



in June, 2018

To the English Teachers at the European Rudolf Steiner Schools / Waldorf Schools

Dear Colleagues,

Spring has finally arrived, which means that the time has come to invite you to this year's



from **Sunday, November 11th – Friday, November 16th , 2018**

in beautiful, historic and now wonderfully renovated **Haus Altenberg**. For those of you who are not familiar with the concept of the *English Week*, here is a brief description of what you can expect:

The concept of the *English Week* is based on our conviction that intensive artistic work with actors, directors, storytellers, poets and clowns, can be of immeasurable benefit for foreign language teachers. Thus, we view the daily three-hour artistic workshops as the keystone of the entire *English Week*. In addition, there are morning lectures based on the general conference theme and a wide variety of working groups addressing different methodological issues and questions, as well as a 'Market Place' offering an exchange of materials and ideas. The evenings are full of the "Spirit of English" in the forms of songs, dances and artistic presentations. Another aspect that has always been important to us is to encourage an open exchange with leading authorities in teaching both inside and outside of Waldorf circles.

The theme of this year's conference will be

Language, Love and Life in Teaching

A primary basis for a successful pedagogy of foreign language teaching and learning is an interest and the will to understand the living language as an *Other*. From this perspective, learning another language inevitably means being open to the *Other* - as embodied in a person, in a language and in different cultures. Understood as such, it cannot be the search for equivalents, for the simple translation of words or ideas from one language to another, because every language gives expression to an experience of the world that is individually, linguistically and culturally situated. It is this understanding of language learning which underlies Waldorf foreign language teaching.

Love in a pedagogical context also means being open to the being of the *Other* and likewise implies both interest and the will to understand the *Other* as such. It is coupled with a heart-felt attitude of caring and a heightened sense of responsibility for one's pupils. Although it is perhaps unusual in our times to speak of love in education, it is a theme that lies at the heart of Waldorf pedagogy: As Rudolf Steiner wrote, "Accept the child into school with humility, educate the child with love, and have the child leave school as free." ("Das Kind in Ehrfurcht aufnehmen, in Liebe erziehen, in Freiheit entlassen.") One also finds it as a central pedagogical theme in the lives and writings of other pioneering educators including Maria Montessori, Janusz Korczak, Martin Buber and Paolo Freire. The Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, who devoted his life to creating a pedagogy that could free people from all forms of oppression, wrote of his understanding of a teacher's task:

It is a task that requires that those who commit themselves to teaching develop a certain love not only of others but also of the very process implied in teaching. It is impossible to teach without the courage to love, without the courage to try a thousand times before giving up. (...) We must dare, in the full sense of the word, to speak of love without the fear of being called ridiculous, mawkish, or

unscientific, if not antiscientific. We must dare in order to say scientifically, and not as mere blah-blah-blah, that we study, we learn, we teach, we know with our entire being. We do all of these things with feeling, with emotion, with wishes, with fears, with doubts, with passion, and also with critical reasoning.

What significance do thoughts and feelings regarding language and love in teaching have in our lives? We believe that they play decisive roles in shaping what and how we teach and in our entire attitudes towards life. We also believe that they are inextricably connected to our possibilities of supporting and enabling pupils to realize their individual possibilities and intentions in their own lives. Although difficult to pin down, these aspects belong to that realm which Steiner referred to as the *imponderables* of teaching and learning and which are often far more crucial than we might imagine.

The different lectures and courses of the English Week 2018 will attempt to address these different themes and questions. Parallel to this, it is our deep-seated conviction that the artistic workshops, which constitute the 'heart' of each *English Week*, will play a decisive role in this respect insofar as they offer teachers unique chances to go substantially further in developing their entire range of perceptual capabilities, as well as a higher degree of self-awareness; all within a highly supportive environment full of warmth, humour and trust.

The entire English Week Team 2018 will naturally be

a great help in enabling us to realize such goals and ideals. We are delighted to be able to welcome **Chaz Pugliese**, undoubtedly one of Europe's most creative and dynamic EFL teachers, to this year's English Week.. If you are not aware of Chaz's broad range of artistic methods of teaching you're missing something very special and we are very much looking forward to being able to work with him. It's a great joy to welcome for the first time **Isabelle Schweitzer**, a Geneva born and well-renowned solo performer in the art of mime. We are delighted to have **Sarah Kane** one of the leading Chekov drama specialists in Europe and the U.S.A., back with us this year. We are very happy that two very appreciated colleagues **Catherine Bryden** for theatre clowning and **Paul Matthews**, England's leading specialist for creative writing, will be present. **Michael Rose** from York will be back with us again to teach us songs for the classroom and work with the *English Week Choir*. **Norman Skillen** from South Africa, one of our co-founders, will also be able to join us again. **Susan Wehner** from Hamburg, **Mario Radisic** from Haan-Gruiten and **Beate Langer** from Stuttgart will all be giving courses this year again. Furthermore, two experienced colleagues, **Thorsten Hakansson** from Hamburg and **Craig Boulton** teaching in Schopfheim, will share their expertise in working groups. And naturally the **old team** - Silvia Albert-Jahn (*Mülheim*), Erhard Dahl, Christoph Jaffke (*Stuttgart*), Doris Schlott-Lüdicke (*Frankfurt*), Peter Lutzker (*Stuttgart*), Duncan Macintosh (*Forest Row/GB*), Robert McNeer (*Ostuni, Italy*), Martyn Rawson (*Kiel*), Ulrike Sievers (*Hamburg*), Alec Templeton (*Basel*), and Tessa Westlake (*Bochum*) - will all be back.

We will offer

an open 'Teacher's Sharing', designed to facilitate the exchange of teaching materials and ideas for all grade levels. This space is intended to enable teachers to directly offer and explain resource material and ideas they have developed. Thus, please bring copies to exhibit and share; examples of students' work, and/or books/readers you wish to recommend - - even the smallest contribution like a tongue twister or a poem that worked well is welcome.

We are very glad to be back in the fully renovated facilities of *Haus Altenberg*. Whereas the rooms will be brand-new, that beautiful old Gothic cathedral in the courtyard is still standing there and for those of you who don't know it, *Haus Altenberg* is a wonderful place to spend an inspiring week. **The amount of places and rooms is limited, so we strongly suggest that you register soon. See you in Altenberg!**

Peter Lutzker Silvia Albert-Jahn Doris Lüdicke Martyn Rawson Christoph Jaffke