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MARGIT LEIDINGER

Famous Preservationist of Architectural Monuments



APRIL 2021



MARGIT LEIDINGER

Famous Preservationist of Architectural Monuments

At the age of three when most girls dream of visiting Disneyland, Margit Leidinger accompanied her father Kurt Leidinger, a master stonemason, to the Carrara Marble quarries in Italy. This was the foundation for many joint trips to various countries and quarries in the years to come, which became Margit's biggest asset when she started her own company - Finalit StoneCare.



Recalling those years of travel and learning, Margit says, "I got to know the stones and their characteristics from an early age, as well as cleaning and protection of any natural and artificial stone. I realised that the future lies in stone care, i.e. cosmetics for the stone, or what I call a woman's approach to stone."

Margit decided to attend an engineering school for construction and afterwards studied business administration at the University of Vienna which included four languages: English, Italian, Spanish and French.

She got to work immediately afterwards. "When I started, I worked minimum 80 hours a week, almost every weekend, and was hardly home before 9 pm. This went on for many

years. I could not have a family or animals, there was just no time left. This is the reason why I started my family life late, I dedicated my early years to my profession," shares Margit.

Soon, Margit had it all. A relationship, an eight year old daughter, a nine year old dog and a five year old cat. However, organisation became all the more essential. "A helping hand at home is important. At the end of the day it is more of a challenge for women I think as we are not only responsible for the company (if we have one on our own) but also for the kids, animals and the house," she says.

Margit experienced quite a few ups and downs in her career. But thanks to her general positive attitude, she got over the downs pretty quickly and



Minister Doris Bures and WOMAN editor-in-chief Euke Frank at a gala event. In 2009, Finalit StoneCare was also honoured with the ‘Pacemaker Award’ for being one of the best companies in Austria.

Throughout her successful journey, Margit’s biggest inspiration has always been her father. “He laid the foundation with the invention of our product line already in his company. His years of experience as a stonemason and businessman showed me the way forward,” she says.

Never easy being a woman in a man’s world, Margit says women are quick to doubt

their own decisions and think them over: “So any time I am insecure I talk to friends who have been in similar positions and try to find a solution out. My motto ‘There is always another solution’ helped me a lot in solving problems and forging ahead.”

Stones also play a role in Margit’s private life, through the 15 black and 15 white pieces each in backgammon! “I love to play backgammon, it is one of my biggest hobbies,” ends Margit with a smile.

always found a good solution for continuing in another way. She then faced her biggest challenge when she started her own company in 1997. “When I started my business in a technical surrounding, it took a while until male business partners accepted me as a woman in a technical niche. It took a lot more than it would take a man to prove that I have technical knowledge,” she reveals.

Margit didn’t let any of it hamper her fast ascend and today, Finalit StoneCare is one of the leading companies not only in Austria, but across the world. It specialises in the cleaning, care and protection of natural stones. The products used to carry out the works are based on a technology developed by Margit herself.

A proven market leader in its field, Finalit, along with its

partners in 22 countries, helps protect historical monuments from decay and maintain private buildings. “Working on great projects like the pyramids, Mecca, St. Peters Basilica in Vatican, Acropolis and many more and having cleaned, treated and protected all these projects gives me big motivation for more,” says Margit.

Her lifelong passion saw her being awarded the ‘Freeman of London 2006’ for her work with the Princess Diana Memorial. This honour is a status and one of the oldest surviving, originally British, honorary awards that a citizen in the English-speaking world could and still can receive. In 2008, she was bestowed with the ‘Woman Award’. The Woman Award is given to particularly committed and innovative women. The award was presented by Federal

