

## 2018 Annual Cranes Club conference held at Espace Barrault in Paris

Elisa Brann, edited by Antto Aassinen  
March 18, 2018



This year's annual Cranes Club conference was held on March 16th-18th, at Espace Barrault in Paris and was attended by some thirty-five professionals from across Europe (including a guest from the USA). The event was smaller than usual, owing to the Peace Starts with Me festival taking place in April, which not only understandably takes precedence for many with limited funds, but also resulted in the Directors scheduling the event a month early. All things considered, our weekend of guest speakers, networking sessions, mini workshops, and socializing proved impactful, with participants rating the overall success of the event 8.6 out of 10.

Some of the highlights of the conference included a variety of interesting and thought-provoking breakout sessions and inspiring keynote speeches. The annual general meeting saw the departure of three of the 2017 directors, Elisa Brann, Jung-Jae Hur and Sonja Read, the re-election of Antto Hassinen and Ely Loew, as well as the welcoming of three new board members, Inoë André, F. C. and Romica Spiegl-Jones (see below for more information about the 2018 Board of Directors). With this comes the exciting beginning of a new year, new goals and progress towards building a vibrant community of professionals from a Unificationist background. We look forward to you joining us in the year ahead!

### MAIN PROGRAM

On the first evening of the program, participants were welcomed by an opening address from one of the Cranes Club Directors, Antto Hassinen, who outlined the organisation's vision. This was followed by an informal interview with the current FFWPU European Regional Chair, Mike Balcomb and his wife Fumiko, who joined the program for the first two days. They touched on how for many first-generation members, joining the movement often meant they forewent their education, and therefore it is meaningful to see second-generation investing in their profession as well as fostering networks within the Unificationist community. This session was followed by some lively ice-breakers that helped participants to get to know one another and set the open and engaging tone of the event.

The main program took place on the Saturday and began with two inspiring keynote addresses. The first was from Jonathan Jesper, who is a second generation member from the USA. He shared his journey as a serial entrepreneur, starting from humble beginnings, facing a number of business crises, before reaching seven figures in sales and making six figures in profit selling on Amazon.com through private labelling – the true American dream. This was followed by the valuable testimony of Patrick Martin-Prevel, who shared the history of the Christian Bernard jewellery company, of which he

was a Board Director for many years. As well as providing an insight into the company's pioneering early years and successful, lucrative highs, he also shared the unfortunate experiences of its ongoing persecution as a result of its association with the movement. The keynote addresses were followed by an overview of the Cranes Club activities in 2017, which included the education and health conferences (please click for individual reports from these events).

There was a networking session in smaller groups meeting by area of interest, which included: business and finance, creative industries, science and technology, medicine and health, education and social work, policy and society. During this time, participants could share about their personal interests and

experiences of the professional environment, having the opportunity to meet new people, build connections, and have passionate discussions on topical issues.

In the afternoon, participants joined various breakout sessions that included workshops and presentations on the following themes: 'culture of change' and project development (Elisa Brann); financial planning and investment (Chris and Nick Jones); an introduction to the FFWPU Hyo Jeong Arts and Culture Department (Kazuha Canak), challenges and opportunities in coping with aging populations (Heiner Handshin), corporate interview practice (Ely Loew), the process of building a start-up business (Kim Blikas), cryptocurrencies (Pascal Roussel), following your dreams as a freelancer, youtuber and business owner (Romica Spiegl-Jones). More information about each of the speakers and their sessions can be found below.

The main part of the program concluded with a social evening that included an atmospheric dinner with many opportunities for cosy conversations. During the fireside talk Rafael Guignard offered a personal testimony about his experience as an older second generation Unificationist, finding his way in the world both as a husband, father of three, and professional table tennis coach. He gave an honest and intimate reflection on the experiences many second generation face, highlighting the value of fellowship that Cranes Club seeks to encourage. The evening culminated in a musical performance from aspiring artist, Pierre a.k.a. E-Motion.



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

A number of Cranes Club members who could not attend, were still able to join in virtually alongside all the other participants on Sunday morning during the Annual General Meeting. During the session, there was a reminder of the Cranes Club constitution and the nomination of the 2018 directors. In addition to this, membership also voted on the allocation of the first ever Cranes Club Europe grant (€500), which was awarded to the Healthy Minds project ([click this link for a copy of the project proposal](#))

As well as some discussion about membership fees and finances, it was determined that the membership-only newsletter that was offered during 2017, will now be made available to non-members in an effort to help promote and grow the Cranes Club network. Some suggestions were made concerning the aims of the 2018 Directors; these will be decided in the coming month and sent out to membership. A recording of the AGM is available on youtube and minutes can be viewed by clicking on [this link](#).

## **NEW DIRECTORS**

The following are the directors appointed for Cranes Club Europe during 2018. Their primary responsibilities include supporting the development of Cranes Club projects, management of the organisation's finances, and overseeing the preparations for the third Annual Meeting in 2019.

Inoë André is a software engineer since November 2017. He graduated from Grenoble Institute of Technology with honours in Signal and Image processing. His work in Paris consists in developing programs and applications to improve electricity consumption management.

As a director of Cranes Club, he wants to help CC members develop inspiring professional career and provide networking support so that they can harmoniously contribute to the society.

F. C., MSc, has been working in finance for the past 10 years, specializing in asset

management. He is currently working in Paris for the bank Société Générale as a portfolio analyst valuing hedge funds. In his free time, he enjoys organizing events for the youth in his community, music and spending time with friends. He wants to help Cranes Club become a network that can empower the professionals in the European community and abroad.

Antto Hassinen is a MSc student at Aalto University in Finland, majoring in finance and business administration. Besides his studies, he has actively served his local Unification community by taking responsibility in Family Federation and youth work for a number of years and has been a Director of Cranes Club Europe since 2017. Antto is also a second lieutenant in the Finnish Defence Forces. His hobbies include sports in several forms, playing in a band and moving outdoors in the nature.

Ely Loew is an experienced digital marketer, working with the world's largest advertisers (Google) on integrated Video and Display product solutions. He specializes in YouTube strategy and international branding campaign coordination, and has excellent product knowledge of the digital video marketplace, including non-Google products and solutions. Ely has served as a Director of Cranes Club Europe since 2016 and he is also national leader of FFWPU in the Republic of Ireland.



#### **SPEAKER BIOS (In program order)**

**JONATHAN JESPER – KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** Jonathan Jesper is an entrepreneur currently doing 7 figures in sales and making 6 figures in profit selling on Amazon.com through private labelling. He had a short history of doing arbitrage, reselling books and other discounted items for retail prices, but stumbled upon an online course which has led him to a life working on a laptop on his own time. He has been generous in sharing his success by coaching others to achieve what he has and more. Jonathan lives in Las Vegas NV together with his wife Yuri and cutest son Kesung.

**PATRICK MARTIN-PREVEL – KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** Patrick Martin-Prével joined our movement in 1973 in France. He worked as the General Manager of Christian Bernard Corporation during 35 years, from 1978 to 2012. Since his retirement, he became the President of the European Mission Foundation which oversees the finances and properties of the European Movement. He is also in charge of the Finance Department of the FFWPU France. He is a board member of UPF France where he and his wife work witnessing and educating Ambassadors for Peace. During the past three years, he also led a French translation and editing team of the three books of Holy Scriptures along with other publications. He is a devoted husband, father of four and grandfather of two adorable grandchildren.

**ELISA BRANN – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT (MINI WORKSHOP):** Elisa Brann is a PhD student in Cognitive Neuroscience at King's College London. For over ten years, she has been involved in countless social and community projects, developing creative project proposals, leading teams of volunteers, and obtaining thousands of pounds in external funding. She is currently one of the Directors of Cranes Club Europe and is leading Healthy Minds, a Cranes Club affiliated project that aims to explore the topic of mental health within the European Unificationist Community.



**KAZUHA CANAK – HYO JEONG ARTS AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT (PRESENTATION):** Kazuha Canak was appointed to establish and head the department of Hyo Jeong Arts & Culture in the FFWPU EUME region in November 2017. Since then she's been building a network of artists in the fields of music, dance, fine arts, and media. With her background in music, graphic design, and marketing, she's planning to support artists develop an understanding of Hyo Jeong and facilitate the creation of a God-centered culture through the arts.

Kazuha enjoys spending her free-time watching movies, working out, and traveling with her husband. She also has a passion for hand-lettering and tries to stay active on Instagram.

**HEINER W. HANDSCHIN – HOW TO COPE WITH AN EVER AGING POPULATION (PRESENTATION):** Heiner Handschin was born in Zurich in 1956 and he joined the Unification Movement in 1976. He is a graduate of the Teachers College of Zurich and studied Art and History of Art at University of Geneva and Academie des Beaux-Arts Genève. Mr. Handschin has been President of FFWPU Switzerland since May 1995 and part of the UPF Director Office for UN relations as well as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva since 2008. In addition, for the past 18 years he has been CEO of FPF – an assistance and care company providing care and nursing services for elderly and disabled people.

Mr. Handschins family consists of his wife, Carolyn, their seven children and three granddaughters. He has a special interest in fine arts and he is a passionate painter himself.



**ELY LOEW – INTERVIEW PRACTICE (MINI-WORKSHOP):** Ely Loew has been working in one of the world's largest tech firms (Google) for the past 7 years. During this time, he's interviewed candidates for a variety of roles, and reviewed numerous CVs. Through this experience, Ely has developed a sense of common mistakes and pitfalls that people make in corporate interviews.

Ely likes to spend his free time with his family, usually reading books or walking to the park with his wife and two young sons. If there is any additional free time after that, Ely enjoys listening to political podcasts, and making YouTube videos about his 2040 Presidential Campaign.

**CHRIS AND NICK JONES – ETHICAL INVESTMENT (PRESENTATION):** Chris Jones is a financial planner based in England. He is the director of Providential Finance, the family financial planning business. Providential finance helps families and businesses to increase their wealth, gain financial freedom and protect themselves and those they care for.

**KIM BLIKASAS – BUILDING A STARTUP (MINI WORKSHOP):** Kim Blikasas, graduated with a double degree in international Business and Trade from Macquarie University Sydney and Pantheon Assas – Paris. He always kept and worked with an entrepreneur mindset which allowed him to quickly grow within the company he joined right after his graduation. He worked 5 years in the financial software industry and gained substantial clients. He started as a salesman and ended being head of business in his region. His company decided to centralize their operation in London and Kim felt it was the right time to fly from his own. But towards what? Meanwhile Kim won a startup weekend with a friend working on a project called LinkArt to facilitate amateur artists to find a market. But with the artists was a limitation to him and he wanted to open the possibility to give a market to everything that could be considered hard to access, whether it is art, crafting, home, fashion etc.

**PASCAL ROUSSEL – WHAT'S FUNDAMENTALLY WRONG WITH EXISTING CURRENCIES AND WHAT ABOUT ALTERNATIVES SUCH AS CRYPTOCURRENCIES? (PRESENTATION):** Pascal Roussel is currently heading a Unit within the Risk Department of a large multinational investment bank in Luxemburg. He is also cofounder of Viberlocal.com a unique social network on the Internet which aims at solving four major problems: loneliness, lack of support and money to initiate a project and no certainty for an entrepreneur that there is a real demand for his project. He is the author of many articles on the financial crisis and of a novel "Divina Insidia" which describes the root of the evilness and flaws of the existing financial system built on interest-bearing loans. He is involved in cryptocurrencies on Viberlocal.com and on a separate project. He believes that if you don't succeed at first attempt try, try and try again! Pascal lives in Belgium with his wife and two children.



**ROMICA SPIEGL-JONES – FOLLOW YOUR PASSION, LOOK FEAR IN THE FACE, AND DO IT ANYWAY (PRESENTATION):** Romica Spiegl-Jones is a freelance children's book illustrator, designer, and creative entrepreneur based in Manchester UK. Her aim is to create moving illustrations for children's books and to inspire and support creative people by sharing her journey in the creative industries. Romica believes in lifelong learning and in the power of art and design. After business school with a focus on IT and a BA in Cultural and Social Anthropology, she decided to finally live life without

regrets and to follow her dream of a creative career. Romica is currently in her final few months of her BA Graphic Design with focus on illustration and loves to inspire other people to follow their passions founded on sound business strategies.

**RAFAEL GUIGNARD – FIRESIDE TALK:** My name is Rafael Guignard, I am 32 years old and I am blessed to Domila Dedours since 2005 and we have 3 children. I am professional table tennis coach since 2009. I started playing table tennis when I was 7 and I am a semi-professional player still today. Focusing on table tennis I have not been much involved in the church in my teenage years. I went to STF in 2004 and in my 4th year I became STF director in 2007-2008. I continued as a commander and service project coordinator for STF in 2008-2009 and became responsible for CARP in France from 2010 to 2012. I got my Master's degree in Political and social Philosophy in 2013. From 2013 until 2017 I focused more on my family and my work as a table tennis coach. In 2017 even though my coaching career was going well (ex: one of my players became U13 National Champion) I felt like something was missing in my life, mainly a higher purpose, even though I always focused on character education in my work as a coach. I decided to get involved actively in our movement again and I decided to plan a shift in my professional career, wanting to specify in mental training in table tennis and sports in general and moving later towards life and personal development coaching. This is one of the reasons why I am at this cranes club meeting this year even though I was supposed to be coaching in a national competition.