.it, located in the heart of Milan and just a stone's throw from Castello Sforzesco. Osteria Artidoro specialises in traditional cuisine from Emilia Romagna and Lombardy.

The evening will begin with a welcome glass of *prosecco* and the opportunity to chat and catch up with friends. We will then celebrate the coming holidays with a festive dinner accompanied by fine Italian wine. Everyone attending is requested to bring a small, wrapped gift (value: €5 or less) to share during the evening.

Space is limited, so early booking is recommended! Priority will be given to members.

Members may reserve places until 22 November for the special price of €40 (guests pay €50). From 23 November, the price for both members and guests will be €50.

Members, please **reserve and prepay online** via the calendar section of EuropeanPWN (<www.europeanpwn.net>) or by cash at PWA events. Guests unaccompanied by members may reserve and purchase their tickets from 23 November only.

To request a vegetarian meal, to reserve and/or arrange payment, and for more information in general, please contact networking@pwa-milan.org

2007 CALENDAR

Mark the following dates in your 2007 diary to be sure not to miss future PWA events:

- 10 January: New Year *aperitivo*
 - 24 January: Speaker meeting
 - 7 February: Networking *aperitivo*
 - 21 February: Speaker meeting
 - 7 March: Networking *aperitivo*
 - 21 March: Speaker meeting
 - 4 April: Networking *aperitivo*
 - 18 April: Speaker meeting
 - 2 May: Networking *aperitivo*
 - 16 May: Speaker meeting
 - 6 June: Networking *aperitivo*
 - 20 June: Speaker meeting
 - 11 July: Summer party
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HOW TO JOIN

Individual membership

The best way to find out if PWA Milan is for you is to experience the association by coming to one of our events as a guest. Meet members, ask questions, speak to the members of the board and see whether joining would be beneficial for you.

To join, simply fill in completely and submit the online application form at www.pwa-milan.org and pay the dues.

Membership fees

September 2006-December 2006 €50

January 2007-December 2007 €100

September 2006-December 2007 €135

Corporate membership

Companies may join PWA Milan, enabling designated women employees to benefit from all that PWA has to offer. For further information, please refer to the website www.pwa-milan.org or email pwa@pwa-milan.org.

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