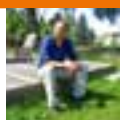


SPRING 2016 | ISSUE 01



NOOKEE

The magazine of the Breuninger Foundation Group
for social innovations and placemaking



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Initiatives like enpact bring people from different backgrounds together_p. 36



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Wilfried Schley and Helga Breuninger introduce the new version of their School Learning Platform_p. 50

“The art of hosting exists as a method – and then there’s the art of hosting as a passion. It’s the latter form I perceive whenever I visit you, performed with great joy and kindness, and I’d like to express my gratitude for this wonderful location, the communicative, atmospheric, physical setting you provide, where much can and indeed does grow.”

Michael Gleich, Der Story Teller

N O O K E E

/ *nookee (Mohawk, also nooh keeyh): 'world' or 'our land'. The Breuninger Foundations' Wasan Island in Canada was once a mystical reserve for Indigenous Peoples. By choosing this word as the title of our magazine, we want to honour this heritage – partly because we realize that this is our only world and we have to preserve it./



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WASAN ISLAND







The magic of Wasan Island

New solutions arise best at places where people can get away from it all and escape the pressures of work and everyday life.

One such place is Wasan Island, which has a magic all of its own. This island owned by the Breuninger Foundation is located in the Muskoka Lakes in Ontario, Canada. Formerly a reserve of the Mohawk First Nations, Wasan Island's remote location and unique atmosphere make it an ideal location for unforgettable conferences and symposiums.

With its traditional cottages and old boathouses nestling in a rocky woodland setting, and surrounded by the waters of Lake Rosseau, Wasan Island is a retreat where collaboration can be reimagined and experienced. As visitors resonate with each other there, they acquire fresh insights and find the inspiration necessary to change things for the better.

Therefore, in conjunction with its foundation partners, every summer the Breuninger Foundation invites people from civil society, the business sector, science, politics and the arts to discuss the pressing issues of the day and work together on future solutions.

www.wasan-island.de

Left to right:

One of the guest houses on Wasan Island

A participant plays the musical stones

Cosy log fire in the lounge

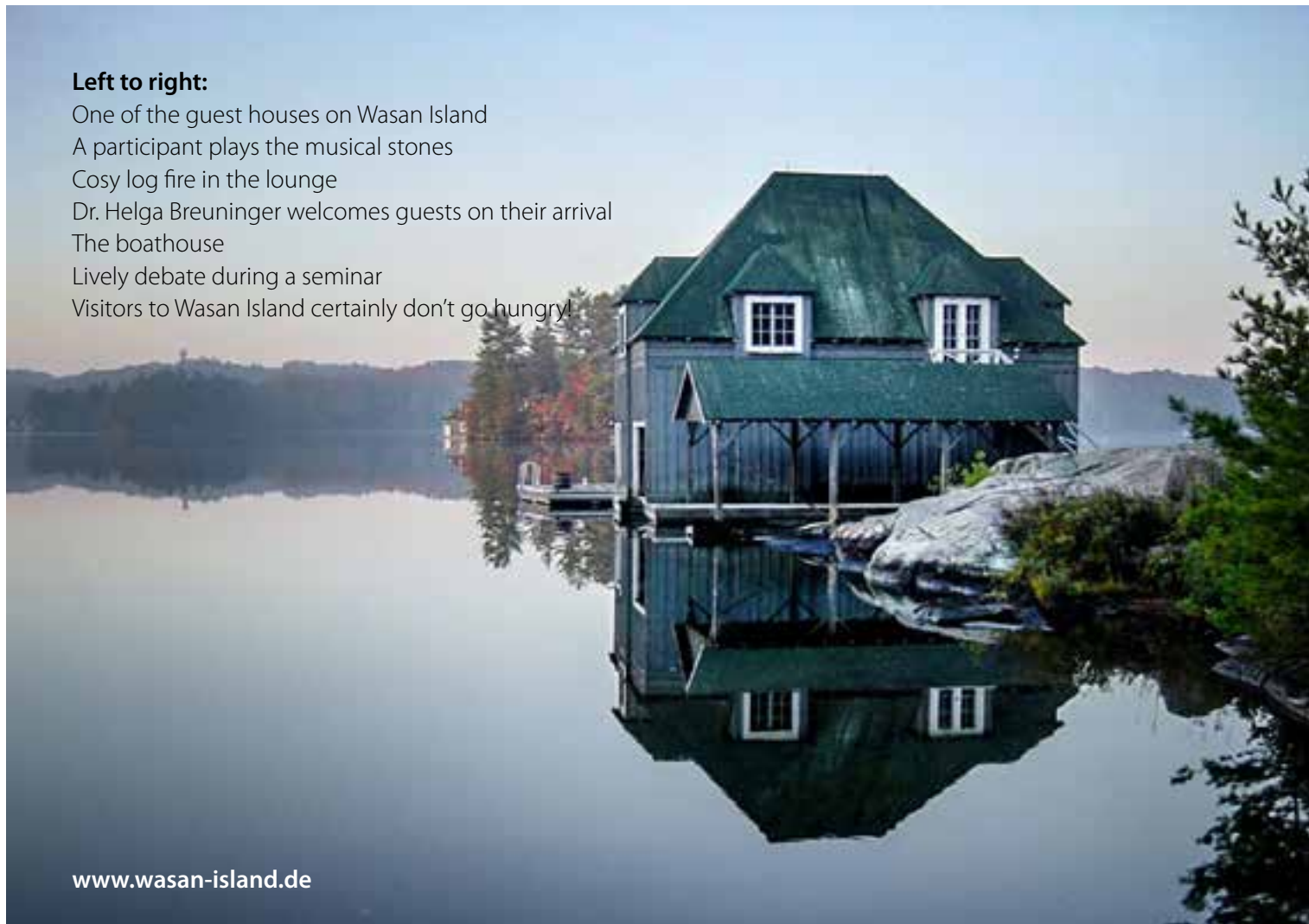
Dr. Helga Breuninger welcomes guests on their arrival

The boathouse

Lively debate during a seminar

Visitors to Wasan Island certainly don't go hungry!

www.wasan-island.de



All photos © Volker Hann



1 June 2016 – Philanthropy in Muskoka

Wasan Island is part of the Muskoka Lakes in Ontario, Canada. In this one-day workshop, a group of experts, community leaders and philanthropists are invited to discuss and develop strategies for philanthropic impact in the Township of Muskoka.

In collaboration with the Muskoka Community Foundation

20–22 June 2016 – Research and Development for the Social Sector

The social purpose sector needs to become as innovative as possible to achieve better outcomes, but without an effective R&D engine we are operating at a sub-optimal level. This session will explore how to create an R&D engine for the social purpose sector.

In collaboration with the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, MaRS Discovery District and SiG – Social Innovation Generation

3–9 July 2016 – Reflecting and Co-Creating Partnerships

Reflecting back on a year of collaboration, co-creation and partnership, we will explore how we can continue to support and develop shared value practices within our organizations to leverage our relationships toward greater community impact.

In collaboration with Community Foundations of Canada

14–17 July 2016 – Impact Session Accountability Lab

To solve our collective global challenges, it's essential that people in power are held responsible for decisions. This session with the Accountability Lab will bring together global experts to explore how we can build a youth movement for integrity – and bring about a generational shift towards accountability.

In collaboration with BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt

24–27 July 2016 – Philanthropy of Place

Places and spaces are crucial elements of how people work together and processes can be shaped. This workshop will explore ways to establish a worldwide network of 'purpose-driven' places where people can share their knowledge and inspire each other.

In collaboration with the Helga Breuninger Foundation, Impact Hub Global and the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt



4–7 August 2016 Transatlantic Core Group

In a dialogue process to revive and strengthen transatlantic relations between the young generation in Germany and the USA, young executives from all sectors actively collaborate to identify new topics relevant for both sides of the Atlantic and develop common solution approaches.

In collaboration with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Atlantic Council and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs

These are just a few of the events this summer on Wasan Island. For a full list, go to www.helga-breuninger-stiftung.de (Campus > Wasan)



W
WASAN ISLAND



1–3 September 2016 – Performance Simulation for Education

How can simulation training tools help teachers and parents integrate new methods and research into their daily practice? A German approach is being explored with Canadian experts and authorities.

In collaboration with the Helga Breuninger Foundation and the Leadership Foundation for Professional Learning and Global Education



17–22 September 2016 – Belonging in a Society where Borders are Challenged

Why do people feel a sense of belonging and assume responsibility for their family, community or society? How do communities grow together? In this workshop, Canadian and German foundations, community organizations and scholars will explore the impact of public, private and non-profit sectors on these issues.

In collaboration with the Community Foundations of Canada and German Community Foundation



2–8 October 2016 – Arts and Reconciliation

This unique initiative promotes artistic collaborations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists, investing in the power of art and imagination to inspire dialogue, understanding and change.

In collaboration with the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and the Canada Council for the Arts

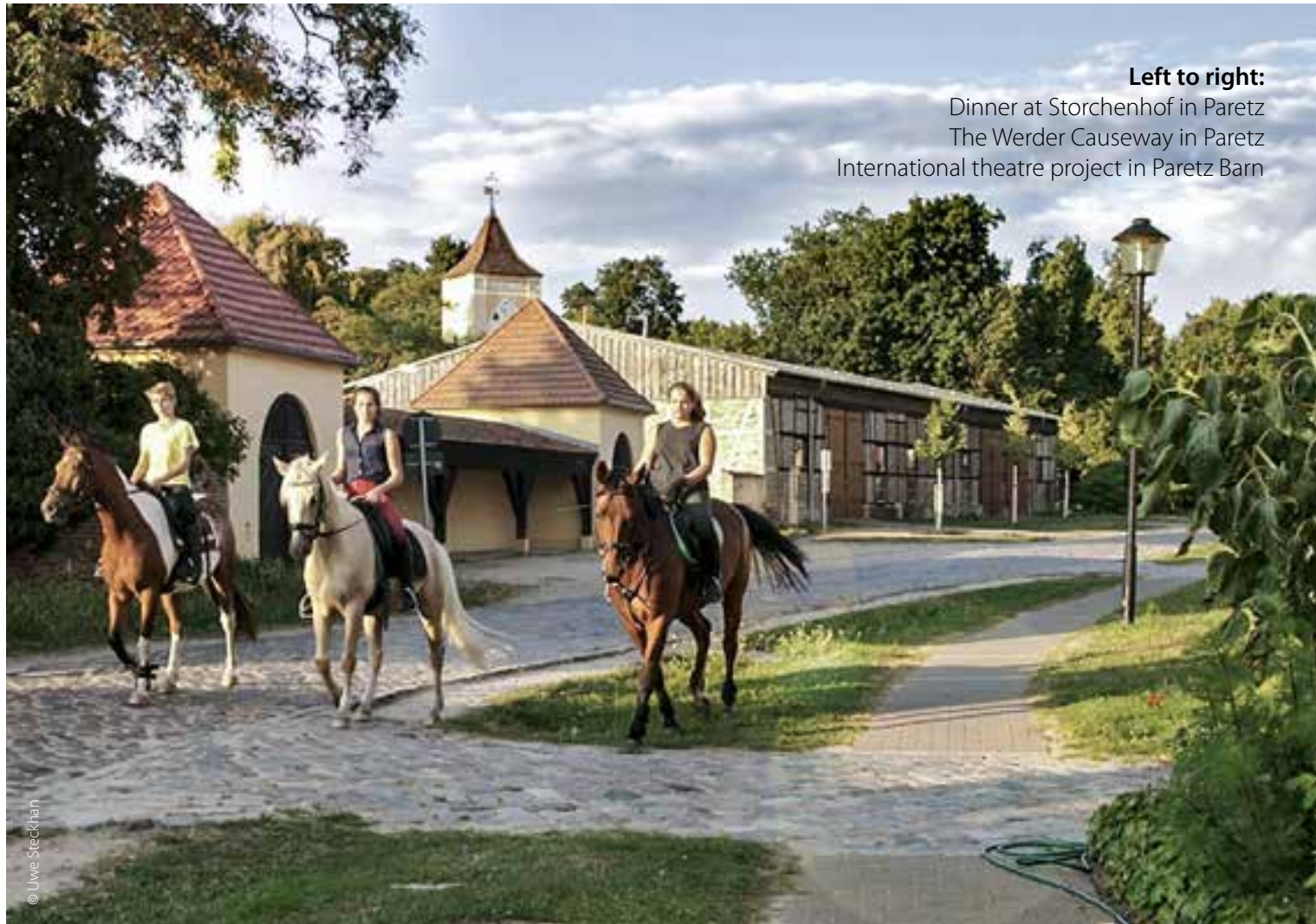


HERE I AM HUMAN

Places with a positive resonance – and how they affect us.

Sometimes you arrive at a place you've never seen before and immediately feel welcome, carefree and open; in short, you feel right at home. You absorb the atmosphere, submit to its guidance – and simultaneously start corresponding with it.





Left to right:
Dinner at Storchenhof in Paretz
The Werder Causeway in Paretz
International theatre project in Paretz Barn

© Uwe Steckhan

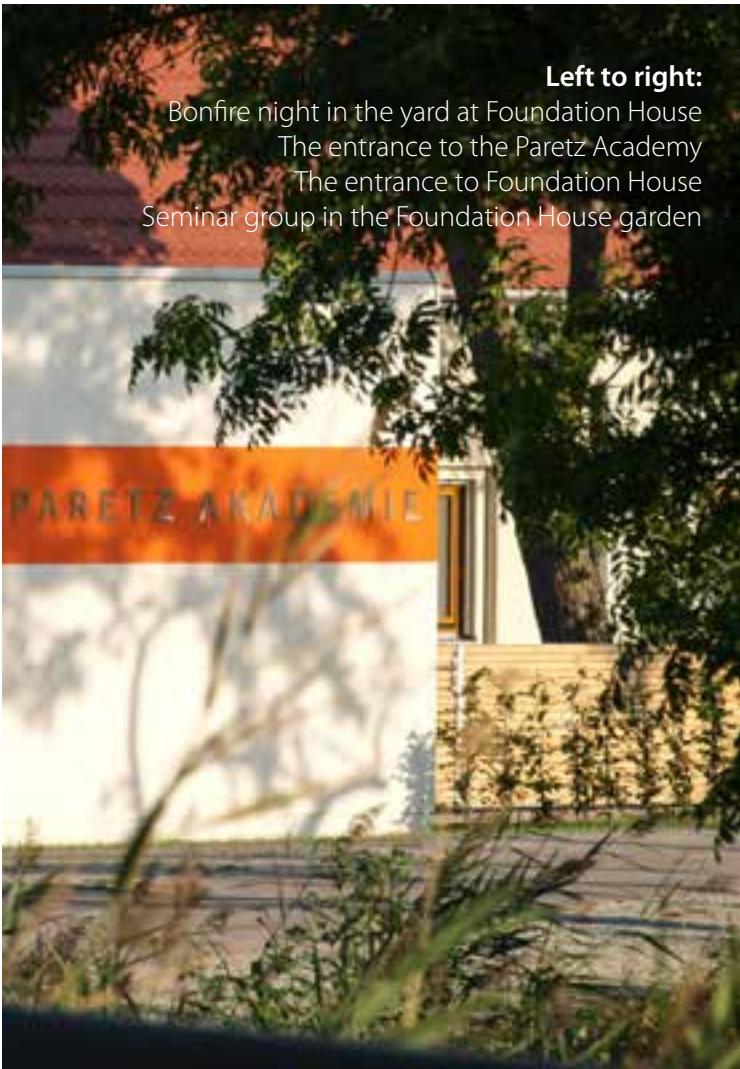


© Jörg Peter



Top to bottom:
 Summer trip on board the MS John Franklin
 A seminar group in the Stable at the Paretz Academy
 The Academy Stable – empty for a change!
 Bonfire night at the Paretz Academy





Left to right:
 Bonfire night in the yard at Foundation House
 The entrance to the Paretz Akademie
 The entrance to Foundation House
 Seminar group in the Foundation House garden



All photos © Uwe Steckhan

Left to right:

Recital by Maria Baptist at the Paretz Academy
Boathouse on the Havel
Green Villa in Ketzin





All photos © Uwe Steckhan

Places have their own resonance. They have their own language, and a much stronger influence on our being and consciousness than we understand. Churches are good examples. So are concert halls. That cute little café down a narrow alley where you can leave the world behind you. Areas in the countryside often have a positive effect on us, not least because of their tranquillity. Sitting by the water on the shoreline. The woodlands where you can unwind.

It's important for us humans to escape from information overload and regularly seek out places where we can find ourselves. Where we don't merely function but get in touch with ourselves, with our life and what we do. Where we can switch off, set aside our habits and constraints, forget our obligations and responsibilities, and see things from a new perspective. What's more, this holds true not just for individuals, but above all for groups and teams. Places that are conducive to taking an external view and engaging in a shared process.

On Wasan Island in Canada as well as at the Academy, Foundation House and the Barn in Paretz, places have evolved which are both a retreat and a resonance chamber. After all, in a world where society is becoming more and more standardized, where the economy is increasingly complex and all-embracing,

havens like these are essential in order to explore existing problems and find new solutions, to identify opportunities and social potential, and to find innovative, unusual ways to harness them. And to remember that our strength still lies in being human beings and not machines.

"A place invites visitors to discover it. And everyone does that in their own way," – Helga Breuninger.

“A place only makes suggestions while allowing you total freedom to use it as you see fit.”

With the stunning Wasan Island and the facilities in Paretz, Helga Breuninger's foundations have places available with a powerful energy intended to inspire and invigorate people. Visitors can share views and find new solutions. Even conflicts in systems or societies can be resolved if everyone is involved and their needs are taken seriously – and for this we need venues where people can open up to each other.

“We hope that our settings enhance our guests' openness to solutions and partnership, allowing a sense of belonging to quickly develop. This makes collaboration easy. People feel confident, become more creative, and can engage with previously unknown viewpoints.”

However, says Helga Breuninger, this can only happen if the locations have a certain quality. “You have to be able to move in them easily. They should radiate peace and calm, and they should provide a certain standard of comfort without being too cosy.” Ultimately, visitors are expected to use the power of these places in order to think and work together in a focused manner. The architecture, the size of the rooms, and their non-standard amenities are immensely important – as are the placemakers and those providing background support.

“Our employees play a vital part in the energy of our locations. In order to be able to do so, it's vital that they themselves feel happy in their work – that they think positively, are receptive, open to everyone, and look after our guests' welfare with compassion and sincerity.

This leads to an atmosphere in which people move from a personal to a community dimension. An atmosphere in which they want to be part of a group and contribute to the solutions. “Those who want to change the world first need a place as the nucleus,” we might say. Two such places are undoubtedly Wasan Island and Paretz..

www.wasan-island.de



Wasan_017.JPG



All photos © Breuninger Foundation



Left to right:

Volker Hann, host on Wasan Island
Guests, group room and an installation on Wasan Island



"As soon as I arrived here, time began to move differently. The Paretz Academy expands the soul. The deep, affirmative atmosphere of the place can be found in every word, every person, every action. Here, people started engaging with each other. This led to an intensity in our work which wouldn't have emerged at a traditional venue. I'd never dreamed that an effect like that could be generated by a location. One thing's for sure: everyone who comes to Paretz leaves a changed person."

Almut Rietschel, participant in the seminar 'Supervision for Learning Therapists' in Paretz



Paretz Academy and seminar participants in summer 2015



Angaangaq Angakkorsuaq, a healer and shaman from Greenland, sanctifying Wasan Island

© Volker Hann



“On Wasan Island and in Paretz, people resonate with the laws of these positive places. They open up to others, let go of their egos and forget their rivalry. Only then can new perspectives – and hence new solutions – arise.”

Dr. Helga Breuninger



NEW THINKERS

Social enterprise is booming like never before – thanks to a new generation of smart, public-spirited enthusiasts. They're young with their whole lives ahead of them. They're burning with vision, dedication and ambition. But they're not career-minded – at least, not in the conventional sense, in which a career means a handsome salary and an executive position in, say, banking, IT or manufacturing. Social entrepreneurs have a different outlook – and in Paretz they come together from all four corners of the world at the invitation of the Helga Breuninger Foundation.

At some time or other, everyone has a small idea – or perhaps even a big one! – about how to make the world a better place. But whereas most of us don't do anything about it, social entrepreneurs turn it into a business venture.

If you saw them on the street, you wouldn't think they were any different from the rest of us. You wouldn't dream that their aims weren't of this world, that they were a species with a different economic philosophy. Nor would you guess that they came from a universe in which social benefits outweigh the sum of economic success, stakeholder value and dividends. Instead of being driven by profit and the trappings of commercial success, their minds orbit around social issues. The good news is that these people are indeed among us. Better still, they're

THEY  ARE

extremely serious! They're known as social entrepreneurs or change agents. To some people they sound like crazy do-gooders, but in actual fact they know exactly what they're

doing. What's more, they have a proven track record of success. Social entrepreneurs are people who have developed and applied an innovative solution to pressing social problems. Instead of leaving it to the government to change social phenomena, they regard themselves and others as driving forces with the ability to transform a system and bring about change; be it in society, politics, the economy, education and integration, healthcare, the environment or the arts.

Small loans, big impact

One man who caused a sensation as a social entrepreneur is Muhammad Yunus. He founded the Grameen Bank and granted microcredits to poor people in Bangladesh who wanted to set themselves up in business. He turned the traditional system of lending upside down by not demanding any sort of collateral from borrowers; instead, his system was based solely on general creditworthiness, mutual trust and investment. Traditional banks are loath to provide micro-loans to poor people because they see them as a high credit risk and also unprofitable

(because of the disproportionate administrative costs caused by microcredit). Until recently, no one thought the poor had what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Yunus, however, forged a new system and built up an organization which is largely self-funded and can be reproduced internationally. His social enterprise started out with \$27 and helped 42 women go into business by lending each of them half a dollar. Nowadays, the Grameen Bank operates in over 80,000 villages (97% of Bangladesh) and serves more than 9 million borrowers, 97% of whom are women.

For a host of examples illustrating how social entrepreneurship works, check out the Forbes list '30 under 30: Social Entrepreneurs'. It includes Hugh Evans and Simon Moss, who launched the Global Poverty Project in 2008. Their vision is to put an end to worldwide extreme poverty – defined as people living on less than \$1.25 a day – within twenty-five years. It's a noble cause which they're tackling with smart ideas. For example, Evans and Moss started major campaigns such as the Global Citizen Festival in New York City's Central Park. Those who want tickets for this major music event have to first earn bonus points by means of active involvement such as tweeting about the issue of poverty or watching YouTube documentaries and sharing them on Facebook.

AMONGUS



Special drive for special challenges

Social entrepreneurship isn't the same as social activism. Change agents attempt to bridge the gap between entrepreneurship and doing good for society – a bit like the traditional idea of the honourable businessman trying to live up to both corporate and social responsibility. The difference is that for social entrepreneurs, the social benefit is more important than financial success. True, they still have to earn money, but this is merely a means to fund and expand the project. The number of people taking up social entrepreneurship is steadily rising.

As things stand, one out of every four firms which are established in the EU these days can be considered a social business, and in Germany the social economy already makes up at least 10% of the country's gross national product. However, the problem facing social entrepreneurs is that as businesses they don't operate in a traditional market where the price and success of a product or service is determined by the laws of supply, demand and innovation. Much of what they achieve can't be expressed in monetary terms, and they are often ignored by traditional companies, private investors, government departments and local authorities. As a result, they're often left to fend for themselves.

Social entrepreneurship in Paretz

These very issues are addressed at the ChangemakerXchange run by Ashoka and enpact's Entrepreneurs Camps. Participants are invited to debate ideas and problems at these annual meetings of young, responsible entrepreneurs (which the Helga Breuninger Foundation supports by providing its venues and its team in Paretz). They are aided by experienced mentors from enpact, who analyse the structural, strategic and organizational hurdles currently faced by change agents. On meeting these young visionaries, one thing is immediately apparent. Although they come from different countries such as Morocco, Sweden, Tunisia, Germany, Spain, Egypt, France and Israel, they all have one thing in common: a positive obsession and conviction that they can genuinely bring about change with an idea coupled with unlimited tenacity. Examples include Johan Fredriksson, who through his company Didici promotes collaborative learning and intrinsic motivation in the classroom in order to break the old-fashioned teacher vs. students model, and Lander Ismael, whose web platform Lokaliza features mapping functions allowing residents of Pristina in Kosovo to highlight problems in their city ranging from illegally dumped refuse to staircases in need of repair in retirement homes. Then there's Guillaume Capelle, whose project SINGA promotes integration and cooperation with refugees and helps them start their own businesses. They and countless other change agents are well on the way to making the world a better place with their visions. Most of them will never be in the spotlight and only a few of them will be featured in the news. The most important changes take place on a small scale – which is why the value of social entrepreneurs is priceless even if it can't be calculated. At any rate, they can count on the support of the Helga Breuninger Foundation.

www.ashoka.org
www.enpact.org
www.seakademie.de



... people in the EU

(6% of those in work) work in the social business sector

ONE IN FOUR ...

... businesses set up in the EU
are social businesses



FACTS AND FIGURES...

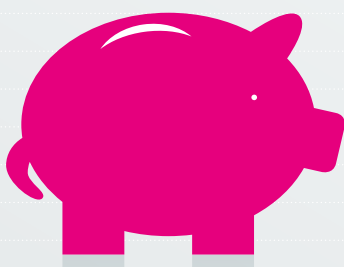
... about social entrepreneurship

©Social Entrepreneurship Akademie München



tackled by social entrepreneurs include

social affairs and inclusion, education, environmental protection, job creation for people with disabilities, combating poverty and human rights



STARTING CAPITAL

... of social enterprises

€0 to €30,000

A social entrepreneur is an entrepreneur:

- Who seeks to provide lasting solutions to social problems
- For whom profit is just a means to accomplish social benefits rather than the main goal
- Whose values are based on democracy and human dignity
- Who tackles a task they have set themselves by means of an appropriate organizational structure and encouraging like-minded people to join in
- Who can acquire the necessary financial and material resources without becoming dependent on large individual backers
- Who is mainly interested in material objectives rather than profit

www.wikipedia.de



A PLACE FOR DREAMERS



"Some people say the world ought to change in this way or that. But that's not how change comes about. It all depends on what you can do and how you can make a difference. There's a dream inside everyone. And that makes everyone a dream developer." Harald Katzenschläger

Harald Katzenschläger and Hermann Gams founded DreamAcademia in the Austrian village of Siegsdorf. They help people to express their dreams and gradually get closer to them. www.dreamacademia.at

"It's not easy to open yourself up to your dreams and pursue them. Fear of failure or financial problems as well as social pressure are issues that can only be dealt with in an atmosphere of freedom and openness, such as in Paretz. We find it inspirational when people follow their dreams and grow with them." Hermann Gams

CASTING OFF WITH NEW IDEAS

Johan Fredriksson from Sweden and João Rafael Brites from Portugal participated in the Ashoka ChangemakerXchange, which was held at the Paretz Academy in August 2015. There they pooled ideas with other social entrepreneurs on how to take change-making in Europe to the next level.

The thought provoker

With the aid of his company Didici, Johan Fredriksson is determined to get schools to adopt Supplemental Instruction and Collaborative Learning. Known as SI for short, this teaching method is already applied in 1,500 universities in 30 countries – and now it has been adapted by Didici for use in schools. The traditional approach to teaching simply involves knowledge being communicated by teacher to pupil. The idea behind SI is to replace this one-way street with a system of collective learning in which children work together and share knowledge with each other. “This generates totally different dynamics and a natural enthusiasm for educational content. Moreover, the pupils develop a great deal of respect and trust for each other,” says Johan as he explains the Didici method. “We grow schoolchildren into tomorrow’s executives – with social understanding, an awareness of responsibility, and a sense of participation.” For his hard work with Didici, Johan was nominated Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2015 in his native Sweden.

www.didici.se



The tireless motivator

João Rafael Brites is a co-founder of the Transformers Project in Portugal, in which art, sport and hip-hop are employed to help youngsters discover their abilities. Over the past five years, the programme has successfully mobilized more than 200 mentors to teach over 2,800 hours of classes in 120 different activities on a voluntary basis throughout Portugal. Owing to his dedication and vision, João was invited to the 2010 World Economic Forum, where he was one of the youngest participants. In Davos he spoke about change-making and new ways of activating the potential in young people. "I believe tirelessly in the energy of youth. In breakdance, there's an unwritten rule that you always share your knowledge and motivate people. Well, that's exactly what we're doing with our Transformers Project."

www.projectotransformers.org

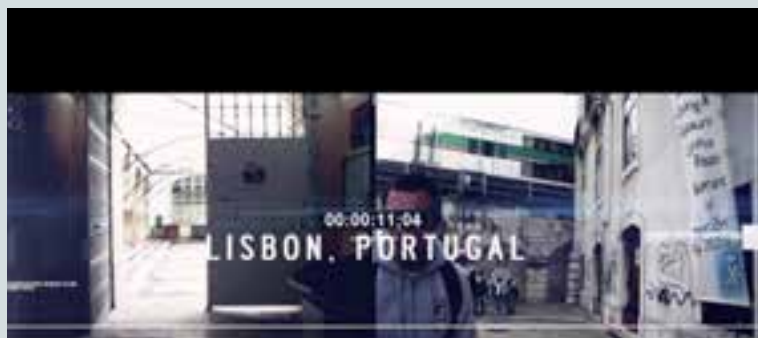


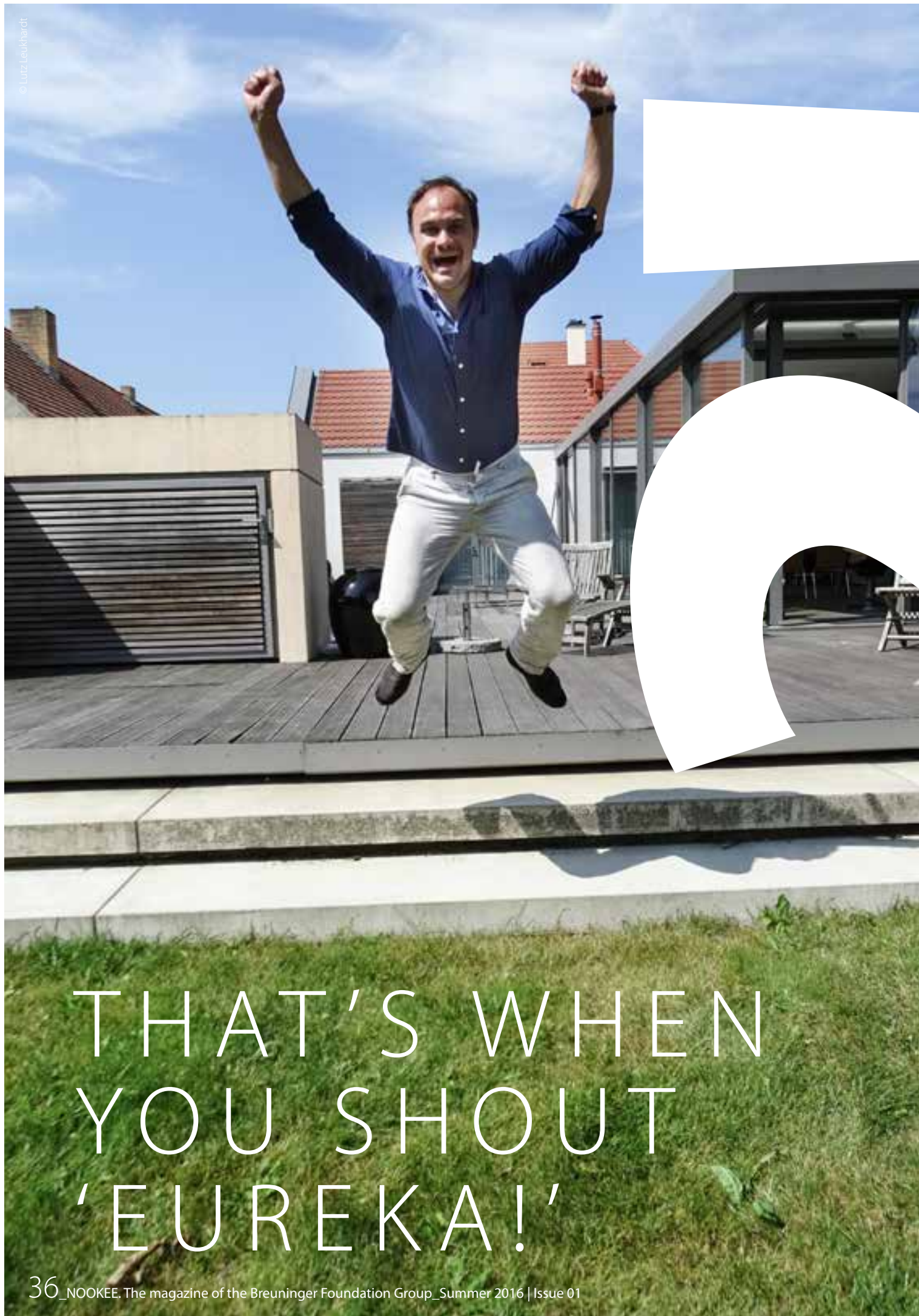
© Lutz Leukhardt

Visionaries on board: Johan Fredriksson (sitting) and João Rafael Brites.



©youtube.com





THAT'S WHEN
YOU SHOUT
'EUREKA!'

Matthias Treuntwein, the CEO of enpact, talks about participation, courage – and heavy baggage.

Matthias, what's going on at the moment in Paretz?

Young, innovative start-ups have come here from Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco. Many of them are trying to find permanent solutions to social problems in their country. The conditions they have to work under are incredibly difficult. There's a new military dictatorship in Egypt, there are terrorist attacks in Tunisia, and these countries have no stable economic structure. Despite the tough conditions, these are young people in their early twenties who want to make a difference. Their latent talent and potential are extraordinary – but they need support to develop them. enpact puts them in touch with entrepreneurs from Germany and other countries who are willing to share their knowledge with them horizontally.

What does that mean exactly?

'Horizontally' means bringing people together from different backgrounds to collaborate on a solution – perhaps from different countries or industries, or from fields such as politics, business, IT, education, and so on. The way in which individuals' horizons are broadened is unbelievable – so that's probably another reason why we talk about imparting knowledge 'horizontally'!

Wouldn't it make more sense to put people from the same fields together?

It's more exciting to talk to people from outside your own sphere. They think differently, they have a different outlook and take different approaches. They're quick to ask: "Why do you do it like that and not in some other way?" You reel off your standard arguments, but they'll soon pipe up again: "Yes, but why? That's silly, you need to tackle it differently!" Then they show you an alternative tack, and suddenly the scales fall from your eyes. In ideal situations, that's when you suddenly shout: "Eureka!"

What's the mentality of the mentors, the entrepreneurs' sparring partners?

It varies enormously. Everyone is different. That goes for the mentors, too, and this is an extremely important aspect. Some simply pass on their valuable expertise, while others are very pushy, call up between our workshops in Egypt, Germany and Tunisia, demand project plans and keep tabs on the progress made. Both types are legitimate in their own way. The bottom line is that participants should understand that the more they engage, the more they participate, the better they'll be able to take action afterwards. That's the origin of our name: enpact is a combination of engage, participate and act.

Ultimately, enpact is also still a young company that's growing rapidly. How do you deal with this?

People working for us tell us what they want and what their objectives are. Based on this, they're quickly allowed to assume responsibility in their field. This makes for high job satisfaction, which is the only way we can exist as a young team with flat hierarchies, especially in peak phases.

How does the location affect the success of your project?

Being able to use Paretz is an absolute gift for us and plays an enormous role. By getting away from it all, you can concentrate on what you're doing. It's a place where trust arises and people open up. An atmosphere prevails in which people feel relaxed, where inspiration and fresh ideas arise. The participants sleep in the house, on the boat, in the stables. They can quickly come together – and are in top form.

This sparks lifelong friendships.

Absolutely. Our goal is for a network to evolve made up of people who develop bonds extending beyond the project. The elements of international understanding which occur during the workshops are always amazing. After all, the participants from North Africa bring a variety of things with them in their heavy baggage – and take many positive things home with them, too! And for this to work, you need the right people and the right location.

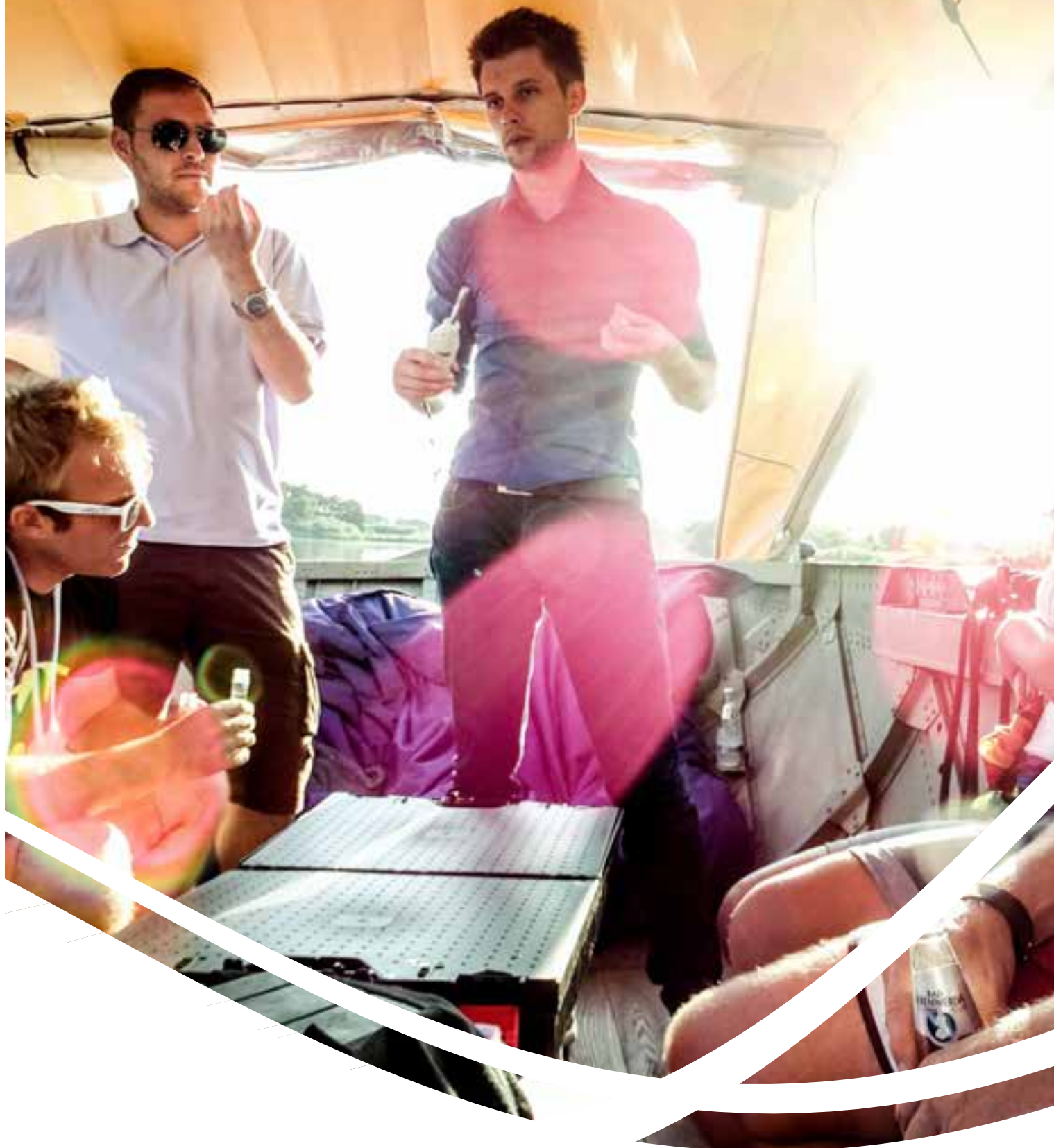



MAKING EVERY BOAT A

Philip Mattha plans to equip owners of private sailing boats with 'Sea Samplers'. Together, they'll make up a network providing oceanographers with a pool of independent water data – delivered by the crowd.

RESEARCH VESSEL

Philip Mattha (shown in the middle) explains the Sea Sampler to participants of the enpact workshop – and gives them a practical demonstration on the Havel (left).





A boat glides towards a bay in the River Havel. The engine falls silent, the anchor is cast, and a few swans swim up inquisitively. It's a process which takes place dozens of times a day out here on the water near the Paretz Academy. Nevertheless, something's a little different about this boat. On board are ten passengers: dream developers Harald Katzenschläger and Hermann Gams along with participants of the enact workshop currently being held in Paretz. One of them is Philip Mattha, and all eyes are on him. As he heaves out a large case, the others gather round.

At first glance it looks like a huge toolbox containing perhaps a power drill, hammer, wrenches and all kinds of tools. In actual fact, its contents are far more intricate – the case is more reminiscent of a chemistry set. When Philip opens the case, the light of the setting sun is reflected in a series of cannulas, vials and small jars of liquids with a variety of colours. This is data collection by the crowd.

The name given by Philip to the case and its contents is 'Sea Sampler'. His plan is simple yet compelling. Owners of sailing boats are to be given a sampling kit and asked to take water samples wherever they happen to be. Then they will upload the resulting data to an online platform, where it can be accessed by research institutes and NGOs. The ingenious thing about this proposal is that it won't cost sailing boat owners a thing. They'll be credited a certain amount for each set of data taken and uploaded, and once the costs of the analysis kit have been covered, the boat owners will start receiving a small fee for each additional water sample.

Philip explained the need for water sampling by the crowd: "Most researchers and institutes aren't in a position to collect extensive data regarding salinity, temperature and chemical content from the oceans and inland waters by themselves. Instead, we can offer them a network of sailing boat owners who

can carry out sampling on researchers' behalf. This enables more differentiated data to be gathered for, say, oceanography, helping us all to understand our planet better – and revealing the terrible state our waters are currently in."

The Sea Sampler is easy to use, as Philip demonstrates live on the boat. Using two containers, he extracts two water samples from the Havel. Depending on the object of analysis, he then adds a suitable liquid indicator. After 30 seconds, the result is displayed digitally – in this case 3.1 milligrams of iron per litre. "That's a good level for a river," says Philip, satisfied. If his plan is successful, everyone piloting a boat could in the future take samples while out on the water and feed their results to a growing independent body of data.

The demand is clearly there, Philip notes: "Greenpeace wants to know whether a factory near the shore in Croatia is polluting the water, for example.

If we had private sailing boats taking samples there, Greenpeace would have hard evidence and could put pressure on the owner to install greener technology."

Malek, one of the workshop participants on the boat, comes up with another example of how this analysis kit could help. A canal is currently being built linking the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. "But no one has calculated yet how the respective ecosystems could affect each other," he points out. "This is an area where the Sea Sampler could clearly be very useful." This is one of those enpact breakthroughs that are so precious to Philip. "Events like this help me a lot," he says once everyone's ashore again. "You talk to dedicated people who have different perspectives and different approaches regarding an issue and who come up with new ideas. In my view, this is the only way to tackle current problems: together!"





In July 2015, a group of young, successful online entrepreneurs met up in Paretz. They were there to launch the Entrepreneurs' Pledge initiative in conjunction with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt and the Helga Breuninger Foundation. And their aim is nothing less than to change the world! The ninety companies which have already signed the Entrepreneurs' Pledge are thoroughly serious. They have each undertaken to launch a startup that eliminates social and environmental ills and reinvests at least 50% of its earnings for this purpose. The new firms must be scalable and commercially viable in order to maximize the amount raised to benefit society. This initiative is both credible and exciting because the companies involved all have a wealth of experience in developing and implementing relevant, economically feasible ideas. And apart from the necessary expertise, they also have the financial wherewithal required. How they choose to socially invest 50% of their profit remains up to them, as long as they actually do so. And they will.

www.entrepreneurspledge.org/

VOWING TO CHANGE THE WORLD





FROM SPARK TO FLAME

A campaign can only take off if it can grab public attention. But this in turn requires the right tools. In order to empower those with a project vision, Campaign Boostcamp was launched in Germany in 2014 – and was held for the second time in Paretz in September 2015. Organized on a voluntary basis by a team of experienced campaigning experts, thirty-three people with and without disabilities were invited to spend five days being shown by professionals how to develop campaigns that can change society. It certainly wasn't a holiday, for the participants spent every day attending intensive workshops and seminars from early in the morning until the evening hours. During this time, they acquired the expertise necessary to develop successful campaign strategies and also learned how to plan activities, organize fundraising, and stage memorable events. The participants received a year's coaching afterwards by experienced mentors to help them carry out their own campaigns. Regardless of whether they work in social justice, environmental protection, inclusion or anti-racism movements, Campaign Boostcamp in Paretz helps participants fan the sparks of their enthusiasm to ignite public interest.





REACHING INTO THE COOKIE JAR

What modern teachers need to do –
if they are to do right by all children.

By Dr. Helga Breuninger

Learning to read and write was something which didn't come easy to me. It's still etched in my mind. For one thing, the letters b, d and q all looked the same to me. This was something my father couldn't tolerate, and he only had eyes for those of his children who shone in class. Nothing was more important to him than scholastic achievement – which is why he had nothing but disparaging remarks for me, his daughter who failed his high standards. At the age of seven, I was supposed to be a star pupil – but I wasn't.

The way my father wrote me off and the pressure he put me under might have made me an emotional wreck – had it not been for my primary school teacher, Mr Pfiztmeyer. Whenever anyone was able to do something well in class, such as read out a sentence or do a writing exercise correctly, they were directed to a high shelf bearing a cookie jar. Standing on tiptoe and swelling with pride, they were allowed to reach inside the jar as they lapped up the admiration of the rest of the class. But given my dyslexia, I assumed the cookie jar was an unattainable goal because such achievements were beyond me.

Yet I was wrong, for what did Mr Pfiztmeyer do? He asked me where my talents lay, and when I told him I played the violin a little, he asked me to bring along my instrument to school. The next day I played a simple song in front of the whole class, and Mr Pfiztmeyer simply praised me for something I was able to do. Despite not demonstrating a more conventional classroom achievement, I experienced recognition. And that moment gave me my first, immeasurably important opportunity to reach inside the cookie jar! Afterwards, Mr Pfiztmeyer said to me: "Just as you play the violin, you'll also learn to read and write," and consolidated my basic vocabulary by means of musical motor activity. On leaving secondary school years later, I went on to complete two degree programmes and a doctorate – all thanks to a cookie jar and a teacher who believed in me.

The arrival of Mr Pfiztmeyer meant that suddenly my father – visionary, patriarchal and power-hungry – was no longer my only male role model. Mr Pfiztmeyer represented an alternative figure of authority – one who was calm and unruffled, and who exuded kindness and fairness. The four years in his class at primary school made me strong. If he hadn't been my teacher, I would have become a different person.

Every child is individual

What am I trying to say? Everyone has talents. If they can develop these talents, they'll gain confidence and be encouraged to tackle new tasks. But our education system is unable to alter its rigid, traditional structure. During their training, teachers aren't taught the skills necessary to recognize, respond to and nurture the individuality of a child. Instead, they're drilled to teach obedient pupils. Yet teachers must learn that their job is to teach children, not subjects.

As it is, talents in today's school system go unnoticed and are sometimes even suppressed, and children who don't make the grade are stunted in their development. The human capital we waste by humiliating, hurting and discouraging creative, independent children and making them feel insecure is shocking. Many children are then deemed 'failures' or 'under-performers' (what an ugly word in an educational context!) because they don't function in a system where the teaching of first-graders is based on military traditions. The only ones to excel at school are those who find it easy to learn by rote and meet the regimented expectations. Later on in life, they frequently don't turn out to be good business people, lateral thinkers, artists or writers – although they do make very good clerks and caseworkers!

Identifying and nurturing potential

When children's abilities are identified, this encourages them to learn and want to do well. This is especially true of under-achieving pupils. As a learning psychologist, I prepared student-teachers using my Essen Model of Teacher-Training for their future responsibilities and challenges by having them help children from underprivileged educational backgrounds get to grips with learning exercises. In their very first semester, each student-teacher coached a pupil and under my guidance experienced exactly what children need in order to believe in themselves again and to learn successfully: they need partnership, understanding, trust and individual support.



During that time, they learned more than in their four years at university, and they all went on to become outstanding teachers. In my thesis entitled 'Relationship Competence as a Learning Goal', I empirically demonstrated that the Essen Model is effective for both students and teachers. Unfortunately, back in 1983 I was unable to persuade Hans Schwier, at that time North Rhine-Westphalia's Minister of Culture, to make the Essen Model a compulsory element of teacher-training. He told me: "Stick to further training for teachers because I simply can't employ many of your students." At that time, pupil numbers were declining due to the advent of the contraceptive pill.

So instead of students, I began working with trained teachers, with the result that many of them left the school system in order to work with youngsters in other settings. In 1989, FiL (the Association for Integrative Learning Therapy) was founded, which by now has over 600 members nationwide.

The Helga Breuninger Foundation supported FiL, particularly in connection with the development of master's programmes in learning therapy at universities. Now the time is ripe to introduce 'partnership learning' at schools. Proof (if proof were needed) that children's success at school hinges on their teacher's personality was finally provided by the Hattie study in 2009.

Therefore, since 2012 I have been developing the School Learning Platform with Professor Wilfried Schley. This strategy helps teachers learn how to enter into partnership with children, to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, and to harness conflict as an opportunity to identify needs. To implement the School Learning Platform, the Helga Breuninger Foundation has teamed up with the Leadership Foundation to establish intus³. Some universities, teacher-training colleges and schools in Germany and Switzerland are already working successfully with the School Learning Platform. Although winning over public education systems for partnership learning was an arduous, costly business, in the end it's all worth it if we can ensure that teachers don't leave children behind at school – and that every child's talents are nurtured so that they, too, are invited to reach inside the cookie jar.

www.intushochdrei.de
www.lerntherapie-fil.de
www.myleadershipfoundation.ch





RESONANCE IN THE CLASSROOM

After spending four years developing their School Learning Platform, last autumn Professor Wilfried Schley and Dr. Helga Breuninger revealed their findings to student teachers, teaching professionals and parents.

"TEACHERS SHOULD TEACH CHILDREN, NOT SUBJECTS"

This view speaks volumes about what Professor Wilfried Schley and Dr. Helga Breuninger are trying to achieve. In September 2015, these two experts in partnership-based education unveiled their joint project intus³. In the School Learning Platform and the Family Learning Platform, traditional yet critical situations are simulated in short scenes captured on video.

The videos in the School Learning Platform show typical cases of interaction between pupils and teachers. Examples include a child arriving late for school, a teacher telling off a student for not taking part in a discussion, a girl playing with her smartphone in class, and a mother complaining about a teacher's style. A one-day workshop was held for leaders in education and society at the Allianz Forum near the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin in September 2015. After presenting their videos, Dr. Helga Breuninger and Professor Wilfried Schley, the initiators of intus³, asked the participants to discuss the situations and actions shown in breakout groups. Specifically, they were encouraged to sum up what they'd noticed and to identify the needs of the various individuals without judging them – a key principle of the intus³ learning platform.

Identifying needs, forging partnership

"We intend to make leaders in the education sector aware of just how important a partnership-based approach is," said Helga Breuninger, explaining the objective of the intus³ workshop. "We want to give them a new perspective on traditional situations, on the needs behind conflicts. We encourage them to create positive resonance with their counterparts by treating them as human beings. This applies just as much to the relationship between school councils and head teachers as it does between teachers and students. If we can inspire teachers to forge a genuine partnership with their pupils as a modern basis for learning, we'll really have achieved something with intus³."

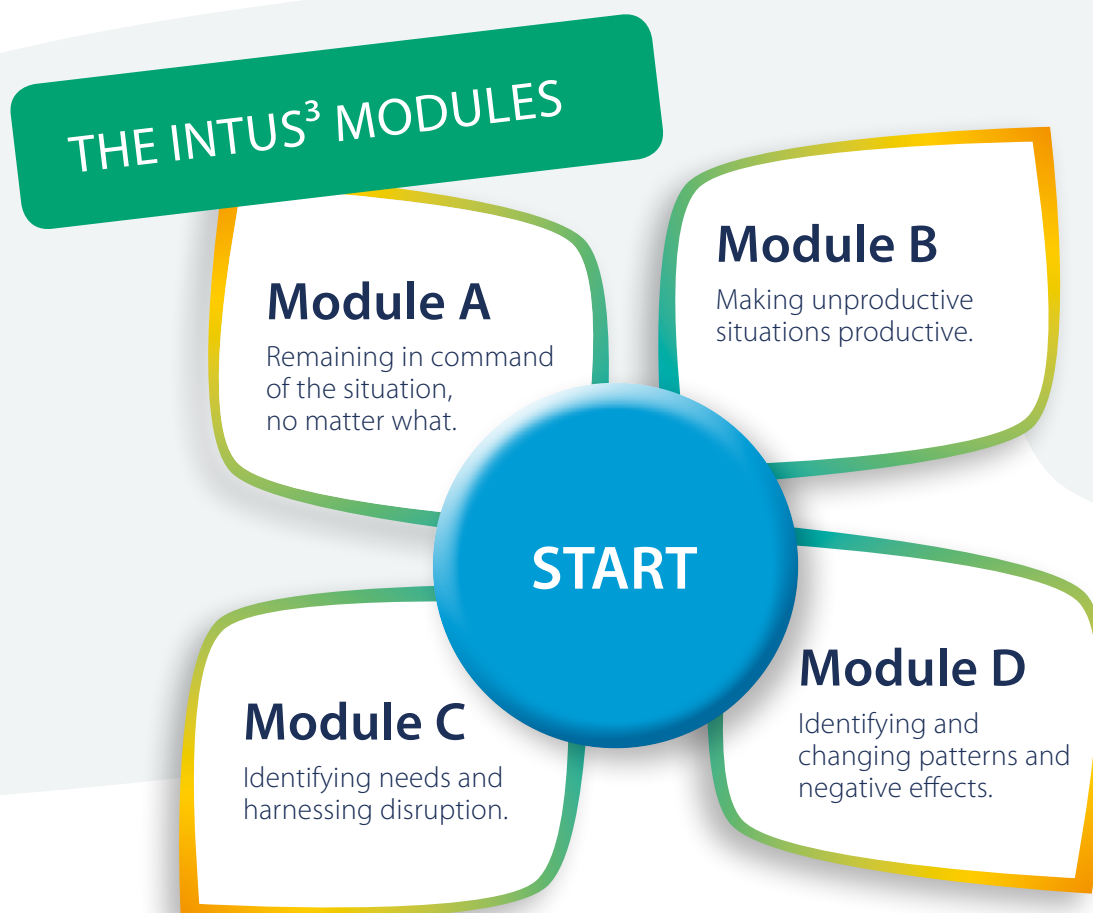
Although the simulations are accompanied by coaches' comments, the job of intus³ isn't to present definitive solutions. Instead, the workshop focused on the ability to observe situations, identify the needs of all those involved, and draw conclusions. "Our videos are a good way to get the ball rolling when it comes to practising emotional competence. After all, if we consider the needs of everyone in a situation, we cease to be judgmental. By allowing everyone to participate, conflicts can be solved in an atmosphere of partnership."



Individuality instead of instructions

The problem is that in today's education system, there's no scope for identifying needs and talents and responding to them individually. At least, not yet. "You have to realize that 80 per cent of teaching in schools currently comprises instructions," explains Wilfried Schley. "'Get your books out and do exercise 5 on page 22. What's your opinion about X? Write down your views on Y.' These days, lesson plans and how the syllabus is supposed to be taught are all defined rationally. But teaching based on a series of instructions doesn't work; therefore, it needs to be changed."

Professor Schley from the University of Zurich knows all too well of course that old habits die hard. "The education system as it stands doesn't allow for intuitive action or attention to individuals. Yet this attention, this partnership with each student releases a form of energy which leads to successful learning. This is what we call resonance." There was certainly plenty of resonance among the participants of the workshop in Berlin. Following intensive presentations and dynamic workshops, they left the venue clearly determined to incorporate partnership learning into their own working environments. And that's another successful outcome for intus³.





Both photos © Luz Leukhardt

"I now have a different understanding of leadership. It's much more a matter of identifying and responding to the needs of others. The intus³ films are excellent for sparking debate about the relationship between teachers and pupils. I'm glad that such professional material is available and I'll definitely be using it straightaway." Christiane Mettlau, Patriotic Society, Hamburg

"Attentiveness to oneself and to others is something that's pre-occupied me. I've now grasped that it's enormously helpful for partnership learning. It includes not passing judgement on things – and that's also an element of partnership learning." Roman Rüdiger, buddY (a forum for a new learning culture)





All photos © Frederic Schweizer



YOU HAVE TO START GRADUALLY

Professor Wilfried Schley is urging for attention to the individual in the classroom – and a distinction between learning situations and performance situations.

“All theory is dull,” to quote Mephisto talking to the student in Goethe’s Faust. Even if the School Learning Platform takes a very practical approach to partnership learning, it’s still just a theory unless it’s applied in the classroom.

“You’re quite right. During the workshop in Berlin, enthusiasm and motivation were clearly written on the participants’ faces. But now they need to convey this enthusiasm to their colleagues. You always need someone on the ground who says: “Right, people, we’re going to start changing things around here!” This is true of every child, every teacher, even every head teacher – and also of Helga Breuninger and me as the initiators of the School Learning Platform.

But how can a fairly rigid system be persuaded to embrace new ideas?

By making the effectiveness of these ideas palpable. What the participants of today’s workshop learned about intus³ has changed their views and given them a new desire. If they can now translate this desire into exercises to improve effectiveness, this will lead to improved performance. And then the system – i.e. the other teachers – will realize what can be achieved and think about how they can increase their own effectiveness. This will lead to a continuous process of change and improvement. After all, if we are to be effective, we must be convinced that we can achieve something with the means at our disposal.

I can just imagine the scepticism voiced by teachers doubting whether children can cope with this new tack.

You can’t change a school from top to bottom at once. You have to start gradually. We’re not talking

about a revolution, either. School and teaching have an evolutionary structure. And this means that small, manageable steps are all that’s required. You can start with a symposium. You can show and discuss videos from the School Learning Platform in small groups. The teachers will then start to change of their own accord and modify their approach.

But what’s the point? Aren’t you just resorting to traditional classroom performance in a round-about way?

Not at all. We’re not talking about classroom performance as a noble, singular aim. The goal is to find and nurture the talents of each child. Positive performance comes about by connecting with the pupil; it comes about through context, feeling and commendation. Therefore, we need to draw a sharp distinction at school between learning situations and performance situations. Those who have to keep performing in the classroom reveal their shortcomings. The resulting humiliation encourages them to develop avoidance strategies. It also results in fear – and fear weakens the relationship with others.

What’s more, it poisons the development of young people.

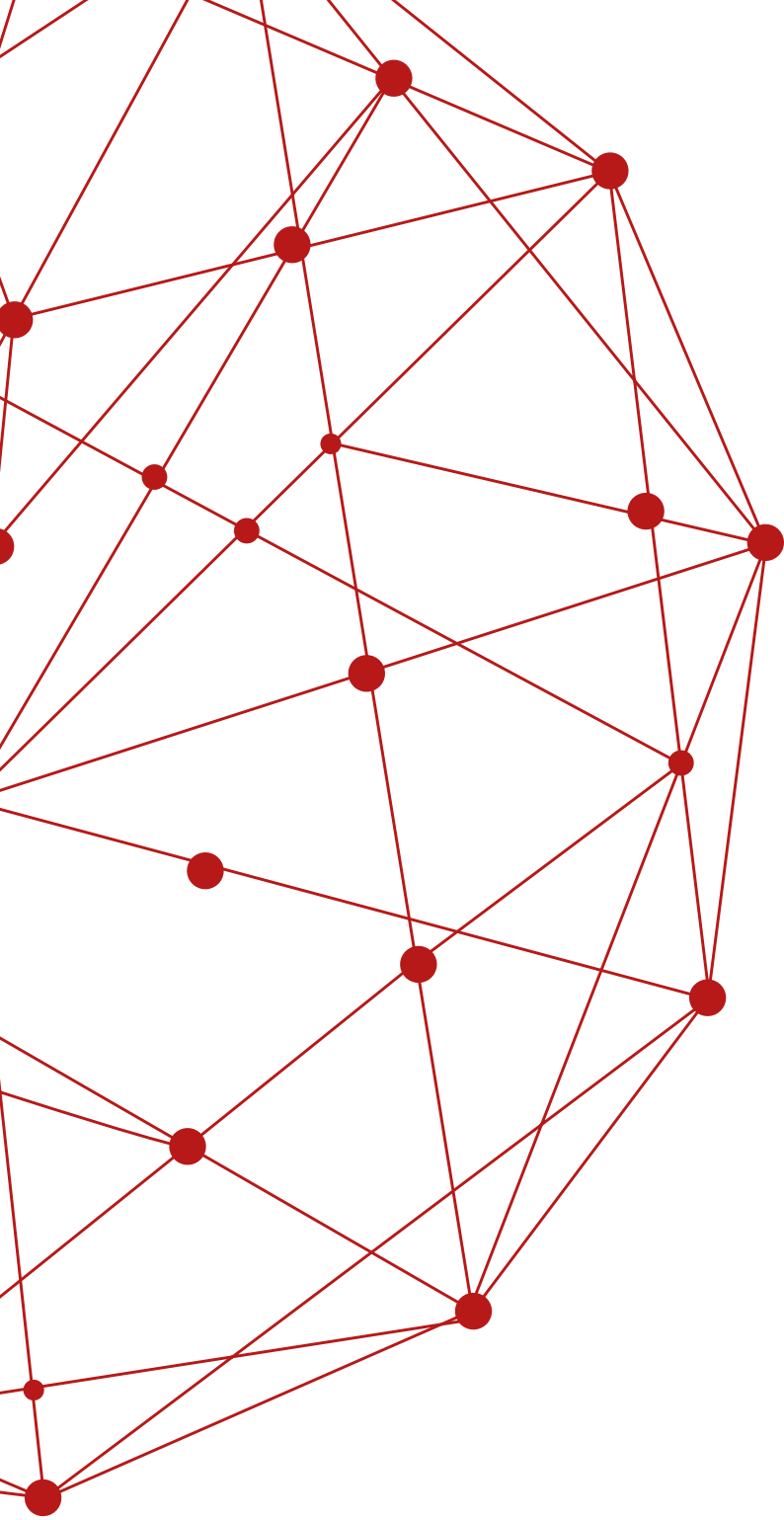
Absolutely. Fear is downright toxic. After all, the embarrassment of an individual is perceived by the whole class. But the good news is that paying attention to each student and commending their achievements is also noticed by the whole class. These are the small yet vital levers which need to be pressed. If we take this approach, major reforms won’t be needed any more.

Networking has been part and parcel of digital technology for years – now it's time to apply it to the way we think and act. This is a cause championed by the WeQ Foundation, a project initially funded by the Breuninger Foundation which is intended to become independent as soon as possible by attracting numerous donors. We spoke to the chair of the WeQ Foundation: Professor Ulrich Weinberg from the School of Design Thinking at the Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam.



LAUGHING AT OUTDATED STRUCTURES





Ulrich Weinberg, on entering the School of Design Thinking at the Hasso Plattner Institute, two things are immediately striking: the modern, transparent architecture, and open areas where groups of students sit and work together in an atmosphere of relaxed concentration. It's amazing! Is this an indication of what WeQ is all about?

Definitely. Students gain positive team experience here which they haven't acquired elsewhere. That's why they come to us – and that's why we're here!

Can you explain the concept of WeQ in more detail?

In business and society, we're facing a paradigm shift from analogue, divisive thinking to joined-up, collaborative thinking. I like to use the metaphor of old silos and a new network. Our thinking – from upbringing and education to corporate structures – is hierarchically organized, and only individual performances are evaluated. If people do well as individuals, under the old system they make progress within their own silo. However, this separate existence hampers both their creative use of their individual talents and their social interaction. In effect there's no cooperation with others, let alone interdisciplinary, free-thinking collaboration.

And this collaborative, free-spirited thinking – is that what WeQ is about?

We also need to add 'joined-up': collaborative, free, joined-up thinking working purposefully on a solution. Digital technology has long relied on networking, and now we have to follow suit and transfer these structures to human activity. We've been driven by this objective for eight years. In a digitally networked world, a basic attitude geared to competition makes little sense. Therefore, we need to learn to work together. We must organize ourselves differently, we need different patterns of action and thought, and also new concepts to pave the way to We-Quality. This means jettisoning what people experience for fifteen years at school and university: this blinkered thinking in which only the performance of the individual counts.

How do you implement this at the institute?

We bring students together from different institutions and disciplines: architects, lawyers, mechanical engineers, computer scientists, and many more besides. They then collaborate in small teams of five or six people on certain topics. We work with project partners from transport, finance, the chemical industry, mechanical engineering, and also the Helga Breuninger Foundation. They explain their problems to us, and our students work in teams to try and solve them.

And the results?

At the very least, the results are amazing! They're far better and far more innovative than if someone had hidden themselves away to work alone. You wouldn't believe what happens when a team of people from completely different fields tackle a problem and develop solutions. They come up with ideas and concepts which astonish any expert.

Why is that?

Because the intelligence of the community, of WeQ, easily surpasses that of the individual and their IQ. We've tested this concept in China, Malaysia, Canada, Sweden, South America and many other countries, and it works everywhere.

At universities, individuals are traditionally assessed with grades. How do you go about this if people only work in teams?

We don't use grades to evaluate students' performance. We applaud them, we praise them, we respect them, we take pleasure in each group's success. There's no need for anything else. The intrinsic motivation and self-esteem which arises among young people when they collaborate is so enormous and creates such a valuable experience that grades are totally unnecessary. Students have magical moments and come out with things like: "I didn't know I could be so creative! I thought I wouldn't be able to do that because I'm actually a law student!" That's a frequent reaction that shows us just how right we are with the WeQ concept.

Established companies in particular still have very hierarchical structures. If your WeQ notion is correct, these firms will now have a problem, won't they?

Certainly. They're well aware of it and they're very worried about it. We work as consultants for many blue chips, real global players. They're well aware that they're outdated, cumbersome and averse to innovation. But changing an organization of this size takes strength and foresight – and also means uncertainty for the decision-maker steering the WeQ process. What's my position within a WeQ setup? What form does leadership take? Will my position still be important? The whole structure really starts wobbling.

You chair the WeQ Foundation. How does an organization like that function?

'Chair' is yet another hierarchical word from the old order. We don't think differently at the WeQ Foundation. Our aim there is to identify activities and projects which are in tune with WeQ. We want to highlight them, advise them and possibly also support them. We want to nurture these small plants, these small initiatives, and help them thrive. But we also want to transform the education sector. Have you ever seen teaching material at schools or colleges designed to support collaboration? Of course not – it simply doesn't exist! That's something else we want to tackle.

Where do you think we'll be in fifty years' time?

In fifty years we'll look back and say: "Do you remember what things used to be like? What we did in higher education and how we brought up our children? It was a disaster!" That's what it'll be like. We'll laugh at today's hierarchical structures, which are becoming increasingly absurd day by day. Today's system is as useful as a hole in the head. Real breakthroughs will only be achieved with WeQ – and that's what we're working on here at the institute and with the WeQ Foundation.

www.hpi.de





SUMMIT ON THE ISLAND OF **WEQ**

In January, representatives of foundations from Canada and Germany met up in Ketzin to develop a brand new form of cooperation.



Helga Breuninger:

"Community foundations work best with local players and are therefore important partners in connection with matters like refugees and belonging. Our great challenge is: How can we introduce the spirit of philanthropy into these very issues?"



Volker Hann, Wasan Island, Canada:

"People who get involved and do good need approval and a sense of belonging. Our locations and networks are intended to strengthen positive, constructive forces in society."



Tobias Hipp, Helga Breuninger Foundation:

"People need to experience the spirit of Wasan Island in order to open themselves up to new ways and to find new solutions together. Transferring this spirit to different places will be an important goal for all of us here."



Stephen Huddart, McConnell Foundation, Canada:

"By combining our ideas, we're starting a new chapter in the history of collaboration between foundations. This is a great opportunity for everyone. Let's talk about borders – for social innovation and cooperation transcend all boundaries."

Globalization, the refugee situation and climate change are typical issues where arduous decision-making and onerous red tape mean the wheels of government turn very slowly. Yet these matters are so urgent that they require fresh drive or even fundamental changes to the system. Who can initiate them? Civil society, foundations, perhaps innovative initiatives?

There are many good examples of foundations and groups which have managed to get things moving and sparked debate, such as the German refugee welcome initiatives. But as a rule, such foundations have to act alone – and citizen action is limited to local campaigns.

Let's play 'what if' for a moment. What if large foundations from Germany and abroad shared their visions and teamed up more often to address common issues? Would this collaboration increase philanthropic momentum? By pooling their experience, would the participants be able to generate more innovation in the social sector? Would international cooperation by foundations help solve important issues of humanity better and faster?

Bouncing ideas back and forth was taken to the next stage on 14 and 15 January 2016 when the two biggest private foundations in Germany and Canada – the Robert Bosch Foundation and the McConnell Family Foundation – met up with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Community Foundations of Canada, and representatives of German community foundations near Potsdam in Ketzin. This 'summit meeting' was hosted by the Breuninger Foundation, whose aim was to continue the progress made in Ketzin on Wasan Island and agree on concrete activities. First of all, each foundation introduced itself, set out its current priorities, and listed the most urgent unresolved issues. Common ground was quickly identified and pressing, internationally relevant issues were addressed.

One issue high up on the agenda is 'belonging'. How can people be made to feel as if they belong to a society, to feel at home when they've been forced to live somewhere else? How do firm relationships grow outside their families? How strong must these

bonds be before responsibility develops? These are just some of the key questions arising from the current global refugee challenge – and which the Canadian and German community foundations now intend to tackle together.

The Helga Breuninger Foundation's educational project 'Partnership Learning' can also be included under 'belonging'. Ultimately, the aim is to change the school system so that no child is left behind in society.

In September 2016, selected members of the partners will get to know each other on Wasan Island and prepare a conference which all the partners and selected guests will be invited to attend at the end of the month.

Cooperation between foundations is nothing new. However, the joint development of firm collaborative action requires mutual trust – and these relationships of trust need to grow. Well, the partners from Wasan Island have now known each other for at least two years. They have benefited from using the island and experienced the community-building power of place-making. The members of this 'residential community' will now become a collaborative team:

- Stephen Huddart, President of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
- Joachim Rogall, CEO of the Robert Bosch Foundation
- Markus Hipp, Director of the BMW Foundation
- Irene Armbruster, CEO of the Community Foundation Stuttgart and Member of the Board of the Breuninger Foundation
- Andrea Dicks, Vice President of the Community Foundations of Canada
- Volker Hann, Head of International Projects of the Breuninger Foundation and the developer of Wasan Island
- Tobias Hipp, Member of the Board of the Helga Breuninger Foundation
- And of course the host: Helga Breuninger

"We want to make the most out of this extraordinary combination of participants, learn from each other at all costs, and find common issues to dedicate ourselves to," was how Joachim Rogall summed up



Irene Armbruster, Bürgerstiftung, Stuttgart:

"What we're launching here represents a new level of cooperation between foundations. We're offering to share our knowledge and experience of community foundations and are open to new ideas from other foundations."

Markus Hipp, BMW Foundation, Berlin

"Germany is the second-largest country of immigration in the world. We therefore have to address immigration and inclusion. What models work in other countries? How can a form of global diplomacy be developed in Syria and Afghanistan? The fact that the biggest foundations in Germany and Canada are meeting up here in order to exploit their possibilities together is a huge opportunity."



Joachim Rogal, Robert Bosch Foundation, Berlin:

"How can we create an atmosphere of respect and trust in the world? What are the common values of all societies? And do we have the right to introduce the concept of civil society and democracy into other countries in the first place? Or is that a form of colonialism? Let us be visionaries, not missionaries!"

Andrea Dicks, Community Foundations of Canada:

"Together we have the possibility to exert a decisive influence on important social issues. We should use it. I'm very excited about our future network and what we can achieve together."



their shared aim at the outset. These issues include the necessity to give refugees a sense of belonging, harnessing the potential of graduates, and the importance and development of placemaking – as can already be experienced on Wasan Island and in Paretz.

“We’re all active philanthropists,” declared Helga Breuninger. “It’s not about how much money we invest or how much we achieve. We make a difference by the manner with which we intervene to make the world more humane. We philanthropists are needed to spur on politicians and the business sector regarding future development, and to augment and correct their proposals. This mammoth task can’t be undertaken alone, which is why we’re joining forces. After all, this feeling of belonging concerns us all. What we’re starting together for Wasan Island will then influence the campus in Paretz and our work with other places.”

www.buergerstiftung.squarespace.com

www.bosch-stiftung.de

www.wasan-island.de

www.mcconnellfoundation.ca

www.communityfoundations.ca

www.bmw-stiftung.de

www.helga-breuninger-stiftung.de





Amélie Jézabel Mariage took part in the Ashoka ChangemakerXChange in Paretz in August 2015 with Apendices Visuales. As a guest of the Helga Breuninger Foundation, she was able to exchange views with other change agents and gather fresh inspiration for the future development of Apendices Visuales.

HELPING AUTISTIC CHILDREN EXPLORE THE WORLD

Having an autistic cousin gave Amélie Jézabel Mariage a brilliant, award-winning idea. The best ideas often start small. And when Amélie Jézabel Mariage's cousin José was diagnosed with autism, she made a small book for him explaining how to use the lavatory by himself in a series of pictograms. Her illustrated story did the trick and so, in order to help others, Amélie posted her book 'El calzoncillo de José' online for free. The response was overwhelming. "I never dreamed that this little thing would bring about such big changes in my life," says Amélie today, clearly still astonished.

"Parents from all over the world wrote that they'd also used the story and thanked me for it, adding that hardly any books were available which used pictograms to explain a little about the world to autistic children." On realizing the huge demand for such teaching material, Amélie quickly decided to devote all her time and creative energy to supporting autistic children. She set up 'Aprendices Visuales' – visual learning for children with autism' – and has so far produced twenty free e-books and interactive open source apps in conjunction with psychologists, educationalists, teachers, experts and parents designed to help autistic youngsters develop their social and mental skills.

Amélie knows from her cousin José that autistic children perceive the world mainly visually: "Although they can pick up details incredibly well, they're overwhelmed by the overall context." She recalls an evening in a restaurant she some-

times frequents with José and the rest of her family. "When the waitress came up to our table, we all ordered – apart from my cousin. He looked at the waitress and said: 'The fourth eyelet of the curtain over there has been replaced.' The waitress was flabbergasted – and confirmed that the week before, a broken eyelet had indeed been replaced." This all goes to show that by launching 'Aprendices Visuales', Amélie had found the right way to help autistic children improve their abilities through a combination of design, psychology and educational theory.

Aprendices Visuales has already received over twenty awards, including UNICEF Comité Español Empeño 2013, the Nestlé Prize for Solidarity, and recently the European Youth Award 2015. The free e-books can soon be downloaded in French and English. "I believe in the potential of every human being. I intend to do my bit to ensure that the talent and ability of every single one of us are recognized and encouraged."

- 190,000 children across the world have read Amélie's free e-books to date
- 1,000 printed copies have been sent free of charge thanks to sponsors to organizations working with autistic children
- 55,000 families and experts employ a special app which enables the books to be used interactively

www.aprendicesvisuales.org



In the beginning was the idea – and Anne Woywod from Hamburg realized that, if she was to carry it out, she needed to bring several different partners together. Anne therefore set up a round table. And to make sure it was organized properly, she attended a training course hosted by the Breuninger Foundation. Thus began the success story of Living Bridge.

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH A SENSE OF BELONGING

Both photos © Lutz Leukhardt



Anne Woywod, why did you originally set up the round table? What was your vision behind it?

My co-initiator Ute Groll and I had been doing voluntary work with refugees for some time. Long before the number of refugees arriving in Hamburg rose dramatically, we realized that they were beset by plenty of obstacles from the outset. For one thing, landlords have misgivings about letting homes to refugees. Moreover, friction builds up in tenement houses when families from different cultures and with different customs live side by side, and the inevitable misunderstandings hamper integration. Let me give you a small example. When people from the Arab world move into an apartment building, they bake pastries such as baklava and wait for their new neighbours to come round and welcome them. We Germans think the other way around: "When are they going to finally knock on our door and introduce themselves?!" And instead of human contact, the atmosphere is clouded by prejudice and aloofness owing to a mutual lack of awareness.

So what was your idea?

We had a vague notion of starting a round table and inviting representatives of foundations, churches, the property sector, local authorities, tenants' associations and citizens' action groups. We wanted to develop recommendations for each of the groups involved. At first, the idea of linking up these different groups simply didn't occur to us. I've since learned that a project can only take off if all the participants work together and contribute their own ideas. The result is a better, much more satisfactory joint solution than our initial idea.

Why do you say that?

Because what emerged at the round table was really amazing and far exceeded my expectations. This venture evolved into a social enterprise named Wohnbrücke ('Living Bridge') which was destined to achieve so much. We're now finding homes for refugees and our housing guides are helping out with social integration. This only became possible because all the different groups were represented at the round table, turning our initial idea into a common cause. It's simply remarkable what a round table can achieve.

Beforehand, you attended a training course run by the Breuninger Foundation where you learned how to organize a round table. How did this training affect the success of your project?

I was intrigued that the Breuninger Foundation had come up with strategic recommendations for how to make a round table succeed. For me as the initiator, this training was the vital missing link between having the idea of a round table and actually setting it up. It gave me the strategic know-how I required for the initial groundwork. Who do I want to invite? Who do I have to invite? How precisely must the aims be expressed for our work to be focused while still allowing enough scope for everyone to contribute? And at the Breuninger Foundation, I learned about all the organizational matters which have to be taken care of: booking a meeting room, catering, and appointing someone to keep the minutes and record the decisions.

How did this training help you regarding your role as initiator?

Let me tell you something about roles in general. You have to know, define and communicate the different roles of the partners at the round table, and you also have to be aware of your own role along with its possibilities and limitations. Incidentally, one of the many things I learned was that you need to bring together people from different groups and with different attitudes. This means including actors with unpopular opinions, so that later on they, too, can back the results.

Despite the training, you were really jumping in at the deep end with this project, weren't you?

Yes, and it turned out to be even deeper! The actors from the participating organizations were consummate professionals and we were the nobodies! That's why it was important for us to look proficient if we were to be taken at all seriously. That's also an aspect where the training helped immensely. It made me a lot more confident and I was able to show our counterparts that we knew what we wanted and what we were doing – and that it was up to them to table their ideas.

And was your invitation immediately accepted at the top?

That's another interesting aspect. At first, important actors signalled their interest but said they wouldn't attend. But they soon changed their minds when they realized that other important players had accepted. Once it became clear after a few meetings that we were making substantial progress, some of the top people turned up in person because they didn't want to be left out of our work.

What came about as the dynamics picked up?

Over time, a 'spirit', a sense of community, a sense of belonging developed. We realized that we'd developed something good together which we could build on and which had become our responsibility. This was said in so many words at the last meetings.

What elements of Living Bridge were achieved at the round table?

The basic structure of Living Bridge was drawn up there. By the fourth meeting, the rough framework had been worked out by the participants. I remember thinking at that time that we only needed to hold one more meeting in order to record the results, but the other actors wanted to go into even more detail. For example, they were keen to define the details of the support fund, develop literature for tenants, map out public relations, and draw up Living Bridge's legal form and structure. Therefore, they decided to set up individual thematic working groups whose results were jointly approved at the round table's last meeting. By this time, it was clear that this had long ceased to be my idea and become a big, joint project. That felt wonderful!

The Living Bridge project

Living Bridge eliminates obstacles between landlords and refugees and helps the two sides come together. It also helps new tenants find their feet and become independent members of society. In addition to finding homes for people, the Living Bridge foundation carries out social work on a voluntary basis for refugees. Since they're given self-contained flats with an assured tenancy, refugees have the security they need to get to grips with their new environment while the housing guides prevent cultural misunderstandings regarding, say, how to pay the rent by direct debit, sorting waste, and cleaning rotations for common areas. However, Living Bridge isn't a traditional housing agency – homes are only found for people nominated by the groups, local authorities and organizations working with Living Bridge.

PLACES WHICH UNITE – THE PARETZ CAMPUS

The campus in Paretz with its spacious grounds and its various facilities is ideal for staging small workshops, conferences, and even festivals and conventions.

Dr. Helga Breuninger: "We value trusting relationships with our partners and a respectful attitude to each other. As the host, we create an atmosphere at our locations which encourages all the participants to become involved in inspiring collaboration."

Would you like to find out more about the Paretz campus? For more information about the amenities and to contact us, please visit:
www.helga-breuninger-stiftung.de

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STORCHENHOF



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