

Stuttgart, September 7 – 10, 2019

"In the Beginning is the Human Being" – The Stuttgart Congress from 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019

*Petra Plützer*

*translated by John Weedon*

When Waldorf education celebrates its centenary, the festivities and events will be like a firework display. On 5<sup>th</sup> September 1919 Rudolf Steiner held the last of his 14 lectures on "The Foundations of Human Experience" as part of the training of the new college of teachers of the Waldorf school. A path of spiritual training began – and it has continued right up to this day. It all started in Stuttgart. Out of the initial teacher training course the present "Freie Hochschule Stuttgart" (Waldorf Seminar) emerged, offering state accredited degree programmes. The original mother school and the "Freie Hochschule" remain close neighbours as always. So what would be more natural than to organise a great conference for Waldorf teachers around the centenary date as a joint effort by the school and the Seminar, in which "The Foundations of Human Experience" is the central focus?

Alongside all the festivities in 2019, it is intended to be a proper working meeting with lots of joy in common activities. For, after all, at the outset in his opening lecture, it is the capacity for enthusiasm that Rudolf Steiner emphasises as one of the key virtues for the teacher. However, the Stuttgart Congress for all Waldorf educators from schools and kindergartens is also meant to do justice to the international nature of the Waldorf education movement. And thus, people from all over the world are invited to Stuttgart. Giving courage, offering impulses, daring the future – the three-day programme is meant to con-

vey all of this with its opening evening on Saturday, which will seamlessly follow on from the festivities of the Waldorf School Uhlandshöhe. The shared grounds of the school and Waldorf Seminar should easily provide space for 1,000 guests from all over the world. Lectures, as well as particular workshops will be translated into English or German.

"In the Beginning is the Human Being" – that is the title of the Stuttgart Congress, which is an event organised by the German Association of Waldorf Schools in collaboration with the International Conference of the Waldorf movement (The Hague Circle).

For the Waldorf schools as well as the kindergartens, a comprehensive understanding of the human being, which sees the three-fold human being as body, soul and spirit, is a fundamental source for all educational work, an instrument for a living teaching method and a way to individualize one's approach. In the work of every teacher and his or her getting a sense of the pupils' future potential, the spiritual understanding of the human being needs to be constantly renewed and needs to creatively call to mind the question: How can our work on the spiritual understanding of the human being be turned into an effective pedagogical impulse in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

A lot of well-known educators are being invited to participate in shaping the compre-

hensive programme. Alongside the lectures, there is to be sufficient time for exchanging ideas in work groups and the opportunity for discussion in forums.

The future confronts us with profound riddles, poses core questions and exciting challenges. The 2019 Stuttgart Congress "In the Beginning is the Human Being", involving

the international Waldorf movement is meant to deal with these themes creatively and make them acutely relevant to our time, in particular with a view toward the coming decades.

All information and online booking from April 2019 on is to be found at [www.freie-hochschule-stuttgart.de](http://www.freie-hochschule-stuttgart.de)

Berlin, September 19, 2019

The Celebration in the Tempodrom in Berlin

*Henning Kullak-Ublick*

On September 19, 2019, the worldwide festival will take place – in all kindergartens, schools, teacher training centers or other Waldorf institutions that want to participate. Many beautiful ideas have already reached us on how schools want to celebrate, ranging from children's activities to involving the city, to scientific or political colloquia. They unfold a wonderful bouquet of flowers in appreciation of what has already been accomplished and of the urgent tasks of our time, as well as the near future. What unites them all is the challenge of being aware of every single child and its individuality within a community, and how they can strengthen each other in practical life.

Our original idea – a central festival on each continent – has transformed because there will be so many congresses and other opportunities for encounters anyway. The plan is now to create a mutual celebration for the whole world, which will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> September in the beautiful Berlin "Tempodrom"-arena. (<https://www.tempodrom.de/en/>)

We are working really hard on the festival program in collaboration with the stage and event artist Rob Barendsma from the Netherlands. It is now clear that there will be three major sections through the day:

- In the morning there will be a ceremony, which will mainly be conducted by children from Classes 1- 8. In many images and artistic scenes, Waldorf education will become an experience through its history, as a global impulse, and through all age groups in a way that touches the senses, hearts and minds of the audience deeply enough to inspire courage, confidence and joy for proceeding towards the second century of Waldorf education.
- In the afternoon, there will be a number of smaller and larger events inside, as well as outside the building, including artistic performances as well as philosophical, scientific and political contributions, TED talks, public talks, theater, circus and whatever else has yet to come to our mind.