

Ore of the Alps UNESCO Global Geopark, Austria

“Music was my first love...”



St. Rupert youth
Brass Band.
Photo St. Rupert
School.

The Ore of the Alps UNESCO Global Geopark is famous for copper mining. Traces of mining can be found from the Bronze-Age until the end of the 1970s, when all mining activities were terminated. During the Bronze Age the area of the Geopark was one of Europe's most important copper mining centres. Copper was used at that time for making tools, weapons, jewellery and cult objects. The latter were often made of bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. The copper of the bronze components of the Nebra-Sky disc originate from the Geopark. All these objects from the Mitterberg/Buchberg region were made with copper famous for its high quality.

Nowadays weapons are not made from copper, instead it is now a component of more peaceful musical instruments. Copper is the primary raw material of the Lechner Music Company. The workshop in Bischofshofen produces brass wind instruments. Inspired by the requirements of domestic and international musicians, the instruments fulfill the highest demands of response, sound and intonation and set standards worldwide. Instruments made by the company can be found all over the world, e.g. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, London Royal Opera House, André Rieu Orchestra Holland, Florida Philharmonic Orchestra,



Making a
trumpet in the
workshop of
the Lechner
MusicCompany.
Photo M.
Lechner.



The People-
Power-Music
exhibition, 2016
in the Geopark's
visitor centre.
Photo H.
Ibetsberger.

Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra and others.

The raw materials such as brass, goldbrass (a brass alloy with a higher copper component) or nickel silver for the production in the Gaisbergsiedlung in Bischofshofen are derived entirely from Europe. The copper content is among other things essential for the sound, response and the durability of the brass instrument. Approximately 30 working hours are used in the production of a trumpet. Instruments can be tailored to each musician's personal requirements. Lechner Music is one of the leading companies and a "proud partner" and supporter of the Ore of the Alps UNESCO Global Geopark.

The special exhibition in the Geopark Visitor Centre in 2016, entitled "Man-Power-Music", provided an overview of the different folk music brass bands in the Geopark. The title "Man and Power" reflects how, following World War II, many people, mainly from Southern Tyrol, left their homeland and found a new home and employment in the large copper mining industry of today's Geopark. When the miners finished their work in the evening or during the weekend, many of them played in local folk music groups. In summary, it can be said, that the miners produced the copper for their instruments by their own hard work.

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