

Inspired
by Nature



Nienhuis
MONTESSORI

6th European
Nienhuis Montessori Retreat



The European Nienhuis Montessori Retreat

Every year in many countries Montessori conferences and refresher courses are being organised by national and European Montessori Associations. Of course, all these events are very valuable for extending people's knowledge of Montessori education and exchanging experiences and ideas.

Nienhuis Montessori had the first experience of a new event format, namely an European forum for sharing and conversation. The main idea was to gather, share and exchange experiences and ideas in an informal setting and to extend the people knowledge of Montessori education. The name chosen for this Montessori event was MONTESSORI RETREAT.

Because of its enormous success and very positive feedback, this already is the 6th edition of this event. As Patricia Wallner is one of the initiators she is going to speak and lecture again during this 6th edition. Next to Patricia, Madlena Ulrich, AMI trainer 3 – 6 and Carla Foster, AMI trainer 6 – 12 will be there to make a considerable contribution.

Inspired by Nature

Current research shows that for optimum learning and the development of the whole child, 'nature' is central and key. 'Nature' holds several meanings. It acknowledges that children hold the key to the future, they are part nature and they follow the natural laws of development. We as adults have the responsibility to nurture and guide them, to create the optimal environment to reach their potential and remove obstacles that impede their natural development. Central to this is that children need to engage in the natural environment as much as possible. The natural world around them holds the stimulus for all learning and the ability to connect with nature actually nurtures the soul.



0 – 3

The basic personality is formed in the first years of life. The impact of nature on this early development will be looked at in light of modern research and Maria Montessori's ideas. Some practical ideas will be offered.

3 - 6

The Cultural Areas in the Children's House are tightly connected with the areas of Practical Life, Sensorial and Language. They help the child to make discoveries in the world of nature, physics and geography and they offer means for self-expression through art and music. Over the weekend, we will demonstrate simple experiments, show how one can use art to study nature, and explore how these activities can be set up so the child can work independently.

6 - 12

Water is not alive, yet water means life. Ours is the planet that has this one thing that made us possible. Water is science and poetry, cooking and song. The elementary children need to meet this element in a way that will inspire them to gratitude and to the desire to protect this precious resource. We have presentations in our album that give the keys to understanding. At this Nienhuis Retreat we will look at building a play from the presentations, a play about the work of water. We will also look at avenues of research into the life of animals that have returned from the land to the water, by looking at the problems they have to overcome. This can give important keys to the elementary children about ecology and evolution.

Friday 20 October

16:00	Registration		
17:00	Opening & Introduction		
17:30	The Six Stages of Human Development and Nature	0 - 3	Patricia Wallner
18:00	Belonging: Cultural Adaptation in the Children's House	3 - 6	Madlena Ulrich
18:30	Theatre in Elementary: Why and How	6 - 12	Carla Foster
19:00	Dinner		

Saturday 21 October

09:00	The Reasons Children Need Nature	0 - 3	Patricia Wallner
10:00	Coffee Break		
10:30	Science Experiments With Air and Water	3 - 6	Madlena Ulrich
11:30	Coffee Break		
12:00	The Work of Water – Theatre Scenes	6 – 12	Carla Foster
13:00	Lunch		
14:00	Spontaneous Q & A and Workshops	All	
17:00	End		
17:30	Dinner		

Sunday 22 October

09:00	Practical Ideas to Bring Nature to Children	0 – 3	Patricia Wallner
09:45	Coffee Break		
10:15	Preparing the Environment for Science and Nature	3 - 6	Madlena Ulrich
11:00	Coffee Break		
11:45	Life in Water – The Aquatic Problem	6 - 12	Carla Foster
12:30	Closing		



Patricia Wallner **AMI Trainer 0 – 3**

Patricia Wallner has been working in Montessori since 1970. She took her AMI 3-6 diploma in Washington D.C. and the 0-3 diploma in Houston, Texas with Dr. Silvana Montanaro. For 17 years she worked in a bilingual Infant Community in Amsterdam, The Netherlands where she lives. In 1995 she began the Training of Training program supported by the Association Montessori Internationale and during her training earned a Master's degree in Education. She has trained students and lectured in Europe, Asia and the U.S.A. Her goal is to promote Montessori, especially for the 0-3 age group in Europe.

Madlena Ulrich **AMI Trainer 3 – 6**

Madlena Ulrich spent her childhood in Germany and attended a Montessori Elementary school there. She moved to Norway as an adolescent and later obtained a Bachelor's degree as a preschool teacher and is about to finish a Master's degree in pedagogy at the university College of Vestfold, Norway. She took her original AMI 3-6 training at Mount St. Mary's Montessori College in Dublin, Ireland. Since 1995 she has worked in the classroom and has been involved in the development of Montessori in Norway by giving lectures and serving as Vice President on the board for the national association NMF. In 2008 she started on her Training of Trainer's, spending two years with Molly O'Shaughnessy in Minnesota and a Summer course with Ulla Wikefeldt in Sweden. She is currently part of the AMI faculty in China and lectures in Norway as well as in many other countries.



Carla Foster **AMI Trainer 6 – 12**

Carla Foster is originally from California, but has lived the last 14 years in Norway. She graduated from UC Berkeley, California with bachelor's degrees in Social Anthropology and Scandinavian Studies and a masters in Old Icelandic Literature and Norwegian Literature. She has her AMI 3 - 6 diploma from the MMTO in London in 1984 and her AMI 6-12 diploma from Milwaukee in 1990 and has been working with elementary children since 1990. She had her own class in Norway for 12 years before joining the AMI Trainer of Trainers programme. Since then she has assisted on the AMI 6-12 summer course in London with Ann Dunne and the AMI 6-12 course in Chennai with Jean Miller. Any spare time is spent doing various forms of dance.

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