



Waldorf English Week e.V.
www.english-week.de

June, 2022

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

Dear Colleagues,

Two years ago, the Covid 19 pandemic forced us to cancel our annual English Week. Last year, the extensive damage to Haus Altenberg due to the floods in August 2021, led to the next cancellation. **However, this year we are very optimistic that we will be able to renew what has been an inspiring tradition for Waldorf teachers throughout the world for over twenty years.** After these last two years, we think it has become particularly important to be able to look ahead towards a future that can provide us with hope and exciting possibilities to work together. We are thus very glad to invite you now to the next



from **Sunday, November 6th – Friday, November 11th, 2022**
in the beautiful, historic **Haus Altenberg**, near Cologne.

Since its founding, the *English Week* has always seen its primary task as offering language teachers different possibilities to develop and support those personal and professional capabilities which Waldorf teaching, understood as an art, continually calls for. For those of you who are not familiar with the *English Week* here is a brief description, which can serve as a first introduction:

The concept of the English Week is based on our conviction that intensive artistic work with actors, directors, story-tellers, 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 form of songs, dances and artistic presentations.

The theme of this year's conference will remain what we had very much hoped to have as our theme last year:
Presence and Perception in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning.

This theme seems to us more relevant than ever after our experiences of teaching during the pandemic.

For both the teacher and the learner, being *fully present* is what opens up the richest possibilities in teaching and learning. And realizing such possibilities is inextricably tied to *how* and *what* we are able to perceive. As Aldous Huxley famously wrote: "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite." The confluence of an enhanced presence and perception leads to a 'wakefulness' which can enable both us and our pupils to sense what can be revealed beneath the surface of everyday experience and judgements. And it is from this point on, that both teachers and pupils are most open for a broad range of new discoveries and intuitions while teaching and learning.

Among the crucial questions that emerge from this theme are the following:

- *How can we as teachers work to develop our capabilities of presence and perception - in our preparations, while standing in front of our classes and in our reflections afterwards?*
- *How can pupils at different age levels be supported in their own development of these qualities?*

It is evident that, for pupils, making such steps will profoundly shape their entire experience of language learning. It is also evident that our own steps in this regard will play a crucial role in our being able to motivate and support them.

There is, in the meantime, a further question that can be added:

- *What can teachers and pupils learn about the nature of presence and perception from our mutual experiences during the pandemic?*

The lectures and courses of the English Week 2022 will attempt to address these questions. Parallel to this, it is also our deep-seated conviction that it is exactly the artistic workshops, which constitute the 'heart' of each *English Week*, which offer teachers unique chances to go substantially further in developing both the entire range of their perceptual capabilities, as well as a higher degree of presence; all within a highly supportive environment full of warmth, humour and trust.

The entire English Week Team 2022 will naturally be

a great help in enabling us to realize such goals and ideals. We are very happy that **Paul Matthews**, England's leading specialist for creative writing, and **Norman Skillen** from Ireland, one of our co-founders, will also be able to join us again.. This year for the first time we will have one of England's outstanding storytellers **Martin Maudsley** joining us. **Clive Ford**, a renowned musician and music teacher from Hamburg will be a member of the team and will create an evening English Week Choir and bring a varied repertoire of songs to aid our classroom activities in his working groups. **Susan Wehner** from Hamburg, **Mario Radisic** from Haan-Gruiten, **Miriam Watson** from Marburg, **Kristina Döring** from Düsseldorf, **Beate Langer** from Stuttgart, **Alex Spencer** from Berlin, and **Kavita Simon** from Freiburg and will all be giving courses. And naturally, Silvia Albert-Jahn (*Mülheim*), Christoph Jaffke (*Stuttgart*), Doris Schlott (*Frankfurt*), Peter Lutzker (*Stuttgart*), Robert McNeer (*Ostuni, Italy*), Martyn Rawson (*Kiel/Hamburg*), Ulrike Sievers (*Hamburg*), Alec Templeton (*Basel*), Catherine Bryden (*Kirn*) and Tessa Westlake (*Bochum*) will all be back.

We will also offer

an open '**Market Place**', 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 you wish to recommend.**

We are very glad to be once again in *Haus Altenberg* (www.haus-altenberg.de). Whereas the rooms are new, having been renovated both before and *after* the flood, that beautiful old Gothic cathedral in the courtyard is still standing there and for those of you who don't know it and the immediate area, it's a wonderful place to spend an inspiring week.

The 'Corona' question:

We are, of course, fully aware that there is still a lingering question whether a new wave of the virus in fall might lead to another cancellation of the conference. It may be advisable to book long-distance flights only after it seems clear that the event will take place. We have arranged with Haus Altenberg to reach a final decision by the end of September.

At the same time, **the number of available rooms** in Haus Altenberg, due to damages caused by the 2021 floods to the popular guest house 'Brauhaus' near the stream, **has become more limited than ever before**. Since we regularly have long waiting lists, we strongly suggest that you register soon. If it is possible for you, we also encourage you to book double rooms, instead of single rooms. Naturally, if the conference has to be cancelled you would be immediately informed and your deposit and/or conference fee would be fully refunded.

We hope very much to be able to see you in Altenberg!

Peter Lutzker • Silvia Albert-Jahn • Doris Schlott • Martyn Rawson • Christoph Jaffke • Ulrike Sievers