

Montessori Europe Congress Gdansk 2023

*Promoting Solidarity and Social Justice
in Montessori Education*

Final Programme

nienhuis[®]
montessori since 1929



View our
new catalog



Learning is in the details

Welcome



Barbara Isaacs
President
Montessori Europe

On behalf of the Montessori Europe Board, I am delighted to welcome you to the 2023 Montessori Europe Annual Congress. In organising this year's event we have been privileged to work with the Faculty of Social Sciences at Gdansk University whose contemporary, spacious, light and airy building provides a wonderful venue for our discussions *Promoting Solidarity and Social Justice in Education*. During the Board's preparatory January visit we were greeted with warmth and good will, in the spirit fitting for this historic city which saw the birth of the Solidarity movement and spearheaded a powerful and relatively peaceful revolution in Eastern Europe more than quarter of a century ago.

This meeting inspired the plan to present an ambitious Congress to our Montessori community. We have extended our Friday programme, which traditionally begins with school visits in the morning, by showcasing Montessori Europe's commitment to research, sustainability, the promotion of education for adolescents and a reflection on our education for peace. This year's keynotes are inspired by research, Gdansk history, and reflect on the importance of solidarity and equity as we, as educators, help children and young people navigate the early stages of their journey through life. These presentations and the extended selection of workshops draw on the experience, knowledge and understanding of colleagues from across a wide spectrum of organisations, demonstrating Montessori Europe's capacity to engage with, reflect on and challenge our practice.

We are delighted to be working with Riemer Brandsma, Young Sustainability Ambassador and Student Advisor to Montessori Europe, who will lead our adolescent forum on Sunday morning - a feature of the congress which was initiated last year in Amsterdam and which we hope will become a regular opportunity for young people interested in engaging with environmental issues.

Sunday morning will also offer you the opportunity to participate in Bewildering Montessori: In the Service of the Child - a discussion panel where we will endeavour to explore, challenge and reflect on some of the current issues engaging our community as we continue to promote Montessori education and its impact on children, families and society today.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who is helping and contributing to making the Gdansk weekend a success - the many staff members of the University; nursery, kindergarten and schools teams offering to host their Montessori colleagues; our speakers and workshop leaders; sponsors and exhibitors; and my Montessori Europe Board colleagues. I hope you will find the programme exciting, invigorating and inspiring and that you will be able to make time to visit the medieval part of the city and the Solidarity Museum which so aptly documents our need to work together for better future of humanity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Isaacs". Below the signature is a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line.

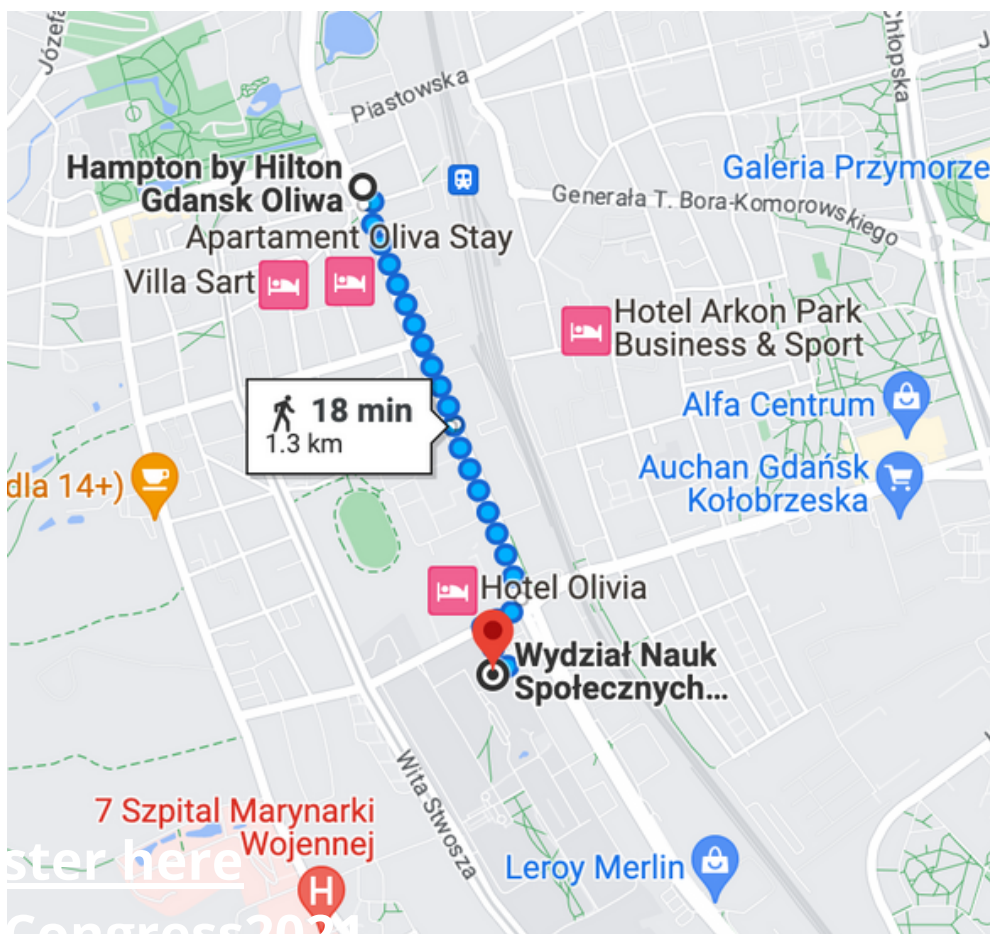
About our Venue



Address

University of Gdańsk
Social Sciences Faculty
Jana Bażyńskiego 4, 80-952 Gdańsk

[Click here for map](#)



New this year



dr Jarek Jendza
Board Member
Chair, Research
Group
Montessori Europe

Research Day

Friday 29 September

Montessori Europe considers as one of the important elements of its mission the promotion of research and connecting of different educational communities, especially within the approach pioneered by Maria Montessori in the early 20th century. This year, the Board of Montessori Europe, in order to meet the expectations of members of the Montessori community, is dedicating the whole first day of the congress (Friday 29 September 2023) to the presentation and promotion of the achievements of scholars. This will be an excellent opportunity to share the latest research results with the international community.

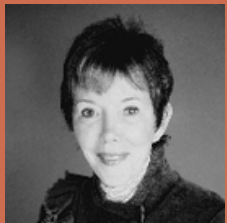
In the Spring of this year, an open call for submissions for speeches presenting research results in the field of Maria Montessori education and pedagogy during the annual Montessori Europe Congress was shared with the Montessori Community. A panel met to review the submissions and we look forward to sharing with you the work of the successful researchers at our inaugural Research Day on Friday 29 September.

Adolescents Forum

Sunday 1 October

Adolescents are growing up in a changing and complex world. Our role is to ensure they develop the skills to become lifelong learners making informed decisions and able to positively engage with their communities. In this effort, we continue, at our Congress in Gdansk, to offer a programme for adolescents, providing a platform to amplify their voice.

The Adolescent Forum is designed to empower European students to take action on sustainability in their communities and work together with peers. It is based on a similar event held at the 2022 Montessori Europe Congress in Amsterdam. Judith Cunningham, Montessori Europe Vice President and Riemer Brandsma, Student Advisor to Montessori Europe, are delighted, on behalf of Montessori Europe, to organise the ME Adolescent Forum for you and your students.



Judith Cunningham
Vice President
Chair, Adolescents
Forum
Montessori Europe

New this year



dr Jarek Jendza
Board Member
Chair, Research
Group
Montessori Europe

Bewildering Montessori: In the Service of Children?

Sunday 1 October

Bewildering Montessori is an attempt to gather professionals working with children in various contexts and implementing different solutions (sometimes far from Montessori approach) around a central issue and to welcome diverse interpretations. This year we will address the question of what it may mean to be *in the service of the child*.

We hope you will join us as we critically engage with our practice and principles and keep Montessori thought alive and vibrant by meeting, sharing ideas as well as challenging it and looking at it from various perspectives.

The term "Bewildering" in relation to education, is an academic concept introduced by Nathan Snaza in his article "Bewildering Education" (2013). In his article, Snaza the author proposes an alternative theory of education that breaks with more than 2000 years of educational philosophy. The author calls it "bewildering education" since it does not seek pre-determined ends (the production of "humans").

**"The art of education must become a service to
these powers inherent in all children.
It must be a help to life."**

Montessori, M. *The 1946 London Lectures*, 2012:18





FRIDAY

- 09.00 – 16.00: A full research day where researchers will present their research and findings
- 09.00 – 12.00: Morning school visits
- 14.00: Registration Opens
- 14.30 – 16.00: Open Spaces for practitioners and national organisations to engage with a variety of topics including Sustainability, Adolescents, the Post-Covid and AI Inspired World, and Applying Peace in Education
- 16.30 – 17.30: Annual General Meeting
- 18.00 – 19.30: Keynote presentation – Solange Denervaud, University of Geneva

SATURDAY

- 09.00 – 13.00: A full morning of exciting key notes followed by interactive discussions led by a facilitator. Key notes presented by:
- Andre Roberfroid, Global Ambassador, Association Montessori Internationale
 - Maati Wafford, Director of Anti-bias Antiracist Education, American Montessori Society
 - Professor Tomasz Szkudlarek, University of Gdansk
- 13.00 – 14.30: Lunch
- 14.30 – 18.00: An afternoon filled with a diverse offering of workshops focusing, amongst other things, on:
- Identity
 - Unconscious bias and blind spots
 - How multiculturalism can help to educate for peace
 - The role of nature in fostering solidarity
 - Children's rights
 - Inclusive music and movement
 - The significance of relationships in building a community
 - And much more
- 18.00 – 19.00: Drinks Reception

SUNDAY

- 09.30 – 13.00: Adolescents Forum – a platform to amplify the adolescents voice – by adolescents, for adolescents
- 10.30 – 12.15: *Bewildering Montessori: In the Service of Children?* A panel discussion in which we explore and critically engage with our Montessori practice and principles, considering pedagogical approaches which sit alongside our Montessori perspective.
- 13.00: Close

Featured Sponsors



Sponsors



Exhibitors/Supporters



Our Mission

Inspired by Maria Montessori's legacy, Montessori Europe connects Montessorians in Europe and beyond, to consider how education can be reimagined to help guide our children to cope with the complexities and uncertainties of the modern world in the 21st Century. Recognising the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, alongside specific initiatives such as the UNESCO Futures of Education programme, we offer events and other opportunities to encourage networking and collaboration amongst our members, promoting the exchange of ideas and mutual support, facilitating the preparation of today's children for tomorrow's world.

Membership of Montessori Europe provides access to:

- Discount and prioritised booking access for members to our Annual Congress offering early bird access to registering for workshops and school visits
- Voting privileges in the election of the Montessori Europe Board of Directors and at the AGM
- Exclusive access to a members' forum on our website
- Online webinars with exclusive access to recordings and certificates of attendance for members

Join Montessori Europe TODAY!



Friday 29 September: at a glance

Morning

School Visits

With the kind help of Beata Licznarska, Polskie Centrum Montessori, we have secured school visit places in a wide range of provision from forest school to Montessori by the sea and a Christian focused setting. Some schools have several locations and cater for babies and toddlers, 3-6 years olds and also primary age children.

If you noted your interest in school visits at the time of registration, you will have received details on which school you are visiting. Any questions regarding school visits to be directed to:

Ellen Zeiss: +49 173 841 2563

Carola Lang-Howard: +357 999 50070

Please note that you are welcome to directly attend your school visit, before coming to the Congress Venue in the afternoon to collect your badge and attend our afternoon programme.

09.00 - 16.00

Research Day

A full day dedicated to the presentation and promotion of the achievement of scholars. Details on page 11.

14.30 - 16.00

Open Spaces:

An opportunity for all Congress delegates to engage with a variety of topics. Details on page 14.

16.30 - 17.30

AGM

16.30 - 17.30

Erdkinder Programmes in Practice: a Video Presentation

18.00 - 19.30

Research Keynote Speech

Details on page 18.

"This then is our task, to gather the highest discoveries that have been made in the sciences, to render them clear and fascinating, and offer them to childhood."

Montessori, M. *Creative Development in the Child*, 2020: 367



Research Day

Research Day

Montessori Europe considers as one of the important elements of its mission the promotion of research and connecting of different educational communities, especially within the approach pioneered by Maria Montessori in the early 20th century. At this year's Congress, we are introducing a full Research Day dedicated to the presentation and promotion of the achievements of scholars. This will be an excellent opportunity to hear the latest research results with the international community.

Chairs:

- **dr. Jaap de Brouwer**, Saxion University of Applied Sciences
- **dr. Jaroslaw Jendza**, University of Gdansk
- **prof. Piotr Zamojski**, Department of Education Studies, Polish Naval Academy

Presenters (*in order of presentation*):

Session 1: 09.20 - 11.00

- **Hannah Baynham**, American Montessori Society, *Beyond the 3 Period Lesson: Understanding Montessori Teacher Education as Transformation in Teaching and Learning*
- **Beata Bednarczuk**, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin, *Potential and Actual Significance of the Montessori Learning Environment*
- **Per Gynther & Eva-Maria Tebano Ahlquist**, Stockholm University, *Sensorimotor Exercises and Training of the Hand in Preschool Children's Learning to Read and Write*

Session 2: 11.15 - 12.30

- **Lucy Blackwell, East Anglia Ruskin University**, *Designing a System of Learning Materials to Explain Climate Change to Children*
- **Kerstin Signert**, University of Gothenburg, *Variation and Invariance in Maria Montessori's Sensory Training Materials*
- **Dessi Stoeva**, Sofia University, *Teaching and Learning Media and Digital Literacy in Montessori Preschools*

Research abstracts can be found at the back of this programme.

Priority entry to the Research Day will be given to those who noted their interest in attending at the time of registration.

Research Day Programme

Room: S204 (Auditorium)

08.00 - 09.00

**Registration for Research Day Participants
& Welcome Coffee & Tea (foyer - level 200)**

09.00 - 09.15

**Welcome and ME "research mission statement"
Barbara Isaacs, President, Montessori Europe**

09.20 - 11.00

**Session 1 of research presentations
Chair, dr Jaroslaw Jendza and prof. Piotr Zamojski**

11.00 - 11.15

Coffee & Tea (foyer - level 200)

11.15 - 12.30

**Session 2 of research presentations
Chair: dr Jaap de Brouwer and prof. Piotr Zamojski**

12.30 - 13.15

Lunch break (self-catered)

13.15 - 13.45

Open space: research collaboration proposal/project invitations

13.45 - 14.45

**What's new in Montessori research?
Facilitator: dr Jaap de Brouwer**

In this workshop, we challenge ourselves to examine what has been happening in the Montessori research field over the past year. We look back at important themes, articles, and published papers. Where necessary, we discuss their outcomes and impact. We also take a small look ahead: what is in store for us in the forthcoming school year?

15.00 - 16.00

Starting your own Montessori research and observation as a research methodology - workshop

Facilitators: dr Jaroslaw Jendza and prof. Piotr Zamojski

This workshop is aimed at developing the in-class observation techniques as well as small-scale practice reflection projects. Maria Montessori underlined numerous times that in order to follow the child we need to have scientific spirit and skills, thus observation is undoubtedly one of the key-competence of the Montessori Guides. During the meeting we will look into the types of observation as point to a few useful tools. You are most welcome!

16.00 - 18.00

Coffee & Tea (foyer - level 200)

Peruse the posters submitted by presenting researchers and connect with fellow Congress Participants ahead of our Research Keynote Speech.

18.00 - 19.30

**Research Keynote Speech
Flexible Self-direction in Montessori-schooled Students: Evidence from
Behavioural and Neuroimaging Studies
dr Solange Denervaud, Lausanne University Hospital, Switzerland**



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
THE INTERNATIONAL
MONTESSORI INSTITUTE

SPECIALISE IN MONTESSORI EDUCATION AND PREPARE FOR A FULFILLING CAREER WORKING WITH CHILDREN

This two-year degree course will encourage you to think differently about education.

Scholarships of up to £3,000 are available.

Discover more and apply now at:
leedsbeckett.ac.uk/montessorieducation



Montessori-Pierson Publishing Company

Montessori-Pierson Publishing Company

The Montessori-Pierson Publishing Company (MPPC) publishes and distributes the books and previously unpublished writings by Maria Montessori in the English language as well as the Spanish language.

The Montessori-Pierson Publishing Company has the following objectives:

- to publish and distribute books and unpublished writings by Maria Montessori as well as translations thereof.
- to uphold, propagate and further the pedagogical principles and practice formulated by Maria Montessori for the full development of the human being
- to care for and maintain all the (publishing) rights and copyrights of the work of Maria Montessori and the Archives of Maria Montessori



Friday 29 September

14.00

Registration opens for all participants

Coffee & Tea (foyer - level 200)

14.30 - 16.00

Open Spaces

Running simultaneously, these Open Spaces offer Congress participants the opportunity to engage with a variety of topics. The Open Spaces are accessible to all Congress participants and do not require pre-registration.

Applying Montessori's Vision for Peace Today

ROOM A208

Tammy Oesting, ClassroomMechanics, USA and Judith Cunningham, Vice President, Montessori Europe / Founder, Montessori Model United Nations, Italy

Montessori practices provide us with the tools and values to address the rise of nationalism, growing climate changes, and rampant violations of human rights. Participants will understand how cosmic education is the golden thread connecting all elements of peace education and be able to link human solidarity and our connection with the natural world. Participants will acquire a sense of empowerment and agency for change. Join this reflective and interactive workshop with Montessori educators Judith Cunningham and Tammy Oesting as they propose how together, we might build upon Montessori's vision for peace education through today's understanding of universal and human tendencies to build a sustainable and just life for all.

**"Preventing conflicts
is the work of politics;
establishing peace is
the work of education.
We must convince the
world of the need for a
universal, collective
effort to build the
foundation for peace."**

Montessori, M. Education and Peace
2007: 30



Friday 29 September

Can the Montessori Method Withstand the Post-Covid AI-Inspired World? A dialogue for Montessori Organisations and Associations

ROOM A205

Susanne van Niekerk, Montessori Centre South Africa, South Africa

With the current global pandemic and its associated fall-out impacting every aspect of our daily lives, including education, it is crucial to assess the challenges that face our education approach. The Montessori method of education is built on the idea that children are natural learners and that education should be tailored to the children's needs, interests and pace, taking into account their time, place and culture. The approach, that Montessori envisioned for ALL children, prioritises hands-on learning, child-led exploration and individualised learning plans. However, the rise of technology and Artificial Intelligence has brought new challenges to our traditional Montessori teaching and teacher training. Furthermore, the pandemic has also raised concerns about all stakeholders in the Montessori community – the children, teachers, school administrators and parents. This has resulted in children being kept at home for longer, and schools struggling to remain financially robust. Training colleges are also met with a new wave of digital learners who are seemingly no longer interested or able to attend on-campus training, which has its own impacts on the new generation of Montessori teachers.

Solidarity is synonymous with the city of Gdansk where the first free labour union strikes in 1980 laid the foundation for Solidarnosc, a nationwide social movement. As we navigate these unprecedented times, it is fitting that we come together in solidarity in Gdansk as a community of national Montessori organisations and associations to explore how the Montessori method of education can continue to thrive and meet the needs of children worldwide whilst also prioritising wellbeing and belonging of all its participants.

Hosted by our National Organisations Working Group, join us to share experiences and explore possible solutions in providing help and guidance for our Montessori community.

“...science has made great progress, and so has our work; but our principles have only been confirmed, and along with them our conviction that mankind can hope for a solution to its problems, among which the most urgent are those of peace and unity, only by turning its attention and energies to the discovery of the child and to the development of the great potentialities of the human personality in the course of its formation.”

Montessori, M. The Discovery of the Child, 2017: 9

Friday 29 September

Maria Montessori's Erdkinder – A Revolutionary Concept for Educating Adolescents: A Panel Discussion **ROOM A210/A209**

"Adolescents need a school that is not a school."

Consistently based on the developmental needs in adolescence, Maria Montessori designed the concept of a 'Centre for Study and Work on the Land' for students aged 12-16 (18) years, which, with its components of farm school, store and bed & breakfast gives young people the chance to learn about and experience the basic social structures of production, trade and services in a manageable, transparent and protected setting.

A new book on Maria Montessori's Erdkinder concept is about to be published in English by LIT Verlag Münster/ Germany Ela Eckert (ed.) (2023): *Maria Montessori's Erdkinder – A Revolutionary Concept for Educating Adolescents* (ISBN: 978-3-643-91430-9)

On this occasion, the editor of the book and three of the co-authors will offer a discussion on the core statements of the concept and share their experiences with practical implementations. Afterwards, the audience is invited to participate in the discussion.

Participants in the panel discussion are:

- dr Ela Eckert, board member Deutsche Montessori Gesellschaft e.V. (German Montessori Society), author and editor of the book
- dr Maria Angelica Paez Barrameda and Joseph Christopher Barrameda, founders and directors of The Abba's Orchard Montessori Schools/ Philippines and co-authors of the book
- Roman Klune, Director of the Erdkinder Programme at the Montessori Campus Vienna and co-author of the book

Hosted by our Adolescents Working Group, this discussion, moderated by Ellen Zeiss, Board Member of Montessori Europe, will focus on questions such as:

- Which are the core principles of Maria Montessori's concept for adolescents?
- Practical work is a crucial element in the Erdkinder concept. What is meant by Work & Studies in this context?
- How important is the principle of 'boarding'?
- Is the Farm School approach relevant for adolescents for 12-15 years? Or even for ages 16-18?
- What is most important when planning and starting an Erdkinder implementation?
- Is there any scientific evidence on the effectiveness of Maria Montessori's concept?
- This panel discussion will allow exciting insights into implementations of the Farm School concept – and thus into a learning arrangement that gives young people a high degree of responsibility and participation and strengthens their commitment to a sustainable approach to natural resources and a peaceful way of living.

Friday 29 September

Solidarity through Sustainability

ROOM A206

Hannah Khiani, Unity Montessori School/Collaborative Montessori, UK and Kate Larsson, Westwood Montessori, UK

Hosted by our Sustainability Working Group, this interactive workshop will explore how, through story-telling and small-scale projects, we can embed the principles of Comic Education in our early years environments. With a focus on including our youngest citizens, within the 'Absorbent Mind' we will work in small groups to consider the role of the adult in the environment and ways in which we can challenge our practice. This collaborative workshop welcomes everyone to share their ideas and together we will look at ways to develop activities which give children agency and understanding of sustainability in action. We will explore ways to expose young children to big ideas and real-life experiences both within and outside of their own cultures and communities. By reflecting on the importance of inclusive practice we will discuss how to nurture children into being responsible and respectful citizens of the world, who are equipped to celebrate and care for their planet. Throughout the session we will consider how sustainability starts with small steps and the foundations of belonging, listening and connecting with others.

16.00 - 16.30

Coffee & Tea (foyer - level 200)

16.30

Annual General Meeting

ROOM S204 (Auditorium)

Members of Montessori Europe are invited to attend and vote at our the Montessori Europe Annual General Meeting. Guests are welcome but will not have the right to vote.

16.30 - 17.45

Erdkinder Programmes in Practice

ROOM A210/A209

Come and enjoy this video presentation, open to all, sharing different Erdkinder Programmes in practice from around the world. The video includes:

- a presentation of the adolescent programme at a school in the Philippines
- a presentation of the adolescent programme at a school in Germany
- a presentation with photos of Erdkinder programmes from around the world

17.30 - 18.00

Comfort Break

18.00

Research Day Keynote Speech

Open to all Delegates

Flexible Self-direction in Montessori-schooled Students: Evidence from Behavioural and Neuroimaging Studies ROOM S204 (Auditorium)

dr Solange Denervaud, Lausanne University Hospital, Switzerland

The self-regulation of thoughts and actions is shaped by environmental factors. However, little is known about how different pedagogies affect it across development. Many comparative studies of students experiencing a Montessori versus a traditional pedagogy revealed differences in a wide range of academic, cognitive, and social-emotional outcomes. Consequently, it is often suggested that Montessori-schooled students develop higher executive functions. While it is supported by some studies, it is not always replicated, especially in wealthy Western children. Using behavioural and neuroimaging experimental designs we show that instead of higher executive abilities (i.e., cognitive control), Montessori compared with traditionally-schooled children develop higher self-direction, a form of flexible self-monitoring abilities. This capacity to set goals and adapt actions up to their achievement implies sustained voluntary but flexible control that cannot be captured through short-term regular behavioural tasks. These neuroimaging studies investigating the links between school pedagogy (Montessori, traditional), self-monitoring skills, and flexibility highlight a positive modulatory effect of the Montessori pedagogy on brain networks crucial for cognitive flexibility and self-monitoring processes, but not executive control. I will conclude with data suggesting that peer-to-peer learning is one aspect of the Montessori pedagogy that supports this development. Together, our work calls to broaden our perspectives on executive function development in school children.

Modern Montessori International Group

Modern Montessori International (MMI) was established with the primary purpose of preserving the time-honoured Montessori tradition by promoting pre-school services and teacher-training opportunities. MMI also provides franchising opportunities for prospective business partners.

MMI Group has seen phenomenal growth in the last two decades, operating close to 100 teacher-training colleges and pre-school centres across the World.



NURTURING · INSPIRING · EDUCATING

Global Headquarters (London)
Modern Montessori International Limited
46 Leslie Grove, Croydon, CR0 6TJ
Tel: 0208 686 2727
Email: modernmontessori.intl@btinternet.com
Website: www.modernmontessori-intl.com



Asia Pacific Corporate Headquarters (Singapore)
Modern Montessori International Pte Ltd
MMI Building, 72 South Bridge Road #01-00, Singapore
058702
Tel: (65) 6220 8200
Email: enquiry@modern-montessori.com
Website: www.modern-montessori.com

Saturday 30 September

08.00

Registration

Foyer

Coffee and Tea (foyer - level 200)

09.00

Welcome

ROOM: S205 (Auditorium)

Barbara Isaacs, President, Montessori Europe

prof. dr hab. Michal Harciarek, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, UG

prof. dr hab. Arnold Klonczynski, Vice-Rector, UG

Malgorzata Miksza, President, Polish Montessori Society

A Culture of Peaceful Change

An attitude of joint responsibility, coupled with a preparedness to make sacrifices for the common good – these make up the very essence of solidarity. People of every nationality, skin colour and religion have been championing this notion of the peaceful struggle for human rights in the name of freedom the world over and throughout history. They have had one thing in common – good will.

European Solidarity Centre, Gdansk, Poland



Saturday 30 September

Keynote Speeches

Room: S205 (Auditorium)

Facilitated by dr Jarek Jendza, Board Member, Montessori Europe

09.30 **Solidarity: The Message and Event of Togetherness**

prof. Tomasz Szkudlarek, University of Gdansk, Poland

Solidarity is, first of all, an ethical concept which inevitably makes it somewhat elusive when we try to relate it to social and educational practice. In this presentation I would like to make it more tangible. First, I will refer to my personal experience from the time of the Solidarity revolution in 1980 in Gdansk. This will speak to the event aspect of my presentation, and I will interpret in light of theories of social change. Second, I will focus on the logo of *Solidarnosc* and will interpret its meaning in light of Ernesto Laclau's political theory. This second part will bring us closer to the „message” of solidarity and, at the same time, to the question of political and pedagogical strategies that can be identified in political movements and pedagogical practices driven by the value of togetherness. I will also point to mutual dependencies and fundamental differences between political and pedagogical ways of construing the social.

10.30 **Comfort Break**

11.00 **In Defence of Humanity: Montessori's Greatest Lesson** **(pre-recorded)**

Maati Wafford, American Montessori Society, USA

A major goal of our Montessori movement is to provide an education capable of saving humanity. In order for us to do this we must be able and ready to defend children. It is also important that we understand that, we defend that which we find ourselves most connected to. It is more than what we learn in training or simply envision ourselves to be, it is about who we are at our core as people and how effective we are in leading from that place. Social justice is of the utmost importance in our aim as Montessori educators and leaders worldwide. A philosophy that is deeply grounded in human behaviour uplifts the unique sensitivities of its learners and therefore living in a just and safe world is key. In order for children to adapt to their environments with their psychic integrity intact, adults must be able to model what it means to be in right relationship with self, others, and our planet.

11.45 **Tea & Coffee (foyer - level 200)**



a.r.u. | Anglia Ruskin
University

MONTESSORI DEGREE AND MASTERS

BA (Hons) Montessori Early Childhood Studies
MA Education with Montessori

Study in Chelmsford, Essex or via Distance Learning

Find out more at a virtual or on campus Open Day

aru.ac.uk

Or email Course Leader, michelle.wisbey@aru.ac.uk

Saturday 30 September

12.15

Solidarity: A Principal Value

Andre Roberfroid, former UNICEF Deputy Executive Director and AMI Global Ambassador, Switzerland

The purpose of this speech will be to demonstrate that solidarity is a central value to the Montessori approach to education.

In a Montessori environment, children build self-confidence and empathy; they develop their skills to work with others. They practise individual freedom by making their own decision. In short they become self-accomplished human beings and as such are likely to contribute to a better world.

But Maria Montessori's dream goes far beyond the acquisition of knowledge and skills; it goes beyond development of personality and building of self-confidence.

She was convinced that children have the capacity to live a life that emphasizes freedom, respect and solidarity.

We believe that education is meant to cultivate that capacity, and this concept will be elaborated on.

We all believe that children have the capacity to change the world. It is time that we make this sentence more than a slogan.

13.00

Lunch

Lower Level Foyer (level 100)

Meet new and old friends, peruse the posters presented at the Research Day, and perhaps take a moment to explore the beautiful campus filled with interesting sights and buildings. You will also have the opportunity to meet our exhibitors and enjoy the materials and services they have to offer.

"We all believe that children have the capacity to change the world. It is time that we make this sentence more than a slogan."

Andre Roberfroid

Saturday 30 September

14.30 - 16.00

&

16.30 - 18.00

Workshops

We are offering fifteen workshops this year – each workshop will run twice.

- Cycle 1 will run from 14.30 - 16.00

Coffee & Tea from 16.00 - 16.30 (foyer - level 200)

- Cycle 2 will run from 16.30 - 18.00

Please attend the workshops you chose at the time of registration. You can check this at our Registration Desk or on the sign-up sheets on the doors.

A. What Helps and What Hinders Self-organisation in a Montessori school?

ROOM: A306

Alexander Modekin, teacher 6-12 and a professor of UdG (Girona, Spain)

dr Piotr Kowzan, Department of Education, UG

Self-organisation is a process inherent in systems of different nature: biological, physical, chemical and social. Through the development of self-organisation, children develop a tool that they can use to solve important and complex issues. Self-organisation is possible when certain conditions are achieved, one of which is the interaction of different but single-level elements. For a social system, a similar level of understanding of morality and ethics is an important element. When the level of morality is high enough, the processes of self-organisation in human society are triggered.

This workshop, presented as a recording and moderated by **dr Piotr Kowzan**, will look at what contributes to the development of morality in children. Given the characteristics, age 6-12 is the optimal age for the development of internal foundations for self-organisation and mutual assistance. We will look at the views of H. Haken and P. Kropotkin on self-organisation and see if they can be correlated with the ideas of Maria Montessori.

B. Identity - Why Who We are Matters

ROOM: A201

Kavita Doodnauth, Montessori Educator, Czech Republic

Who we are shapes our understanding of the world and how we express ourselves. Our identity is a sum of our parts—our ancestry, the roles we inhabit, the conscious and unconscious decisions that define us, the ways in which we represent our physical selves, our aspirations and dreams and much more. The richness of who each of us is can be erased in educational settings—perhaps our story is too complex or we are fearful about sharing how different we are or feel? As educators we may feel unprepared to interact with the identities of our peers, students and their families. Maybe we do not feel the need to be so personal in our interactions?

What can we learn by uncovering the layers of our own identities? How can that understanding inform our work with children? Why is it important to create prepared environments, physical and atmospheric, where everyone can be who they are?

Saturday 30 September

C. Building Social Competence and Empathy by Creating a Safe and Relaxed Prepared Environment in our Schools

ROOM: A309

Luise Haeggqwist, Mathematte and Akademie Biberkor, Germany

A solidaric and fair society is mainly based on people who are socially competent, team-minded and empathic. To develop these characteristics, children need the best possible safe conditions. From neuroscience we know that human beings change to a survival mode (fight-flight-modus or freeze-modus), when one encounters a threatening or stressful situation as outlined in the model of the triune brain as proposed by McLean in the 1960s. When we don't feel safe and secure, our nervous system goes into a survival state. In this state the social interaction system is shut down and social interaction and so social learning is not possible anymore. In contrast in a safe condition the social exchange will actively be looked for by children. This allows free play and working together in which social competence and teamwork will be explored and learned. So to encourage social learning to a maximum we should focus on safe and secure conditions in our schools.

This workshop will introduce the most important factors as a part of a "safe prepared environment". It will also offer a view on supporting children which biographically have special needs to feel safe.

D. Nourishing the Individual

ROOM: A304

Paige Norris Rogers and Kelly Seach, Generation Schools Sunningdale, South Africa

This session will run from 16.30 – 18.00 only

Attendees of this workshop will gain the knowledge and understanding of the different reasons and ways we can embrace each student as an individual, their backgrounds, their cultures, their previous knowledge and their absorbent minds, into our classrooms. This workshop will provide insight to the diversities of a South African classroom and the ways in which social justice and solidarity are promoted within our Montessori school. Practical application will be discussed, and interactive opportunities will provide attendees to identify the needs within their environments and brainstorm solutions collaboratively. Our presentation will be based on the following points:

- Kosmopolites, which is to be a citizen of the world; to be eager to talk to anyone from anywhere.
- Epistêmê, which refers to knowledge and the fact that teaching requires learning, but learning does not require teaching.
- Potentiality, which is similar to what Maria Montessori terms the nebulae; invisible potentialities at birth that allow for the development of something that is not yet them.
- Finally, hybrid space, referring not only to our South African classrooms with our rainbow nation of students; but also, the hybridity of the knowledge that pre-exists entering our environment.



Seeking the key to unlock
high fidelity Montessori
education in your
community?

*Connect with seasoned
Montessori teacher educator
and school consultant
Tammy Oesting, M.Ed. to
design and deliver a plan that
assists your community in
reaching its potential.*



Tammy Oesting, M.Ed.

tammyoesting@gmail.com

| www.classroommechanics.com

WATERPARK



MONTESSORI

MORE THAN A DIPLOMA

Accommodating the Future

We pride ourselves in understanding Montessori principles and their application to new concepts. We are part of the conversation to take Montessori through the next century.



International Community

We work closely with the schools whose teachers we train. We offer ongoing support, advisory services, workshops, webinars and materials as part of our inner circle.



Leaders in Blended Learning

Our MACTE-accredited diploma has a significant online component as well as practical training. We have 30 years of experience in online educational programs.



Accessibility

With multiple centres around the world we strive to make quality Montessori accessible globally. Our programs are flexible without compromising high quality.



Thought Leaders in Discussion

Technology in the classroom, increasing environmental and special needs concerns, psychological well-being and growth mindset are all part of our interest and research.



Saturday 30 September

E. How Nature can Teach Us Solidarity and Social Behaviour

ROOM: A210/A209

Justyna Mudent and Ula Tlaga, Montessori Elementary School "Skrawek Nieba", Poland

This session will run together with session O: "Community = Relationship"

Regardless of the degree of transformation, the world of nature is harmonious by nature; it always strives for stability and order. All its elements are both interconnected and interdependent. Staying in the forest allows you to be in continuous harmonious development and helps you get to know yourself and others better.

This workshop invites you to discover the ever-present potential in the natural world around us, which can be used in the educational process, whilst building a sense of community within our small school communities.

F. Creating a World Embracing Education by Addressing our Unconscious Biases and Blind Spots

ROOM: A308

dr Rebecca Teclemariam-Mesbah, Gemmes, Bosnia and Herzegovina

If there is a credo that Montessori teachers share it is that education is the foundation for World Peace we all call for. As we witness the rise of racist and xenophobic discourses in Europe, our schools become bastions for the promotion of peace and social justice. And as we strive together to help our students understand their place in the world and work for a just world, we must address the unconscious biases and blind spots educators perpetuate through our language, our materials and behaviour. We need to evaluate our cultures and traditions with a critical eye and see how we can uproot the ones that do not live up to our ethical standards. This process does not happen in a vacuum. We are part of an increasingly diverse and mixed world where cultures, religions and world views converge and sometimes clash but diversity also bring plentiful perspectives and a richer understanding of the human being.

So, how can we create safe and nurturing spaces where uncomfortable conversations about biases, prejudice etc. can take place? How do we become mindful of our continent's unresolved dark histories and consciously work through restoring connections to the world based on healthier foundations? How can we move away from a Eurocentric worldview and build a vision that is truly world embracing?

"We must proceed, not on the basis of our own ideas or on our own prejudices, not on preconceived methods, but by observing the child."

Montessori, M. *The 1946 London Lectures*, 2012:46

Saturday 30 September

G. Mon-Tech: Blended Montessori-Creative Technologies Approach for Successful Inclusion in Multi-Cultural Schools

ROOM: A203

Jordi Freixenet and Maria Berrocal Arévalo, Girona University, Spain, and Sarah Kennedy-Berge and Aleksandra Zarosa, Waterpark Montessori, Norway

This presentation will highlight how our task to gather and offer the highest discoveries, as Dr. Montessori writes, can be implemented in the classroom using creative technologies and concrete Montessori-inspired activities in a cross-curricular way. The workshop will be a hands-on experience of working with a variety of concepts within creative technology in relation to various aspects of the curriculum. This will offer real-life experiences for practitioners of how this may be implemented in the multicultural classroom. The MonTech methodology incorporates project-based learning and discovery while at the same time focusing on social inclusion, using hands-on activities to cross cultural and language boundaries.

Using the guidebook developed by the MonTech project, the workshop will begin with an overview and description of the project and the work done so far, followed by hands-on activities from the guidebook for participants to engage with. Participants will use Scratch and Micro:bit technology to experiment, explore and discover a variety of topics related to a cosmic curriculum

H. Dissidents as a Topic for Fostering Solidarity Among Young People

ROOM: A207

dr Yuliia Kravchenko, National Centre, Junior Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine

This workshop will provide information about the dissident movement and the struggle against repressive, authoritarian regimes. Its aim is to motivate participants to study and research dissent as a historical and cultural phenomenon of the 1960s and 1970s. The workshop also aims to develop critical thinking by familiarising participants with the writings of dissidents and to train solidarity and empathy through studying meaningful short texts. In discovering the actions, thoughts and lifestyle of dissidents, young people can learn how to become better human beings by respecting others and demonstrating solidarity. In this workshop, participants will learn how to work with students and develop their knowledge about the dissident movement.

**"The thing that lies at the foundation of positive
change, the way I see it,
is service to a fellow human being."**

Lech Walesa, Former President of the Republic of
Poland, dissident, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate

Saturday 30 September

I. The Evolution of Montessori Materials

ROOM: A310/A311

Chris Willemsen, Nienhuis Montessori, the Netherlands

Maria Montessori visited The Netherlands for the first time in the early 1920s. In these days she was still very busy designing and developing all Montessori materials that are so common for us nowadays. In this workshop participants will hear some interesting considerations why some of the materials have become the way they are today, and how we are still modifying and developing new materials.

J. How Multiculturalism can Help to Educate for Peace and Inspire Teachers in the Montessori Classroom

ROOM: A205

Dominika Izdebska and Malgorzata Pomorska, Montessori Academy for International Children, Poland

"The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child." Maria Montessori *The Absorbent Mind*, 2007, p. 15, Kindle Edition.

Our aim as Montessori Teachers working in a multicultural environment is to present our daily work from creating a place that supports diversity, respects multiculturalism and broadens the minds and lives of children, teachers and our families. Being in the Montessori classroom with a group of diverse children from all over the world who are free to choose their work and live harmoniously together in one community, permits us to observe and learn about unique habits and traditions. The special composition of individuals in our class offers wonderful cultural learning opportunities. This workshop will offer experience and ideas practised by the presenters in their daily life, including how one might introduce the concepts of diverse religions and traditions.

K. When Montessori is More than Just a Way of Teaching

ROOM: A307

Liska Adams, World Academy of Tirana, Albania

When I get asked how I came about Montessori, my reply is, "I did not find Montessori, Montessori found me", and since Montessori found me, I have tried my utmost best to make sure I follow the philosophy not only in the classroom but in my life. I strongly believe in diversity and inclusivity and the Montessori philosophy has allowed me to put this into some perspective. This workshop will set out my journey as a Montessorian and how philosophy has helped and guided me to be open-minded. Montessori is not just a way of teaching but it is a way of life. I will include examples of how to be diverse and inclusive and hope to get some feedback on how other Montessorians have been able to be diverse and inclusive.

Saturday 30 September

L. Children's Rights in the Modern World, Based on the Ideas of Maria Montessori and Janusz Korczak

ROOM: A206

Gabriela Wnuk, Homeschooling Group

"A child has the right to be himself. She has the right to be herself. He has the right to make mistakes. She has the right to have her own opinion. He is entitled to be respected. There are no children - there are people."

The rights of the child are fundamental guarantees for the personal and social development of the child. In this workshop, we will address the issue of children's rights in the modern world based on the ideas of Maria Montessori and Janusz Korczak. We will also consider philosophical perspectives from the perspective of young people. In order to do so, we are going to explore the position of the child in the world, their rights but also reflect on the aspect of the individual in the education system.

M. Inclusive Music and Movement

ROOM: A302

Inga Sieminski, Montessori Orff Music, USA

In this active workshop, we will explore elemental music and movement to open a safe space for trust, inquiry, and dialogue. Like acquiring a native language or learning how to walk, primal musical instincts are a universal constant in human development. We will use our natural instruments, body and voice, and explore basic forms of movement, speech, body percussion, and singing. The improvisational nature of this holistic music-making is always structured by traditional forms of Echo-imitation, Call and Response, or Question & Answer. Multiple entry points-aural, visual, kinaesthetic, and linguistic- can include different learners and connect with other cultures and languages. Every individual contribution is welcome and community is celebrated.

Enjoying the process first with familiar rhymes, songs, and movement games, we will discover that this holistic learning can go beyond "teaching music." In small groups, we will use these elemental forms and investigate how underlying qualities of social justice and solidarity can be expressed in a childlike way and with age-appropriate language. These embodied experiences can facilitate the child's social-emotional interactions and strengthen our own leadership skills in relation to the school community. Handouts of model lessons will guide the step-by-step integration of inclusive learning in our classrooms.

"Children are not the people of tomorrow, but are people of today. They have a right to be taken seriously, and to be treated with tenderness and respect. They should be allowed to grow into whoever they were meant to be - the unknown person inside each of them is our hope for the future."

Janusz Korczak

Saturday 30 September

N. Montessori and Citizenship Education: Road to Harmony and Peace

ROOM: A208

dr Jaap de Brouwer and Lida Klaver, Saxion University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands

Promoting citizenship is at the heart of Montessori education. Montessori is convinced that a better world can be achieved through citizenship education, through which Montessori strives for a peaceful and harmonious society. Schools in the Netherlands are required by law to promote active citizenship and social cohesion. However, there are many different views on citizenship education, which makes it even more important for schools to be clear about why they choose a certain view. The purpose of this workshop is to support Montessori schools in fulfilling their legal obligation and pedagogical aspirations regarding the implementation of a Montessorian view on citizenship education.

Although it seems that citizenship education is implemented as a matter of course in Montessori education, for purposeful and coherent citizenship education, it is of great importance to make the why, how, and what of the Montessorian approach to citizenship education more explicit. Elaborating on our research about Montessori and citizenship education, in this workshop we will present six design principles for a Montessorian approach to citizenship education, which we will engage in discussion with participants.

Participants will leave with knowledge and ideas about the relationship between their view on citizenship education and their own Montessori educational practice.

O. Community = Relationship: Building a School Community of Students, Teachers and Parents

ROOM: A210/A209

Agnieszka Tlaga and Angelika Gorska, Montessori Elementary School "Skrawek Nieba", Poland

This session will run together with session E: "How Nature can Teach Us Solidarity"

Our experience, as directors of Montessori institutions, demonstrates that there is no education without relationships. It is much easier to build relationships when we create a community. We believe, when we work together – children, parents and teachers – we can gain much more. During this meeting we are going to tell you the way we build our community based on such values as cooperation, co-responsibility and tolerance.

Montessori Europe Reception

Join us for a celebratory glass of bubbles before heading off into the beautiful city centre of Gdansk with colleagues and friends to enjoy your evening

Lower Level Foyer (level 100)

18.00 – 19.00



explore the time and space

topicmontessori.com

topic
montessori



Specials for the MONTESSORI EUROPE CONGRESS IN GDANSK:

- Souvenirs: T-shirts, cups, pillows, jewellery
- Wool fleece Montessori maths & language mats
- Natural velvet cosmic education mats
- Wooden cosmic education materials
- Low shipping costs in EU

www.pcm.edu.pl

POLISH MONTESSORI CENTRE

- Teacher training courses and counselling
- Montessori on-line store



POLSKIE CENTRUM
MONTESSORI



Sunday 1 October

09.30 - 13.00

Adolescents Forum

ROOM: S205 (Auditorium)

Riemer Brandsma, Highschool Student, the Netherlands, and Judith Cunningham, Vice President, Montessori Europe / Founder Montessori Model United Nations, Italy

Adolescents are growing up in a changing and complex world. Our role is to ensure they develop the skills to become lifelong learners making informed decisions and able to positively engage with their communities. In this effort, we continue, at our Congress in Gdansk, to offer a programme for adolescents, providing a platform to amplify their voice.

The morning will comprise the following:

09.30 - 10.15: A general session open to all participants, old and young so we can learn from each other and share different perspectives. This also gives both groups a great opportunity to motivate each other. Riemer Brandsma will share the purpose of the forum: to motivate, educate, and engage the adolescents present to create the future they want.

10.15 - 12.15: Breakout Sessions: these small group settings will be perfect for collaboration and brainstorming in real-time. These sessions are designed for the student participants and will focus on a specific sustainability topic led by student facilitators. Participants will choose which session to join and students can alternate after a certain time.

12.15 - 13.00: the culmination of the working sessions and open to the students and the adult participants of the annual congress. The ideas and solutions created by the students will be presented by the adolescent participants themselves.

"We see the figure of the child who stands before us with his arms held open, beckoning humanity to follow."

Montessori, M. *Education and Peace*,
2015:113



Sunday 1 October

10.30 – 12.15

Bewildering Montessori: *In the Service of Children?*

ROOM: S205 (Auditorium)

Facilitated by dr Jarek Jendza, University of Gdansk and prof. Piotr Zamojski, Polish Naval Academy

We believe that it is extremely important to critically engage with our practices, principles and to keep Montessori thought alive and vibrant by meeting, sharing ideas as well as challenging it and looking at it from various perspectives. In 1911, Edmond Holmes (1850 – 1936), an Irish poet, but also a supervisor of early education institutions and one of the first promoters and theoreticians of progressive education in Great Britain, did not conceal his amazement with the Montessori pedagogy that was becoming popular at that time. He also drew attention to the danger of dogmatic treatment of any ideas and educational solutions, even if they are commonly believed to be innovative or effective, and therefore he postulated a heretical approach to any pedagogical method. He also mentioned that educational conventions have the tendency to fossilise or harden and therefore must be constantly revisited, rethought, and communally renegotiated.

Bewildering Montessori is an attempt to gather professionals working with children in various contexts and implementing different solutions (sometimes far from Montessori approach) around a central issue and to welcome diverse interpretations. This year we will address the question of what it may mean to be *in the service of the child*. Our debate will be opened by the insights of four distinguished guests:

Hannah Baynham, American Montessori Society, USA, is Director of Learning and Professional Development and is passionate about issues of social justice, sustainability and the spiritual preparation of the guide;

dr Piotr Kowzan, University of Gdansk, Poland, investigates the issue of how children develop in social movements;

prof. Justyna Siemionow, Department of Education, University of Gdansk, Poland, specialises in working with and researching children and adolescents who struggle in the aspect of social competences;

Roelant Wijngaards, Agora, Montessori College, The Netherlands, works as a coach, supporting the students in their developmental and educational journey.

The term "Bewildering" in relation to education, is an academic concept introduced by Nathan Snaza in his article "Bewildering Education" (2013). In his article, Snaza the author proposes an alternative theory of education that breaks with more than 2000 years of educational philosophy. The author calls it "bewildering education" since it does not seek pre-determined ends (the production of "humans").

13.00

Closing Remarks

ROOM: S205 (Auditorium)

Barbara Isaacs, President, Montessori Europe

Online Wellness Professional Development

@montessoriwellness



Montessori
Wellness



SZYCIE ✂ MONTESSORI

szyjemy na miarę | we sew to measure | wir machen das maßgeschneidert

Creating is our passion. We sew our educational materials with great care.
Children love the softness and fabric of the things we make.

Barbara Paradowska | info@szyciemontessori.pl | www.szyciemontessori.pl



Gdansk



There is only one such city as Gdansk. Others can only be similar. Its unusual location and over a thousand years of history make Gdansk distinctive. At the same time, it is a city that still holds many secrets and has that 'something' that makes it unmistakable. There is no Gdansk without freedom. This is a truly Gdansk tradition and a virtue held in the highest esteem by Gdansk citizens for centuries, it has shaped the city's unique "genius loci". You can feel it just as much among the tenement houses of the Old Town as between the shipyard cranes of the Young City, on the beautiful sandy beaches and in the post-industrial halls, parks and tunnels. Freedom is omnipresent in Gdansk, you can almost touch it. It inspires and transforms both space and people. This is what the people of Gdansk are like: courageous, committed, passionate and creative. This is what modern Gdansk is like: open to new ideas, moving with the times, creating events, constantly surprising. Further details are available in [this leaflet](#).

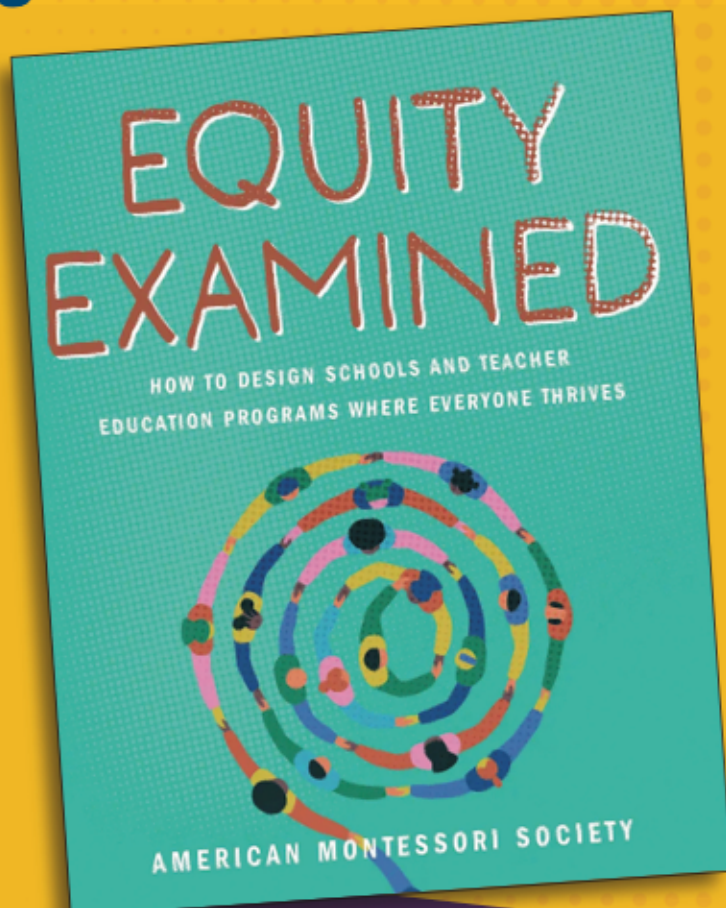


Examining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in European Montessori Schools and Teacher Education Programs

With intentional efforts toward uplifting equity and justice, we can build a better world through Montessori Education. Part of our commitment as educators is to transform as adults in order to create liberatory spaces for all students to thrive.

Join us for 6-weeks of conversation, reflection, and examination of how we can create more inclusive and equitable learning and growth opportunities. Our work will center around the AMS publication, *Equity Examined*, a collection of essays from a diverse set of Montessori voices and an assessment tool to help measure the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our organizations.

In our live sessions, we will invite guest speakers who have lived experiences in Montessori education in Europe and outline where our collective work lies.



SATURDAY'S KEYNOTE SPEAKER

*In Defense of Humanity:
Montessori's Greatest
Lesson*

FACILITATORS



Maati Wafford
AMS Director of Equity
& Engagement



Hannah Baynham
AMS Director of Learning
& Professional Development

January 11 through February 15

Live sessions: 6:00 – 7:30 PM (GMT +2)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 9, 2024

REGISTRATION FEE: €210

Registration includes a digital copy of
the *Equity Examined* book.

Special discount for Montessori Europe Congress attendees!

Get a 10% discount if you register before October 31, 2023.

Use the promotional code [AMSEurope2023](#) to save.

Visit amshq.org/AMSEurope2023 to learn more and register.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®
education that transforms lives

Keynote Speakers

dr Solange Denervaud

Solange graduated from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL) in bioengineering (Life Sciences). She completed a Ph.D. in Neuroscience at the University Hospital of Lausanne (CHUV-UNIL), collaborating with the Center for Affective Sciences (CISA UNIGE), bridging Neuroscience and education. She is trained in Montessori education (AMI Elementary Diploma) and previously taught at the Ecole Montessori Vevey for four years. Initially, her research focused on the impact of the learning environment (i.e., Montessori versus traditional schooling systems) on the development of error monitoring in 5-13-year-old children. However, the findings broadened the research questions to creative thinking and flexibility cross the lifespan, at the individual and social levels. Solange is now supported by the Prepared Adult Initiative for a project focusing on the social dimension of creative thinking in schoolchildren (peer-to-peer learning), to provide a better understanding of how to provide learning means to children that foster healthy human development.



Andre Roberfroid

From 2005 to May 2014, President of the Montessori Association International, responsible for the promotion and development of Montessori schools in over 120 countries.

From 1974 to 1996, UNICEF representative in various countries including Congo, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Iran and Mali. Particularly involved in the development and implementation of policies for children in extremely difficult circumstances such as the civil war in Lebanon, the unrest in the West Bank and Gaza or the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda.

From 1996 to 1999, Director of UNICEF in Geneva, in charge of relations with European countries and global coordination with the main international humanitarian agencies.

From 1999 to 2003, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF in charge of Programmes and Strategic Planning.



Keynote Speakers

prof. Tomasz Szkudlarek

Tomasz Szkudlarek (born 1954) is a full professor at the Institute of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Gdansk, where he heads The Department for Philosophy of Education and Cultural Studies. He also collaborates with the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk and NLA University College in Bergen (Norway). His work is focused on educational philosophies and theories, on the analyses of educational discourse, and on the relations between education, culture and politics. His major books include *On the Politics of Educational Theory: Rhetoric, theoretical ambiguity, and the construction of society* (London & New York 2017), *Education and the Political: New theoretical articulations*, co-authored (Boston, Rotterdam & Taipei, 2013), *Dyskursywna konstrukcja podmiotu* [The Discursive Construction of Subjectivity], co-authored (Gdańsk 2012), *Media. Szkic z filozofii i pedagogiki dystansu* [Media: An Essay in Philosophy and Pedagogy of Distance] (Kraków 1998 and 2009), and *The Problem of Freedom in Postmodern Education* (Westport, CT and London, 1993). He believes that culture, education and politics are inseparable in the process of creating us as humans and our worlds, and that as long as education is autonomous, by its being co-constitutive of society it is inevitably political at the same time.



Maati Wafford

As the Director of Equity and Engagement for the American Montessori Society, Maati Wafford advocates for equity by creating avenues for the coexistence of science, spirit & social justice in Montessori education. Her leadership focuses on building trust for engaging in direct, honest, and productive conversations about rooting the complex art and science of teaching in equity and justice. She is a masters level social worker, equity practitioner and spirit-led credentialed Montessori educator (Early Childhood, Lower EI, Upper EI, Administrator). She fiercely infuses critical consciousness and a sincere love of learning into her interactions with children, parents, and fellow educators. For nearly two decades Maati has created brave spaces for Montessorians to expand, build, and create more justice in the world. She is a firm believer in divine intelligence and understands that we all sit at the very centre of that space!



Facilitators

dr Jaap de Brouwer

Jaap de Brouwer, MSc, works as a Montessori teacher trainer and researcher in the Progressive Education Research Group at Saxion University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. He chairs the Dutch Montessori Research Group and co-hosts MERGe, the European Montessori Research Group. His research focuses on self-regulated learning, executive functions, citizenship, and Montessori implementation.



dr Jaroslaw (Jarek) Jendza

Jaroslaw Jendza is an assistant professor in the Institute of Education at the Social Sciences Faculty (Gdańsk University, Poland). He specialises in alternative, engaging and non-traditional approaches to education, Montessori in particular. Awarded the Distinguished PhD Dissertation Award, dr. Jendza has published a number of scientific articles on Montessori pedagogy focusing mostly on the issue of the teachers' education. He holds a Master degree in early education and teaching English as a foreign language. In his professional career he has worked as a kindergarten and primary school teacher as well as a head-master of a Montessori school. He has been involved in various Montessori teacher training programmes and supported Montessori educational institutions as an external consultant. In 2020 he was elected as a member of Montessori Europe Board where he is mostly responsible for bridging academic and practitioners' worlds by leading the Research working group. He also holds an AMI 6-12 Montessori Guide Diploma and Master's Degree in Montessori Pedagogy (University of Girona).



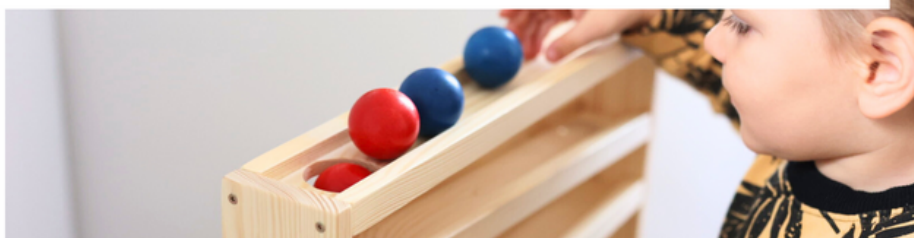
prof. Piotr Zamojski

Piotr Zamojski, PhD, is an associate Professor at Polish Naval Academy. His research interests include the theory and philosophy of education. He contributes to the current of post-critical pedagogy. Published in 2017, Manifesto for a Post-Critical Pedagogy (Punctum Books) written together with Naomi Hodgson and Joris Vleghe is widely discussed in the international community of educational theorists. It has recently been translated into Spanish and German. Two monographic conferences on the idea of post-critical pedagogy were held at the 2020 University of Tübingen and in Flensburg (Germany). Zamojski's most recent books are: co-written with Joris Vlieghe – Towards an Ontology of Teaching (Springer 2019), in which the post-critical perspective is applied to the study of the ontology of teaching and Education as Public Thing [2023] which is a report of a decade-long study conducted in PAR methodology on the possibility of building a public sphere around education in Poland. He has also published on the purpose of education, the bureaucratisation of education, and the role of cultural codes in education, among other topics. He serves as convener of the 13th ECER Network "Philosophy of Education" (European Conference on Educational Research). He sits on the International Council for Doctoral Studies in Philosophy of Education at Charles University in Prague and the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences.





Polana Montessori
z pasją w litym drewnie



Earn Your AMS Credential With Us

Early Childhood 2,5 - 6 yrs.

Elementary I 6 - 9 yrs.

Elementary I-II 6 - 12 yrs.

- Earn your Montessori EDUCATION in Czech Republic, Norway or USA
- TAILORED education for TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS
- Receive a BLENDED learning EXPERIENCE with FLEXIBILITY onsite and online
- EXPERIENCE GUIDED PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP and OBSERVATIONS
- Be part of our MONTESSORI community



We believe in Montessori

www.duhovkainstitut.cz



Workshop Presenters

Liska Adams

Liska sees herself as an evolving Montessorian. Born and raised in Cape Town, South Africa in a suburb called Athlone, she is a mom to a beautiful, adventurous, inquisitive, and funny 8-year-old boy and a wife to a very supportive man. Education has always been important to her and she always knew that she was meant to work alongside people and learn and grow with them. Whilst not necessarily knowing that those people would be little people, she has found so much joy in learning from children and growing with them. Liska completed her early childhood development studies in 2012 at the College of Cape Town. She then went on to complete her Montessori studies through Montessori Centre South Africa and is currently in the 4th year of her psychology studies at Cornerstone Institute.



Maria Berrocal Arévalo

Maria Berrocal Arévalo is a Primary School Teacher who taught for three academic years at the International School of Ghent in Belgium. Currently, she works as a Project Manager and Researcher in the fields of Education, Technology and Development Cooperation at the UdiGitalEdu research group of the University of Girona. In addition, she is a part-time Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education of the same university.



MA Angelica Paez-Barrameda Ph.D.

A psychologist by background, Ann's journey as a Montessori practitioner began with her desire to provide quality Montessori education for her own children in a place where her family had relocated which had no Montessori schools around. She is certified in all the four AMI Teacher Training Programmes for children from birth to 18 years old. She earned her Doctorate in Education from the XU/Ateneo De Cagayan University and her Master in Education from the Loyola University in Maryland. Together with her husband Chris, they run the 25 year-old The Abba's Orchard School system serving about 1400 children aged 2.5 years old to 18 years old in 14 campus locations in key cities of the Philippines, 4 of which have Erdkinder environments. Ann keynoted the 2019 AMI AGM Research Day with her doctoral dissertation entitled The Cognitive Impact of Successive Montessori Programmes.



Joseph Christopher Barrameda

Chris took the first 'NAMTA Montessori Orientation to Adolescence Studies' in 2003 in Cleveland, OH. In 2004, with only 5 adolescents enrolled, Chris started up the Adolescent Program of The Abba's Orchard, a Montessori school he co-founded with wife Ann in 1999. Presently, the school operates 14 campuses in key cities of the Philippines, enrolling 1400 plus students, 350 of which are adolescents spread across 3 sub-urban farm campuses and 1 campus in an urban environment. Also into real estate development, Chris finished his MBA at the Asian Institute of Management and his engineering at the University of the Philippines.



Workshop Presenters

Judith Cunningham

Judith is the Founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Montessori Model UN. Judith founded MMUN to help students find their voices, take action and build peace as a way of honouring Maria Montessori's legacy and implementing her dream of world peace. Judith holds an AMI Elementary Diploma, a Master's Degree in Education and postgraduate work in Alternative Dispute Resolution.



Kavita Doodnauth

Kavita Doodnauth (she/her) began her Montessori journey began in 2010, with curiosity, first as a mother and now as an educator. Kavita was a teacher, a curriculum advisor and an instructor for the Duhovka organisation from 2013 until 2020. In 2020 she joined Montessori Andílek in Prague as a primary teacher and currently provides ESL methodology support to the programme. She holds an AMI 3-6 Diploma as well as an AMS Early Childhood Credential. Kavita is currently on 'sabbatical' choosing to focus on her family and education. She lives in Prague with her husband and two children and is working to complete an MA in Applied Educational Leadership and the Whole School Leadership programme through the Montessori Institute of Prague.



Kavita has embraced sharing the so called complicated parts of her identity. She has learned that often the parts of ourselves that we might think of as complex seem to offer others surprising opportunities to understand themselves. She believes that everyone has a story that deserves to be told and is worthy of being listened to. Kavita is unsurprisingly an avid podcast listener and is working on being a more engaged, empathetic listener.

Dr Ela Eckert

Ela Eckert, dr phil., is a lecturer for the German Montessori Society (DMG) as well as a speaker on various aspects of Montessori education in Germany and abroad with a focus on Montessori theory, Cosmic Education and Maria Montessori's concept for adolescents. Eckert is a board member of the German Montessori Society, co-editor of the DMG-journal DAS KIND as well as author and/or editor of the following books:



- *Maria und Mario Montessoris Kosmische Erziehung-Vision und Konkretion.* Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt Publishing House 2001
- Eckert, Ela/Waldschmidt, Ingeborg (ed.): *Inklusion: Menschen mit besonderen Bedürfnissen und Montessori-Pädagogik.* Münster: LIT Publishing House 2010
- Eckert, Ela/ Fehrer, Malve (ed.): *Kosmische Erzählungen in der Montessori-Pädagogik.* Münster: LIT Publishing House 2015
- Eckert, Ela (ed.): *Erdkinderplan-Maria Montessoris Erziehungs- und Bildungskonzept für Jugendliche.* Freiburg/Br.: Herder Publications

Workshop Presenters

prof. Jordi Freixenet

Jordi is a Professor at the Computer Engineering Department of the University of Girona (UdG). He is co-leading the UdiGitalEdu research group and Tekhné Chair and is inspired by ideas from MIT Lifelong Kindergarten lab and Maria Antònia Canals. The goal is to design and research playful learning experiences, focusing research on studying how creative technology can transform the ways of learning and teaching.



Angelika Gorska

Angelika is teacher, vice director and co-founder and principal of "Skrawek Nieba" Kindergarten and Montessori Elementary School in Kowale, and has repeatedly led and organised events such as conferences and lectures.



Luise Haeggqwist

Luise is a qualified teacher for maths and physics (SekII), Montessori educator (certified by Akademie Biberkor) and trauma educator (DeGPT). After 10 years working at schools with Montessori and reform approaches she now teaches as an instructor at Akademie Biberkor and offers trainings for teachers in schools on the issues of „Safelearning“ (www.sicherlernen.org). She also founded Mathematte (www.mathematte.de), which provides mathematical learning materials based on the Montessori principles. Her special interest is Montessori mathematics and psychological issues of learning, especially dealing with fear of math. Her daily work can be found on instagram: https://www.instagram.com/frau_mathematte



Dominika Izdebska

An AMI Montessori Directress 3–6 years old, since 2002 Dominka has worked as a Montessori Teacher with 3–6 years old children. As a student she lived and studied abroad, studying art and then Montessori Pedagogy at Institut Supérieure Maria Montessori in Paris, France. This experience permitted her to be a part of an international community, which she continues with her work on a daily basis. She is a member of Stowarzyszenie Montessori bez Granic, AMI, Polska Rada Montessori. She has lectured and presented workshops at Conferences of Polski Instytut Montessori (2011–2019) and Polskie Centrum Montessori (2022). She upholds Maria Montessori words: “Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.”



Workshop Presenters

Sarah Kennedy Berge

Sarah is the College Director of Waterpark Montessori International and a Montessori Trainer 3-12 years. Her background in Art Education reinforces her work in creative expression, including use of new technological media. Sarah also designs new and innovative materials for the Montessori classroom. Her work on curriculum development focuses on bringing the Montessori approach into the 21st century in accordance with the principles.



Hannah Khiani

Hannah worked as a Director for an Investment Bank for 10 years. After having her own children, she left the City to pursue a more joyful career working with children. Hannah ran local toddler groups for children and families which inspired her to become a Montessori teacher. She trained as a teaching assistant (AMI) and then received her international Diploma in Montessori Pedagogy (MCI). Hannah moved to teacher training where she was a lecturer, and group tutor for the Foundation Degree in Montessori Early Childhood Practice and the Early Years Educator course at MCI. More recently, she has developed CPD courses to support inclusive practice and projects supporting sustainability in schools. Hannah is passionate about the outdoor environment and works part time at Unity Montessori School where she can often be found in the school garden. Hannah is also a founding partner of Collaborative Montessori where she enjoys serving and supporting children, families, students and practitioners.



Lida Klaver

Lida is a researcher in the Progressive Education Research Group at Saxion University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. She is a PhD candidate who specialises in citizenship education. Her PhD research focuses on students' engagement with socio-scientific issues. She combines her work as a researcher with being a primary school teacher.



Roman Klune

Roman Klune, born 1969, has been developing the Erdkinder model at the Montessori Campus Vienna with his team since 2008. He studied ecology and teaching biology and earth sciences in Vienna and earned the Montessori diploma of the Austrian Montessori Society (ÖMG) for working with 6- to 12-year-old children in 2001. After 7 years of experience in the elementary level he founded the Vienna Erdkinder model inspired by David Kahn and the farmschool in Ohio/USA. He completed the AMI-Montessori Orientation to Adolescence Studies in Ohio in 2013 and holds an AMI Diploma for working with 12-18-year-old adolescents since 2023.



Workshop Presenters

dr Yuliia Kravchenko

Yuliia Kravchenko is Head of the Critical Thinking Development Lab in the National Centre "Junior Academy of Sciences of Ukraine" (JASU), and a Trainer in the Programme "Philosophy for Children" (P4c) developed by Matthew Lipman. She was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar in the Department of Arts and Humanities, Teachers College, Columbia University (2021-2022). Since 2016 she has worked at the National Centre JASU where she organised camps for teenagers (at the national and international levels) in the following subjects:

"Philosophy," "Ukrainian Culture," "Religion and Diplomacy," and "Cultural Diplomacy." She is founder and organiser of "The 1960s and the Dissident Movement: A Festival for Young People" (2017-2022), an annual event that brings together students and teachers and is a successful educational decolonising practice.



Kate Larsson

Kate originally trained professionally in musical theatre and went on to have a successful 10-year career in the arts, performing both inside the UK and overseas. From performing Kate naturally progressed to teaching dance and drama to adults and children of all ages. During this time Kate felt drawn towards working with younger children and whilst facilitating drama and story-telling workshops in nursery schools Kate discovered Montessori. After researching the method further Kate enrolled on the National Diploma in Montessori Pedagogy at Montessori Centre International, where she was awarded the Birt's Bursary and was appointed Lead Student Representative. Kate's first teaching role was at Unity Montessori Nursery School where she became Deputy Manager, Creativity Specialist and Yoga Teacher. During her time at Unity Kate undertook further training, completing the Trainers Course at MCI and gaining her BA in Montessori Early Childhood Studies from Anglia Ruskin University. Kate has delivered webinars and workshops for Montessori Voices, Montessori Musings and Collaborative Montessori and provided online support for teachers and parents. Kate supports children to look after their planet through sustainable projects and is a dedicated diversity champion. Her article "Celebrating Diversity" was published in the Montessori International magazine. In September Kate joined the team at Westwood Montessori where she hopes her joy and passion for Montessori will continue to flourish.



Workshop Presenters

Alexander Modekin

Alexander Modekin started his career as a civil lawyer and worked as a lawyer for over 20 years. It's been seven years since he worked as a 6-12 teacher in a Montessori school. He graduated from AMI Montessori 6-12 course in Girona, Spain directed by Kay Baker.

Currently, he works as an assistant trainer at the AMI Montessori course in Girona directed by Dani Canigual. His work is focused on studying the phenomenon of self-organisation and mutual help among 6-12 aged children. He has several scientific publications devoted to self-organisation and independence in the elementary classroom. He participated in an international research devoted to the development of independence in Montessori elementary schools. He is also a frequent keynote speaker at Montessori conferences, festivals and events devoted to the education.



Justyna Mudent

Justyna is a Montessori education teacher at the "A Sliver of Heaven" kindergarten and Montessori Elementary School in Kowale. She is also a Forest School educator. She often leads and co-organises Montessori Conferences.



Paige Norris Rogers

Paige is a 6-9 Year Phase educator at Generation Schools Sunningdale in Cape Town, South Africa. She spent time studying Montessori Education for 3 years and fell in love with the philosophy and methodology of the system. She continued her studies in education and obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Alternative Education, which has broadened her view of many different alternative education methods. She has now been a Montessori educator for five years and has a passion for keeping the Montessori philosophy thriving throughout the campus, which led to her starting a Montessori Committee for the school in order to inspire the educators and keep the Montessori passion thriving. Additionally, she strives to make global connections with fellow Montessorians eagerly attending online workshops and webinars.



Workshop Presenters

Tammy Oesting

Tammy Oesting, MEd., is a teacher education instructor and self-identifies as a practitioner of awe and wonder. She serves educators globally through her company ClassroomMechanics and her professional passions include issues of social justice, educating support staff, neuroscience as applied to educational practices, and exploring the magnificence of the universe. Tammy is widely published and is a faculty member of The Institute for Educational Studies at Union Institute and University. AMS-credentialed (Early Childhood, Elementary).



Malgorzata Pomorska

A Montessori Teacher for almost 20 years, Malgorzata graduated from the European Academy of Fine Arts with a Master's Degree in graphic art and design in addition to a North American Montessori Teacher Diploma for teaching 3-6 year olds. Incorporating a lot of art into our daily Montessori routine, Malgorzata is amazed every day by children's imagination, tolerance, empathy, and their ability to communicate beyond language if they come from different countries. She has delivered seminars and workshops for teachers and students about: introducing art and creativity in Montessori Classroom; enriching English language materials to motivate children in reading process.



Kelly Seach

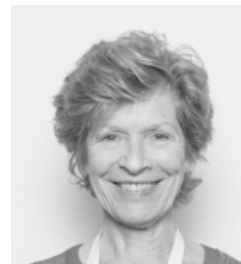
Kelly Therené Seach is a 6-9 Year Phase educator at Generation Schools Sunningdale, Cape Town, South Africa. She completed her Montessori 6-12 Primary Specialisation Course last year through the Montessori Centre South Africa. She has also studied her TEFL, Postgraduate of Education F.E.T, Strategic Business Management Course, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Dramatic Arts. All this allowed her to hone her skills and develop her passion for education and inclusion. Throughout her teaching career at Generation schools, she has been allowed the space to grow, put into practise what she has learnt, and add insights to the Montessori Committee.



Workshop Presenters

Inga Sieminski

Inga has enjoyed 35 years as a Montessori teacher for primary (ages 3–6) and elementary (ages 6–12) levels and worked as administrator in various capacities. She holds an M.Ed. in Montessori Studies from Loyola University Maryland and a Master's degree in Arts Administration from American University, Washington DC. Based on her certification in Orff Schulwerk–Music for Children and studies in Orff Music Therapy, Inga has always included an elemental approach to music and movement in her classrooms to support different learners and connect with multiple cultures. She has written a 230–page integrated lesson manual and now gives training workshops around the world. Inga serves on the executive boards of Virginia Montessori Association (VMA) and Washington Montessori Institute(WMI), the first and oldest AMI training center in the US.



Dr Rebecca Teclemariam-Mesbah

Rebecca's main passion is to explore how spirituality, scientific knowledge and creativity can combine to help develop and build sustainable, plentiful and vibrant communities. With roots in Africa and Europe, she is keenly aware that the diversity of voices and inputs are vital to this process. As a neuroscientist, educator, social scientist and artist, Rebecca has developed a unique experience through consulting, mentoring, administering, project management in a wide range of educational endeavours such as institutional growth and transformation, staff development, curriculum development, policy changes and advocacy for inclusion. She is dedicated to raising capacity and building skills of young people to release their power in addressing the world's social, economic and environmental issues and bringing social change. Rebecca was born in Ethiopia where she spent her childhood and lived in Kenya, France, and the Netherlands. She resides in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, where she is engaged in numerous grass-roots programmes aimed at raising human capacity to work towards a more just, united, and sustainable planet.



Ula Tlaga

Ula is a Montessori education teacher at the "Skrawek Nieba" kindergarten and Montessori Elementary School in Kowale and a Forest School educator. She has led and co-organised many Montessori conferences. She loves mountains and forest, studies positive psychology, and enjoys spending time with children.



Agnieszka Tlaga

Agnieszka is a teacher, founder and principal of "Skrawek Nieba" Kindergarten and Montessori Elementary School in Kowale, and has repeatedly led and organised events such as conferences and lectures. She is fascinated by calligraphy and birds, and enjoys travelling.



Workshop Presenters

Susanne van Niekerk

Susanne's Montessori journey started in 1996 when her son attended a Montessori preschool in Durban, South Africa. This chance encounter with the Montessori philosophy changed the trajectory of her life path as she changed careers shortly thereafter to become a Montessori preschool teacher. After over a decade in the classroom, Susanne trained as a Montessori teacher trainer with Montessori Centre International in London, UK. She is a founding member, director and senior lecturer of Montessori Centre South Africa which offers Montessori teacher training throughout the southern and central African regions and islands. Susanne earned a Masters degree in Early Childhood from the University of Roehampton (UK) in 2022.



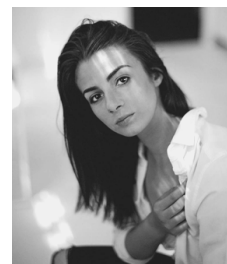
Chris Willemsen

For more than 17 years and with a lot of passion and dedication, Chris has been working as for world's leading Montessori material manufacturer, Nienhuis Montessori. He is representing Nienhuis in the international Montessori network, leading the product development team and leading the marketing team with ideas and content. He has a degree in international marketing and is Montessori-trained at both 3 - 6 and 6 - 12 levels. He has observed Montessori education in many different cultures, varieties and standards. During his presence at many (inter)national conferences, and working with many Montessori organisations and specialists, he gained a lot of in-depth Montessori knowledge, which he is always willing to share.



Gabriela Wnuk

Gabriela studied psychology at SWPS University in Warsaw. She deals with the area of broadly understood education. She gained experience in alternative education institutions. After the educational reform, she presented her position to lawmakers and politicians in the debate "School prepares children for life in a world that does not exist". She is a co-author of a mentoring programme for children based on the fundamentals of education, psychoanalysis and philosophy. She is currently working on a methodology for human development which combines these 3 areas. On a daily basis, she mentors children aged 11 -17 years in an individual and group mode, using her own method of work.



Workshop Presenters

Aleksandra Zarosa

Aleksandra Zarosa is a College Coordinator for Waterpark Montessori International and a Montessori Trainer 3-9 years. She has a broad pedagogical experience from Montessori pre-schools and schools in Ireland and in Norway. Apart from her Montessori qualifications, she holds a MA in Psychology from the University of Opole, Poland. She is particularly interested in how technology influences concentration skills, motivation, problem-solving strategies, and creative thinking.

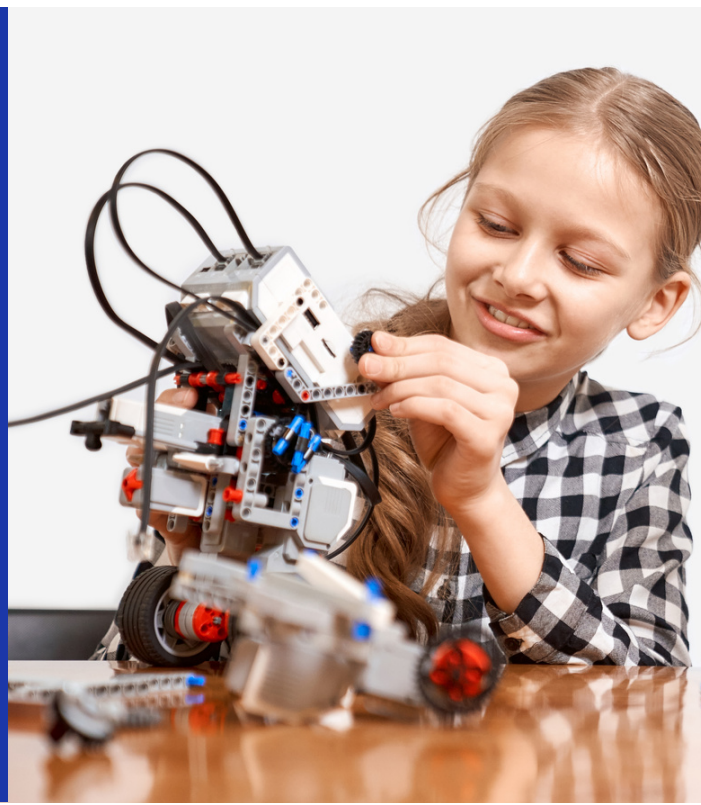


Ellen Zeiss

For almost 20 years Ellen has been working with her heart and soul as a Montessori teacher. Her career is marked by numerous training and further education: among other things, she has acquired 2 national diplomas (IfgL and ÖMG) and an international diploma (AMI) for the second stage of developmental. For the 3rd stage of development, she continued her education with MMUN and as an Independent Facilitator for the World Peace Game. One of Ellen's main interest is adult education, among other things as a lecturer for the German Montessori Society and as an independent school consultant. It is of utmost importance to her that the Montessori principles of freedom and responsibility are rediscovered into the Montessori experience and positively influence the work of Montessori colleges in general.



"The children of today will make all the discoveries of tomorrow. All the discoveries of mankind will be known to them and they will improve what has been done and make fresh discoveries. They must make all the improvements in houses, cities, communication, methods of production, etc. that are to be made. The future generation must not only know how to do what we can teach them, they must be able to go a step further."



Bewildering Montessori: In the Service of Children?

Facilitator

dr Jaroslaw Jendza

See page 40 for details

Panellists

Hannah Baynham

Hannah Baynham is the Director of Learning and Professional Development at American Montessori Society. She has her 0-7yrs International Montessori diploma and teacher trainer qualification from Montessori Centre International, London, UK. She recently completed her Masters in Education from London Metropolitan University in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Her Montessori teaching career has taken her around the world, from Hong Kong, Tibet, India, Turkey, and Malta. In 2017 she moved to London to join Montessori Centre International as a full time academic lecturer and Early Childhood Montessori curriculum course lead. She joined American Montessori Society in 2022. She is the co-founder of Collaborative Montessori, and is passionate about issues of social justice, sustainability and the spiritual preparation of the guide. Having worked in schools around the world, she has a unique view of the importance of Cosmic Education in our early years environments. Hannah is inspired by the Montessori community and her love for the transformative nature of Montessori education which she sees as a gift to children and adult learners everywhere.



dr Piotr Kowzan

Piotr Kowzan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Didactics and Education of Adults, Institute of Pedagogy, University of Gdansk. His research interests focus on the education of adults, particularly the pedagogy of debt, social movement learning, and children's participation in protests. Kowzan's research explores the relationship between adult education and social justice, with an emphasis on how education can empower marginalised individuals and communities. He has published numerous articles and book chapters on these topics, such as "The humiliated began to sing: How teachers on strike tried to teach society" in the European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults, "Parental meanings attributed to children's participation in street protests" in Children & Society, and "Protesting children" in Terazniejszosc-Czlowiek-Edukacja.



Bewildering Montessori: In the Service of Children?

Justyna Siemionow

Justyna Siemionow – is an assistant professor in the Social Sciences Department at the University of Gdansk in Poland and the Fellow at Turku University of Applied Sciences in Finland. Her research interests lie in the broad areas of residential child care, families and education. Specifically, her research focuses on the following areas: adolescence, upbringing, psycho-social development and behavioural disorders. She understands education as a process of supporting the psychosocial development and strength the people' positive sides. She is the author of five monographs, twenty-two chapters in books, over 85 articles (research journals) as well as several programmes (therapeutic, educational, preventive, self-empowerment), and pedagogical innovations, used in working with socially maladjusted young people, and important for improving the functioning of the residential child care institutions.



Roelant Wijngaards

Roelant Wijngaards has worked as an English teacher, team leader and Agora Coach at Montessori College Nijmegen. As webmaster and Public Relations coordinator he has experience in managing the website, developing content for social media and coordinating with activities to promote the school. He is co-founder of Global Association of Montessori Education and Sport, which has created the Global Montessori Games and the Sustainable Development Games, international events that bring Montessori schools, from all over the world, together with the aim of creating peace and connecting people through sports, education and shared culture. And for the past three years, Roelant has served as a member of the Board of Montessori Europe, relaunching its website and generally supporting the organisation's PR and marketing efforts.



Adolescent Forum

Riemer Brandsma

Riemer Brandsma, student at RSG Pantarijn in Wageningen (The Netherlands) and co-organizer of the Montessori Europe Adolescent Forum 2023 in Gdansk. He also works at Montessori MUN as a student advisor and keynote speaker in the development and elaboration of projects for the international development goals. Montessori inspires him to achieve the 17 sustainable development goals and international cooperation through Montessori. In his role as world connector, he wants to connect and unite young people from all over the world, to work together in creating awareness, a path to solutions and action towards a positive and hopeful future for everyone.



Judith Cunningham

See page 43 for details

"Let's move forward together, so that everyone can learn, thrive and dream throughout their lives. Let's make sure today's learners and future generations can access the education they need, to create a more sustainable, inclusive, just and peaceful world for all."

**UN Secretary-General António Guterres,
19 September 2022**



Abstracts – Research Day

Beyond the 3 Period Lesson: Understanding Montessori Teacher Education as Transformation in Teaching and Learning

Hannah Baynham, Director of Learning and Professional Development at American Montessori Society, USA

MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Dissertation Project, London Metropolitan University, September 2021

The spiritual preparation of the teacher is a unique concept within Montessori education which encourages a deep examination of self, in preparation for work with children. The task of preparing oneself is an internal one and only through reflection and 'unlearning' previous educational experiences can a teacher be worthy and ready to learn from and alongside the child (Montessori, 2012). Although reflective practice is by no means specific to Montessori (See Ukpokodu, 2009; Taylor, 2008), the importance it plays in teacher education is vital in the practice of the method. Spiritual preparation is lifelong, and even as an experienced teacher, the continuous need for reflection and deeper learning should continue to unfold (Gang, 2021). In Montessori teacher education programs, I argue, we should be sowing the seeds of this preparation by examining the philosophy behind the method and allowing space for dialogue and voice. The spiritual preparation of the teacher is not only necessary in our work with children but should be an intrinsic part of our work with adults (Gang, 2021).

The research reflects on the nature of the spiritual preparation in the work of adult education, for both the teacher and the student, as well as its connection to the cornerstone of Montessori philosophy, cosmic education. The aim of this research was to explore in depth the role of the teacher educator and the learning environment, in considering the adult learner and how this aligns with critical, feminist and transformative pedagogies. The first aim was to consider the centring of the learner, and the practice of co constructing knowledge alongside students. Working together with students to avoid the top down 'banking' model of education, (Freire, 2005) and to embrace principles of critical pedagogies which in turn compliments values of the Montessori method is a key evolution in HE. The second aim was to consider what the favourable learning environment looks like for the adult. Montessori placed high importance in the role of the environment as more than just a space where learning occurs, but the carefully prepared environment becomes the teacher itself (Montessori 2007). The final aim was to explore the role of the facilitator. This was reflective in nature as I recognised in using qualitative research, I used an interpretivist approach (Mukherji et al 2010) as I was part of the research by engaging in informal interviews, examine the common threads within my interviews, and also in my personal experience in facilitating learning and teaching (Cohen et al, 2011).

Abstracts – Research Day

By using a qualitative methodological approach to research and design, I aimed to capture lived experiences of Montessori students and teacher educators to better understand viewpoints and values upheld within our programmes (Misawa & Johnson-Bailey 2019), (Webb et al 2004). When considering a social constructivist framework, meaning is constructed in a dialogic manner, and therefore qualitative research allows room for voices, experiences and interpretations (Burr 1995). The importance of qualitative research in feminist pedagogies is also essential in its aim to co-construct and consider viewpoints as well as recognising the role of the researcher and their participation (Mukherji et al, 2010) (Webb et al, 2004). With this in mind, I considered the tenets of feminist pedagogies in an attempt to use voices as a resource, to resist hierarchy in both the interviews and my work with adult learners and to see learning as transformation (Lawrence 2016).

For further information about this research, please watch this [short clip](#):

1. Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London, Routledge.
2. Cohen, L, Manion, L., & Morrison, K., (2011) *Research Methods in Education* (7th Edition), Routledge/Falmer
3. Freire, P. (2005) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Continuum.
4. Gang, P.S. (2021) *Educating for Right-Action and Love; Extending and Expanding the Montessori Vision*. Portland, Oregon. Dagaz Press.
5. Lawrence, E. (2016) *Feminist Pedagogy*. Available at: <http://www.genderandeducation.com/issues/feminist-pedagogy/> (Accessed on January 2, 2020).
6. Misawa, M. and Johnson-Bailey, J. (2019). "Practicing a Culturally Responsive Feminist Pedagogy in Higher Education: An Examination of a Feminist Classroom from the Perspective of Transformative Learning," *Adult Education Research Conference*. Available at; <https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2019/papers/24> (Accessed on May 5th, 2021)
7. Montessori, M. (2007a) *The Absorbent Mind*. The Netherlands: Montessori-Pierson.
8. Montessori, M. (2012) *The 1946 London Lectures*. Amsterdam: Montessori-Pierson Publishing Company.
9. Mukherji, P., & Albon, D. (2010). *Research Methods in Early Childhood: An Introductory Guide*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
10. Ukpokodu, O. (2009). The Practice of Transformative Pedagogy. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 20(2), 43-67.
11. Webb, L. & Walker, K. & Bollis, T. (2004). "Feminist pedagogy in the teaching of research methods." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 7. 415-. 10.1080/1364557032000119599. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/225089254_Feminist_pedagogy_in_the_teaching_of_research_methods (Accessed on May 6th, 2021)

Abstracts – Research Day

Potential and actual significance of Montessori learning environment

**dr hab. Beata Bednarczuk, Professor, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin
Institute of Pedagogy, Department of Didactics, Poland**

It is important that people, who want to perform their duties in a global and uncertain reality, are ready for changes. Bauman warns against the social exclusion of those who are not enough flexible and ready to adopt new standards, providing numerous possibilities and choices. Also, such people who are not prepared for challenges which differ from the earlier expectations and are who not able to manage the pressure exerted by the environment (Bauman, 2012, 53). Therefore, education can play a significant role in supporting the development of active and competent citizens. Thus, the superior task the contemporary school is providing the educational environment, which would be a source of the person's various experiences in relations with the material as well as social and cultural world (Todd et al, 2019). These experiences are the foundation of the learning process. It is difficult to define the notion "learning environment" not only due to a great number of formulations but also to the observed transition between learning environments. This transition takes place horizontally across different contexts (lifewide) but also vertically through time (lifelong) (Todd et al, 2019, 9). One of the developmental and open solutions in this aspect is offered by the school environment organized based on Maria Montessori's pedagogical principles. The guiding standard of its organization is supporting the individual's potential. This is the key rule on which the lifelong learning paradigm is based (Fleming 2011).

The paper presents the assumptions of changes of interpretative nature of the school environment and treating it in the space categories liberating pupil's curiosity and exploratory activity. Moreover, the assumption of the prepared Montessori environment is briefly presented (Montessori 1991, 1992. The Logic Model for Montessori Education, which is referred to, constitutes their synthesis (Culclasure, Daoust, Cote., Zoll 2019). This model not only represents a powerful way of communicating the core components of the Montessori approach precisely, but also provides a common starting point for the best understanding Montessori practices. On the basis of the analysis of the Logic Model and the interpretation of the competences indicated in the European educational documents as crucial for the development of learning skills (including lifelong learning) (National Research Council 2011), it will be proved that the Montessori methodology favours the development of these skills (Boté, 2022, Mavrič 2020). The measure of the empirically verified value of the Montessori learning environment and the ways of exploiting its resources will be the result of the own investigations on the emotional connotation of school experiences assessment (Hermans, Hermans-Jansen, 2001) of the Montessori school leavers (Bednarczuk, 2022).

Abstracts – Research Day

References

- Bauman, Z. (2012). O edukacji. Rozmowy z Riccardo Mazzeo. Wrocław: Wyd. Nauk. DSW.
- Bednarczuk, B. (2002). Authors of their own development. Montessori school graduates. Lublin: Wyd. UMCS.
- Boté, J.J. (2022). Theoretical approach to enhance information literacy and lifelong learning through Montessori Methodology, *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2).
- Culclasure, B.T., Daoust, C.J., Cote S.M., Zoll, S. (2019). Designing a logic model to inform Montessori research, *Journal of Montessori Research*, 5(1).
- Fleming, T. (2011). Models of lifelong learning: An overview. (in:) M. London (Ed.). *Oxford Handbook of Lifelong Learning* (pp. 29-39). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hermans, H.J.M., Hermans-Jansen, E. (2001). *Self-Narratives: The construction of meaning in psychotherapy*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Mavrič, M. (2020). The Montessori approach as a model of personalized instruction, *Journal of Montessori Research*, 6(2).
- Montessori, M. (1991) *The advanced Montessori method*. Vol. 1. Oxford, England: Clio Press Ltd.
- Montessori, M.(1992) *The absorbent mind*, Vol. 1, Oxford, England: Clio Press Ltd.,
- National Research Council. (2011). *Assessing 21st Century Skills: Summary of a Workshop*. J.A. Koenig, Rapporteur. Committee on the Assessment of 21st Century Skills. Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
- 21st Century Learning Environments: Position Paper 2019. Todd, A.(Ed.), Boivin, P. (Ed.), Báez Ramírez, J. (Ed.) et al. Belgium: Lifelong Learning Platform.

Abstracts – Research Day

Designing a system of learning materials to explain climate change to children **Lucy Blackwell, Designer, MA Student at Anglia Ruskin University, UK**

The systems we have designed to produce, consume and dispose of the things humans need are leading to global warming, a threat to all forms of life on planet Earth (Doerr, 2021). In order to create a sustainable and equitable future for everyone, there is an urgent need for educators to prepare children for climate change and help them understand what is happening and how everything is interconnected. As a designer who has studied the Montessori method, this project follows my process of designing a set of learning materials to teach children (aged 6 to 8) about climate change, exploring which materials are most effective and why. The work also considers how the Montessori materials (Montessori, 2016) could evolve and become more flexible in order to meet the challenges faced by today's children.

These materials were tested in a Montessori school and a state primary school over a 5 week-period, using a qualitative research methodology of observation and semi-structured interviews.

A key finding of the research showed that a cross-curricula approach to this complex topic, grounded in systems thinking (Wright and Meadows, 2009), proved to be an effective way to break down and organise the content. This is supported by the Montessori approach (Duffy and Duffy, 2002) which exemplifies the idea of breaking down learning into its smallest parts, in order to build an understanding of the big picture.

Whilst a variety of different types of learning materials were designed including: card matching, experiments, listening to sounds, collaborative drawing and engaging with physical materials, the research proved that the hands-on learning materials that directly reflected their purpose, were the most effective in achieving the learning outcomes.

The research concludes that there is a demand for learning materials on the topic of climate change (Department for Education, 2022) and considers how a larger number of children could benefit from the Montessori method if there was more flexibility and collaboration between different educational approaches.

As this project continues into the next phase, I will be further iterating upon the materials and exploring new ideas that emerged in the research process, such as the role storytelling (Dorer, 2016) could play in the materials. Following further design development and research, my goal is to set up a small company to produce, market and distribute the materials to the Montessori community and beyond.

Abstracts – Research Day

References

- Department for Education, 2022. *Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services system*. [online] UK: Department of Education. Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy/sustainability-and-climate-change-a-strategy-for-the-education-and-childrens-services-systems>> [Accessed: 29 November 2022].
- Doerr, J., 2021. *Speed and Scale: A Global Action Plan for Solving Our Climate Crisis Now*. UK: Penguin Business
- Dorer, M.J., 2016. *The Deep Well of Time: The Transformative Power of Storytelling in the Classroom*. [Kindle edition] Parent Child Press. Available at: Amazon.co.uk <<https://www.amazon.co.uk>> [Accessed: 25 February 2022].
- Duffy, M. and Duffy, D., 2002. *Children of the Universe: Cosmic Education in the Montessori Elementary Classroom*. [Kindle edition] Parent Child Press. Available at: Amazon.co.uk <<https://www.amazon.co.uk>> [Accessed: 30 January 2022].
- Montessori, M., 2016. *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*. [Kindle edition] Anboco. Available at: Amazon.co.uk <<https://www.amazon.co.uk>> [Accessed: 30 January 2022].
- Wright, D. and Meadows, D.H., 2009. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. [e-book] London: Routledge. Available through: ARU Library website <<https://library.aru.ac.uk>> [Accessed: 29 November 2022].

Abstracts – Research Day

Sensorimotor exercises and training of the hand in preschool children's learning to write and read; A study of children's experiences, thoughts and feelings about the work carried out in Montessori preschools

dr Per Gynther & dr Eva-Maria Tebano Ahlquist, Stockholm University, Sweden

Teaching writing and reading with paper and pencil has changed due to the widespread digitalisation of society, and young children, at least in Western society, often have their first writing experiences via digital resources (e.g. Mangen & Balsvik, 2016). This development is seen by research as unfavourable to children's ability to develop good skills in this area, pointing to the role our body plays in learning and thus emphasizing the importance of sensorimotor training in learning to read and write (e.g. Naka, 2006; Longcamp et al., 2011; James & Engelhardt, 2012;). The Swedish preschool curriculum states that children's interest in written language should be stimulated. However, it does not explicitly mention if, and consequently how, exercises for learning to read and write should be provided.

In our presentation, we will report on a completed overview of what research points out regarding learning to write and read at an early age and, drawing from this overview, present an upcoming study of preschool children's work with the sensorimotor exercises aimed at developing their fine motor skills as a preparation for writing that are carried out in Montessori preschools. The study aims to gain knowledge about what preschool children express creates meaning and engagement during their work with exercises which prepare them for writing and reading. By highlighting the children's perspective on such didactic application, the study aims to contribute knowledge about whether the writing exercises create interest in the written language. The study will therefore contribute to the discussion about when and how writing by hand should be introduced in preschools in general and not only be of interest to the Montessori community.

At the conference, we will present the theoretical and methodological points of departure in the study and how the study is designed and will be conducted. By doing so, we hope not only to initiate a discussion about the theoretical perspective and the method in the study but also invite other researchers to collaborate with those who might be interested in carrying out the study in countries outside Sweden and thereby expand the study.

References

- James. K.H. & Engelhardt, L. (2012). The effects of handwriting experience on functional brain development in pre-literate children, *Trends Neurosci. Educ.* 1 32-42.
- Longcamp, M., Hlushchuk, Y. & Hari, R. (2011). What differs in visual recognition of handwritten vs. printed letters? An fMRI study. *Hum. Brain Mapp.* 32 (8), 1250-1259
- Mangen, A. & Balsvik, L. (2016). Trends in Neuroscience and Education. *Elsevier*, 5, 99-106.
- Naka, M. (2006). Repeated writing facilitates children's memory for pseudo characters and foreign letters. *Mem. Cogn.* 26 (4), 804-809

Abstracts – Research Day

Variation and invariance in Maria Montessori's sensory training materials

Kerstin Signert, PhD, researcher, teacher trainer, chairman of M.E.R. – Montessori Education Research, Sweden

The purpose of this study was to analyse Montessori pedagogy with the objective to theoretically describe and explain the Montessori pedagogical method and the aim has been to find an answer to what still makes the Montessori pedagogy, after more than one hundred years, successfully spread to schools all over the world. With the help of older and newer theory formations, primarily a number of variation theory concepts, empirical data of small children using Montessori materials were analysed.

The study shows that nothing will come from nothing. Maria Montessori was a child of her time, and not alone in her aspirations. She made use of many of the current events and ideas and transformed them into her own. The pedagogical methods that Montessori developed, when she met intellectually challenged, under stimulated children in the hospital, came about at a time when measures for these children were discussed from a medical and educational perspective.

Later, when the education in the regular school was debated throughout society, she turned to these children to develop the methods, that she had been inspired to by the two doctors Jean Itard and Edouard Séguin. The common characteristics of their method were variation and invariance, a method they in turn were inspired to use by Jacob Rodriguez Pereira, the first teacher of deaf-mutes in France.

Learning is a lot about learning to see differences, learning to distinguish and separate things. Whatever specific thing we are to learn, there is a specific pattern of variation and invariance without which it cannot possibly be learned. A very important aspect of learning is thus the creation of the necessary conditions, the specific patterns of variation and invariance. This idea, which is fundamental in Maria Montessori's pedagogy, is also a central idea in a new pedagogical learning theory, the variation theory. An idea also argued by perceptual psychologists, Eleanor and James Gibson, 50 years ago.

The result of this study shows that Montessori too made a system of variation and invariance in the training with the sensorial material, which also shows that the method Montessori used for sensorial education also can be appreciated within the framework of variation theory. In addition, the result of the study shows that the Montessori pedagogy is based on a carefully thought-out principle on learning that also proves to be built into the sensorial material. This is not an antiquated and vague theory but processed through and practices on a carefully thought-out principle of learning, which corresponds with current science. The materials, one can literally touch, allows the theory and method to live on relatively unchanged over time and space.

Abstracts – Research Day

Teaching and learning media and digital literacy in Montessori preschools

Dessi Stoeva, Assistant Professor and PhD student at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and the Arts, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Bulgaria

According to Dr. Maria Montessori, all children have to master the most important technological achievements of their world. This presentation/publication will draw attention to the fact that together with the idea of mastering modern technologies, at the same time children have to develop media & digital literacy skills, among many others. Another question might be how the use of technology, the media itself and media products influences the concentration, normalization and socialization of children in a Montessori environment. According to the statement of the European Commission "Media literacy has never been as important as it is today". Following the definition of DG Communication, combined with the digital literacy model of EAVI, five aspects of digital and media literacy are defined – information literacy, communication and collaboration, creation of digital content, safety and problem solving.

In this publication/presentation we'll look at how the five aspects of digital & media literacy could be developed in practical terms as didactic, multi-sensory materials and how this could be implemented in Montessori kindergartens. For this purpose, an experiment will be presented, in which – on the one hand, will be explained the practical work for the development of didactic materials for the development of media and digital literacy skills, carried out by students and teachers from the Montessori master's program and postgraduate qualification at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and the Arts at Sofia University. On the other hand, will be presented the results of observations on the work of children and teachers with these didactic materials in a Montessori kindergarten in Bulgaria. Interviews with experts and their analysis with qualitative research approaches will give additional information on the benefits and effectiveness of the experiment. The presentation/publication will include photos and videos of the didactic materials and the children's work with them. The present presentation/publication is part of Dessi Stoeva's dissertation work on the topic: "The development of social and emotional competencies among 5-7 year old children in Montessori and traditional kindergartens.

Global Association of Montessori Education and Sport

www.montessorigames.org



We at GAMES believe that sports have the power to unite people and to be a driver for social change. As a nonprofit organization, our goals are purely that of promoting health, peace education and cultural understanding and international friendship, by connecting people through sport, education and shared culture. Instead of winners or prizes, we remove the competition and combine children of mixed age, gender and nationality, to participate in the Olympic spirit of fun, friendship, solidarity and fair play.

Join us to learn more about how we use sports and physical activity to help guide young people to become better world citizens and create a more peaceful and sustainable future.



Montessori Model United Nations

www.montessori-mun.org

MMUN is a year-long transformative experience for students 9-15. Simulating the format of the United Nations, students are changed through the process of becoming an MMUN delegate. Representing a country, other than their own, they discover that they can become active in solving real-world problems.

That discovery lasts a life-time. Students engage on a global level throughout the school year as they join social meet-ups and committee-style simulations with international peers.

At the MMUN International Conference, live in NYC or Rome or online, they interact with other students from across the world to create solutions to current world issues and develop global awareness, problem-solving and negotiation skills. They learn they have a voice and can make a difference to create the world they dream of.

The Flourish Project

www.flourishproject.net

The Flourish Project introduces a new and powerful framework for understanding and mapping human wellbeing that promotes community involvement and whole-systems thinking. Currently moving into its pilot period,

it offers schools, community-leaders and national policymakers the ability to better understand and promote the health and wellbeing of their own communities and populations. It helps to ensure that child and family wellbeing is at the heart of all local decision-making and assists cities and local authorities to become Centres of Flourishing.

Above all, it underpins the call for a more caring and compassionate world.



Think Equal

www.thinkequal.org

Think Equal is a global education initiative, led by human rights activist Leslee Udwin, committed to creating a safe, free and equal world through a system change in Early Childhood Education. Both a movement and a concrete programme, Think Equal teaches 25 social emotional learning competencies

to children aged 3-6, such as empathy, self-esteem, gender equality, inclusion, environmental stewardship, emotional intelligence and respect for people and planet. Created with help from global experts and thought leaders, Think Equal has designed a scripted, comprehensive, evidence-based and holistic programme to build pro-social foundations in children's developing brains for positive life outcomes.

Youth Impact! Forum

www.youthimpactforum.com

The Youth Impact! Forum's mission is to empower students to change the world in support of the Global UN Goals by building successful projects in their local communities. To do this, YIF works directly through teachers to provide all the scaffolding needed to successfully foster impactful student initiatives.





Montessori Europe e.V.

Grünstr. 23

12555 Berlin

Germany

+49 30 21 480 18 40

office@montessori-europe.net