



OPEN MEDICAL INSTITUTE

SEMINAR REPORT

NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)

September 25 – October 1, 2022

A Global Educational Initiative by the
American Austrian Foundation

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Medtronic



**Weill Cornell
Medicine**



SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR IN NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)

September 25 – October 1, 2022

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| 33 fellows from 25 different countries |
| 13 faculty members from the United States of America, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland |
| 19 lectures given by faculty |
| 31 interesting case presentations by fellows |
| 7 excellent case presentations by fellows |
| 1 cadaver lab training at PMU Salzburg in collaboration with Medtronic and Zeiss |

Group Photo of Faculty and Fellows



| | | Sunday 25.09.2022 | Monday 26.09.2022 | Tuesday 27.09.2022 | Wednesday 28.09.2022 | Thursday 29.09.2022 | Friday 30.09.2022 | Saturday 01.10.2022 |
|-------|-------|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| 07:00 | 08:00 | | BREAKFAST | BREAKFAST | BREAKFAST | BREAKFAST | BREAKFAST | DEPARTURES |
| 08:00 | 09:00 | | Introductions Pre-Seminar Test | Spinal Endoscopy Lynn McGrath, MD | Cadaver Lab at PMU I 3 Cadavers: O-Arm Spinal 3D Navigation Microscope Lumbar Decompression Microscope and Cervical Decompression and Fusion | 6 Ts of Minimally Invasive Spinal Surgery Roger Härtl, MD | Management of Cervical Trauma Michael S. Virk, MD, PhD | |
| 09:00 | 10:00 | | Spinal Surgery and Evidence- Based Outcomes Claudius Thomé, MD | Spinal Metastases Bernhard Meyer, MD | | Spinal Trauma Classifications Harry H. Gebhard, MD | Management of Thoracolumbar Trauma Harry H. Gebhard, MD | |
| 10:00 | 10:30 | | COFFEE BREAK | COFFEE BREAK | | COFFEE BREAK | COFFEE BREAK | |
| 10:30 | 11:30 | | Basic Instrumentation Techniques Sebastian Hartmann, MD, PhD | Lateral Approaches to the Spine Massimo Balsano, MD | | Massimo Balsano, MD Harry H. Gebhard, MD Roger Härtl, MD Andreas Korge, MD Lynn McGrath, MD Claudius Thomé, MD Michael S. Virk, MD, PhD | MIS Treatment of Spinal Tumors Roger Härtl, MD | Management of Idiopathic Scoliosis Massimo Balsano, MD |
| 11:30 | 12:30 | | Spinal Tumors Claudius Thomé, MD | MISS over the Top Decompression and MIS-TLIF Andreas Korge, MD | | Adult Spinal Deformity Classifications Kai-Ming Fu, MD, PhD | Spinal Cord Injury and Recovery - Strategies Michael S. Virk, MD, PhD | |
| 12:30 | 14:00 | | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | |
| 14:00 | 15:00 | | Spine Neurology Dexter Sun, MD, PhD, FAAN | <i>13:30 - 14:30</i> Cervical Deformity Correction K. Daniel Riew, MD | <i>13:00 - 17:00</i> Cadaver Lab at PMU II (As Above) | Basics of Adult Deformity Correction Lawrence G. Lenke, MD | Post-Seminar Test Evaluation & Discussion | |
| 15:00 | 16:00 | | Robotic and Navigation in Spinal Surgery Lynn McGrath, MD | | | Workshop Fellows' Case Presentations Massimo Balsano, MD Kai-Ming Fu, MD, PhD Harry H. Gebhard, MD Roger Härtl, MD | | |
| 16:00 | 17:00 | | Workshop Fellows' Case Presentations Sebastian Hartmann, MD Lynn McGrath, MD Dexter Sun, MD, PhD, FAAN Claudius Thomé, MD | | | | | |
| 17:00 | 18:00 | | <i>17:00 - 17:15</i> OMI Presentation | | | | | |
| 18:00 | 19:00 | FACULTY MEETING TO REVIEW THE WEEK | | | | | FAREWELL RECEPTION | |
| 19:00 | 20:00 | WELCOME RECEPTION & DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | GRADUATION DINNER Certificates Awarded | |
| 20:00 | 21:00 | | | | | <i>20:30 - 21:30</i> CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT | | |



OPEN MEDICAL INSTITUTE

FACULTY BOOKLET

**NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)
SEMINAR IN SALZBURG**

September 25 – October 1, 2022

**A Global Educational Initiative by the
American Austrian Foundation**



Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD

Director, Open Medical Institute
American Austrian Foundation

Associate Dean and Gerhard Andlinger Professor
for International Medicine & Distance Learning
Adjunct Professor of Clinical Urology
Adjunct Professor of Clinical Reproductive Medicine
Weill Medical College of Cornell University

Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics
**Perelman School of Medicine at the Children's Hospital
of Philadelphia**

Associate Professor of Urology
Medical University of Innsbruck, Austria

Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD is the Medical Director of the American Austrian Foundation. He is Associate Dean for International Medicine and Distance Learning, Adjunct Prof. of Clinical Urology and Adjunct Prof. of Clinical Reproductive Medicine at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University/New York Presbyterian Hospital. In 2016, he was appointed Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics in the Associated Faculty of the Perelman School of Medicine at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He is also Associate Prof. of Urology at the Medical University of Innsbruck and Visiting Professor at the Medical University of Vienna. Amongst others he is a member of the American, German and Austrian Societies of Urology and was awarded the Zuckermandlpreis of the Austrian Society of Urology in 1989. In 1995 he received the Silver Medal, in 2007 the Golden Medal for Merits to the Republic of Austria and in 2014 the cross of honor of the Land Salzburg. As Director of the Medical Program of the American Austrian Foundation he has initiated the Open Medical Institute, a scientific and educational collaboration of Weill Cornell and the New York Presbyterian Hospital, the Children Hospital of Philadelphia, Duke University, Columbia University, the Cleveland Clinic and leading hospitals in Austria. Dr. Aulitzky earned his medical degree at the University of Innsbruck in 1977, was a research associate at the University of Uppsala, Sweden and the Rockefeller University, New York. He received his training as an urologist at the University of Innsbruck and the General Hospital of Salzburg. He is the author of more than 140 publications on Urology, Andrology and Health Care issues and is co-author of books on basic and clinical urology/andrology.



Roger Härtl, MD

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Roger Härtl, MD (Course Director) is the Hansen-MacDonald Professor of Neurological Surgery and Director of Neurosurgery Spine at the Weill Cornell Brain and Spine Center in New York. In addition, he is the Founder and Director of the Weill Cornell Medicine Center for Comprehensive Spine Care as well as Weill Cornell's Global Neurosurgery Initiative in Tanzania. He also serves as the official neurosurgeon for the New York Giants Football Team. Dr. Härtl's clinical interest focuses on simple and complex spine surgery for degenerative conditions, tumors, and trauma as well as biological approaches for disc repair and regeneration. He is a world-renowned pioneer and leader in minimally invasive spinal surgery and computer-assisted spinal navigation surgery and augmented reality. He is actively involved in improving neurosurgical care in emerging countries as the leader of Weill Cornell's Global Neurosurgery Initiative in Tanzania. In order to achieve the very best in patient outcomes, Dr. Härtl's practice emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach to spinal disease. He collaborates closely with other specialists such as neurologists, pain specialists, sports medicine doctors and physical therapists. His patients come from all over the globe and include many physicians, surgeons, and even other neurological spine surgeons. He has been repeatedly named to the lists of New York Super Doctors, America's Top Surgeons, and America's Best Doctors, and has been included on the list of New York's Best Doctors in New York magazine. He has authored more than 250 scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals and is the editor of four books on minimally invasive spinal surgery and biological disc repair and regeneration. He is the 2022 recipient of the AANS Humanitarian Award, one of the highest honors bestowed by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. Dr. Härtl has provided commentary for numerous television shows on ABC, NBC, and CBS in addition to national radio shows. His expertise has been sought through interviews in the New York Times, The New York Post, The New York Daily News, and other media outlets.



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Claudius Thomé, MD (Co-Course Director) completed his medical education at the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität München, Germany and at Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford/California, USA followed by his residency in the Department of Neurosurgery, University of Heidelberg, Campus Mannheim (Chairman: Prof. Dr. P. Schmiedek) (1995-2001). He completed several fellowships: 2nd Institute of Physiology, University of Heidelberg; Dept. of Orthopedics, Klinikum Karlsbad-Langensteinbach; Department of Neurosurgery, Barrow Neurological Institute, Phoenix, USA; and, Department of Neurosurgery, Mayfield Clinic, University of Cincinnati, USA. His thesis was entitled "Evidence-based spine surgery: Evaluation of new surgical techniques using randomized studies" (2005). Dr. Thomé's surgical specialties are: cerebrovascular surgery, skull base surgery and complex spine surgery, and his main research fields are: cerebrovascular diseases, neuromonitoring in brain injury (TBI, SAH) as well as evidence-based and minimally invasive spine surgery and regenerative medicine in spinal disease. After his position as Professor and Vice-Chairman at the Dept. of Neurosurgery, University of Heidelberg, Campus Mannheim from 2007 to 2009, he was appointed Full Professor and Chairman of the Dept. of Neurosurgery, Medical University Innsbruck, Austria in 2010. Dr. Thomé has served several years as Chairman of the Spine Section of the German Society of Neurosurgery and as Past-President of the Austrian Spine Society, as Past-President of the Austrian Society of Surgery and as Past-President of the Austrian Society of Neurosurgery. Dr. Thomé's commitments in the societies focus on education as recent Chairman of the Training Committee of the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies, as Past-Education Officer of AOSpine Europe and as Past-Member of the education committee of the German Spine Society and the Spine Society of Europe. He currently serves as Scientific Liaison Chair of the EANS.



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Massimo Balsano, MD is an orthopedic spinal surgeon. He was born in Padova, Italy and graduated from University of Padova in 1983, the second oldest Italian University and a leader in the field of Italian medicine. Dr. Balsano continued to complete his residency at the Orthopedic School of Padova, where he focused on spinal pathologies. Dr. Balsano's area of interest is spinal deformities and traumatology. After becoming an assistant physician in the Scoliosis Section of the University of Padova's Orthopedic Clinic in 1989, he began performing surgery, specializing in different spinal pathologies, which included adult and child deformities, failed-back syndrome, and herniated disc and traumatology. Dr. Balsano completed another residency at the Minnesota Spine Foundation of Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1994. He also has spent time at various other institutions within the United States and Europe, including the Spine Institute for Special Surgery of Louisville, Kentucky; the Atlantic Orthopaedic Specialists of Virginia Beach, Virginia; the Spine Centre of Karlsbad-Langensteinbach, Germany; and the Hospital Pitie' Salpetriere of Paris, France. Since 2000, Dr. Balsano has been Chief of the Orthopedic Department of the Hospital of Thiene (Vicenza), Italy. In 2003, he was also appointed Chief of another orthopedic hospital in Schio, Vicenza, Italy, which, in February 2005 started its Regional Spinal Surgery Department, becoming the first Italian hospital in the north-east to have a spinal center. He has also been appointed Professor of Spinal Pathology at the University of Verona. Dr. Balsano has presented many publications at important international and national spinal pathology meetings and is a peer reviewer of many spinal journals, such as European Spine Journal, Spine Deformity Journal, Journal of Orthopedic Surgery, Journal, and Journal of Orthopedics and Traumatology. He's actually the President of ISASS (International Society for Advanced Spine Surgery). In 2010, Dr. Balsano was chosen as the Spine Center and Fellowship officer of AOSpine Europe Board. In his time as a physician, Dr. Balsano has performed an estimated 10000 spinal surgical operations, including deformities, degenerative conditions, cervical pathologies, traumatology, and cervical and lumbar herniated discs. His main interests lie in spinal deformities, degenerative conditions of the spine and minimal invasive spinal surgery.



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Kai-Ming Fu, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery at Weill Cornell Medical College, obtained his undergraduate degrees from Stanford University and his medical and graduate training in the MD/PhD program at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. After completing his residency and chief residency in neurosurgery at the University of Virginia, Dr. Fu completed a combined neurosurgical/orthopedic spine fellowship at the University of Virginia under Dr. Christopher Shaffrey, where he received advanced training in deformity, reconstructive, and oncological spine surgery. Dr. Fu combines his clinical interests in deformity, reconstructive, revision, and tumor surgery with active research in clinical outcomes. His work has been presented at multiple national and international meetings and been published in journals such as *Spine*, *Journal of Neurosurgery*, *Neurosurgery*, *Journal of Neurophysiology*, and *Journal of Neuroscience*. He has been nominated for and won multiple awards at meetings such as the Scoliosis Research Society Annual Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. His work has been featured in *Spinal News* and *Orthopedics Today*.



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Harry H. Gebhard, MD is an orthopedic and trauma surgeon who specialized in spine care. He grew up in southern Germany and graduated from Medical School in Munich. He underwent residency training at the Universities of Munich and Tuebingen, accompanied by a two-year Neurosurgery Fellowship at Cornell University in New York. Dr. Gebhard's research interests include, amongst others, tissue-engineering, clinical studies and patient registries. During his Fellowship in the U.S., a tissue-engineered composite disc was developed and successfully tested in vivo. Outcome data from broad registries will hopefully lead to a sufficient quality insurance of therapeutic procedures and a better understanding of conventional and interventional modalities. He was therefore acknowledged with numerous distinguished awards in his field and has published significant science in top ranked peer reviewed journals over the years. Dr. Gebhard is heavily involved in educational programs ever since he was a student. This led to online learning tools early on, e.g. in radiology, and surgical training courses on specimen as well as latest patient simulators in trauma and spine care. Dr. Gebhard is currently working in Switzerland, heading the spine team and in order to develop an interdisciplinary spine clinic in three Hospitals. He also was involved in the inauguration of the first AOSpine Past Fellow Alumni Association and is currently chairing the referring steering committee. Its intention is to enhance mentoring and to encourage young motivated spine therapists to actively advance their field.

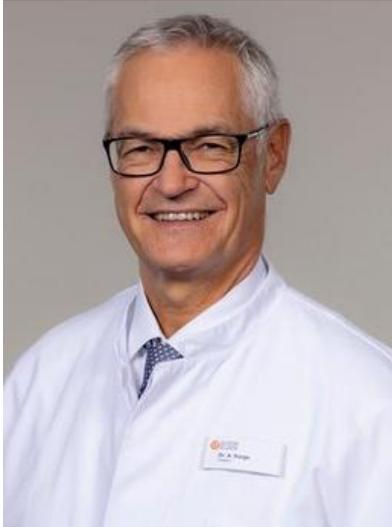


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Sebastian Hartmann, MD, PhD serves as junior faculty with a focus on spine in the Department of Neurosurgery at the Medical University Innsbruck. Since med school and during his residency starting in 2011 his research interests include biomechanical investigations of the cervical spine with special focus on corpectomy procedures as well as clinical studies on instrumented and complex spine surgery. In 2016 he finished his PhD thesis “Biomechanical testing of circumferential instrumentation after multilevel cervical corpectomy“ and also completed his board examination. With a grant award of the Austrian Spine Society he realized a fellowship at the Ilizarov Spine Center in Kurgan/Russia. Dr. Hartmann was appointed associate professor in 2018 and started as attending in the Dept. of Neurosurgery at the Medical University Innsbruck. Dr Hartmann obtained grants from the Austrian Spine Society, the Tyrolean Research Grant (TWF), the German Society of Neurosurgery (DGNC) and the Medical Research Fund of Tirol (MFF). His special interests include deformity surgery, spinal tumor surgery and minimally invasive techniques. Dr. Hartmann lives in Silz near Innsbruck with his wife Stefanie, and their three children.



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Andreas Korge, MD is an orthopaedic surgeon who specialized in spine surgery. He completed his undergraduate studies in Munich/Germany, Basel/Switzerland and at Yale University/USA. He graduated from Ludwig-Maximilians-University/Munich and completed his orthopaedic residency at the University of Ulm/Germany. His fellowship training in spine surgery started at the University of Ulm with Dr. Patrick Kluger. Since 1997 he works in the Spine Center Munich Harlaching, initially as staff surgeon and since 2008 as head of department. Besides treating all pathologies on the entire spine, Dr. Korge's special interests include posterior and anterior minimally invasive spine surgery and non-fusion treatment strategies. He is involved in national and international retro- and prospective spine studies. Recent publications include topics such as total artificial disc replacement on the cervical spine, decompression surgery on the lumbar spine and issues on minimally invasive spine surgery. In 2012, he published together with Roger Härtl (Cornell University New York) the book "Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery – Techniques, Evidence, and Controversies". He is a peer reviewer for major spine and orthopaedic journals and member of the advisory board of the European Spine Journal and Operative Orthopädie und Traumatologie. Dr. Korge is International Consultant of the Chinese Spinal Microsurgery Society, was chairman of the spine section of the German Society for Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgery and served many years as board member of the German Spine Society. Dr. Korge is currently as head of department on the faculty of the Spine Center / Schön Klinik München Harlaching.



Lawrence G. Lenke, MD

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Lawrence G. Lenke, MD is one of the world's foremost leaders in spinal deformity surgery. His world-renowned practice is devoted exclusively to spinal deformity surgery with an emphasis on complex reconstructive surgery in both children and adults for the treatment of various spinal deformities such as scoliosis, kyphosis, flatback syndrome, and other major spinal imbalances, as well as spondylolisthesis. He is generally regarded as the premier spinal deformity surgeon in the world, having developed the classification system for Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS), to which his name is now attached. After receiving his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame and his MD from Northwestern University Medical School, Dr. Lenke completed his internship and residency training in Orthopaedic Surgery at Barnes-Jewish Hospital/Washington University School of Medicine. While at Washington University, he also completed his fellowship training in pediatric and adult orthopedic spine surgery. Dr. Lenke has been listed in America's Top Doctors for the past 10 years and Best Doctors in America the past 15 years. Dr. Lenke was honored with the North American Spine Society's 2013 Leon Wiltse Award for excellence in leadership and/or clinical research in spine care. Also in 2013, Dr. Lenke was listed in Orthopedics This Week as one of "The Top 28 Spine Surgeons in North America." He served as president of the Scoliosis Research Society 2010-2011, the oldest and most prestigious spine society in the world; its single focus is the advancement of care in patients with spinal deformity. As a reflection of his preeminent surgical skills, he has hosted over 700 spinal surgeons from around the globe to observe his surgeries in the past 15 years. Dr. Lenke's prolific academic career includes writing over 590 published peer-reviewed manuscripts, editing five textbooks on Spinal Surgery, writing more than 125 textbook chapters, chairing over 125 Spinal Surgery meetings and having been an invited Visiting Professor domestically and internationally more than 125 times.



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Lynn McGrath, MD is an award-winning neurosurgeon specializing in minimally invasive and complex spine surgery. He is trained in both traditional open as well as minimally invasive and endoscopic spine surgical techniques. In addition, Dr. McGrath is internationally renowned as an innovator working to develop diagnostic tools using artificial intelligence, work for which he was named the Congress of Neurological Surgeons “Innovator of the Year” in 2019. An acclaimed speaker and educator, Dr. McGrath has given more than 30 invited lectures around the world about advanced minimally invasive spine surgery techniques, neurosurgical applications of machine learning, and cutting-edge diagnostic methods for concussion and traumatic brain injury. Dr. McGrath received his BA from Dartmouth College and his MD from the University of Central Florida. He then completed his residency in neurological surgery at the University of Washington, followed by a fellowship in which he trained in minimally invasive and complex spine surgery under Dr. Roger Härtl at Weill Cornell Medicine. Dr. McGrath’s research is focused on the development of next-generation smartphone-based machine learning tools for the diagnosis of concussion, TBI, and neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease. His work in pupillometry led to the development of PupilScreen which in 2017 was named one of GE’s “5 Coolest Things on Earth This Week.” He has been named Innovator of the Year twice — in 2019 by the Congress of Neurological Surgeons and in 2018 by Seattle Health. In 2017 he won the Best Presentation Award from the Washington State Association of Neurological Surgery. Dr. McGrath is also actively working on developing and publishing on the adoption and utilization of cutting-edge endoscopic and minimally invasive spine surgical techniques for complex patients, high performance individuals, and athletes.



Bernhard Meyer, MD

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rurgie/

Bernhard Meyer, MD was born in 1962 and trained in Italy and the US as well as his native Germany before starting his internship in Neurosurgery at the University of Tübingen. He completed his residency in 1995 within the Neurosurgical Department at the University of Bonn, where he stayed for over ten years, ending his time there as Associate Professor. In 2006, he was appointed Full Professor of Neurosurgery and Chairman of the Neurosurgical Department at the Technical University of Munich. In addition to his role as Chair of the EANS Spine Section, Bernhard holds a number of other positions with scientific societies. He is currently President of the Germany Academy of Neurosurgery (DANC) and Vice President of the International Group for the Advancement of Spinal Surgery (IGASS). He also sits on the editorial board or acts as reviewer for over 20 Journals. In addition to Spinal Neurosurgery, his clinical/scientific interests include Neurooncology and the Neurovascular field.



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K. Daniel Riew, MD is an expert in cervical spine disorders and is one of only 2-3 spine surgeons in the world to limit his practice entirely to the cervical spine. For over 20 years Dr. Riew has been named to the lists of America's Top Doctors, Best Doctors in America, New York SuperDoctors, and Top 25 Spine Surgeons in North America. Dr. Riew received his undergraduate degree from Harvard and his MD from Case Western Reserve School of Medicine. He completed his first residency, in Internal Medicine, at New York Presbyterian / Weill Cornell Medical Center, then a second residency in orthopedic surgery at George Washington University Hospital. He did a research fellowship in cardiology and biomechanics, prior to switching to Orthopedics, and completed a spine surgery fellowship with the renowned cervical spine surgeon, the late Henry Bohlman. He has served as President of the Cervical Spine Research Society and as Chairman of the Board of AOSpine International. He spent 20 years at Washington University Medical Center in St. Louis, where he was the Mildred Simon Distinguished Professor of Orthopedic Surgery and Chief of the Cervical Spine Service, until taking a position at New York Presbyterian Och Spine Hospital / Columbia University in 2015, as Director of Cervical Spine Surgery, Co-chief of the Spine Division of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and Co-director of the Adult and Pediatric Comprehensive Spine Fellowship. In 2020, as part of the New York Presbyterian / Och Spine Hospital expansion to Weill Cornell, he also joined the Neurosurgery department of Weill Cornell Medical School moving his practice to Weill Cornell, while still maintaining his appointment at Columbia. Dr. Riew is widely published, with more than 300 peer-reviewed journal articles to his credit.



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Dexter Sun, MD, PhD, FAAN obtained his MD degree from Zhejiang Medical College (now School of Medicine, Zhejiang University) in Hangzhou, China. After that Dr. Sun moved to the U.S. in 1984 and went on to receive his PhD in Molecular Neurobiology from University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1991. As an outstanding graduate, he was invited to give a scientific talk in Europe and won a Young Scientist Award from the International Society of Neurochemistry. He subsequently completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Rockefeller University in New York, an institution known internationally for its advanced Biology research. Dr. Sun entered the clinical field in 1993 and successfully finished his Neurology Residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical Center, and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. His Neuromuscular Disorder subspecialty was concluded at the Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School. Twenty-four years ago, Dr. Sun joined the Clinical Faculty and became a Clinical Professor of Neurology at Weill Cornell Medical College, affiliated with both New York Presbyterian Hospital and Hospital for Special Surgery. He remains an active professor at the Medical College, instructing medical students and overseeing Neurology residents. He is serving as a board member (board fellow) of trustees at Weill Cornell Medical College. Dr. Sun is the very few neurologists who is specialized spine neurology. Dr. Sun has exceptional rich experience and knowledge in spine neurology by working closely with spine surgeons at spine centers at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Medical Center and Hospital For Special Surgery. He has been delivering the lectures in spine neurology, and training neurologists and spine surgeons around world. Dr. Sun is an American Board-certified Neurologist and Electromyographer; life member of America's Registry of Outstanding Professionals; Fellow of many medical associations including the American Academy of Neurology and the American Academy of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine, etc. He has also served as the President of the American Association of Chinese Physicians and the Co-Chairman of the National Republican-Medical Advisory. He has been awarded numerous honors such as America's Best Physicians rated by National Consumer Advisory Board; America's Top Physicians by Consumers' Research Council of America; and Best Doctors by Castle Connolly and New York Magazine, just to name a few.



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Michael S. Virk, MD, PhD is a highly respected and widely published neurosurgeon with specialty training in minimally invasive and complex surgery for a wide variety of spine conditions. He specializes in advanced, state-of-the-art minimally invasive techniques using intraoperative, computer-assisted navigation as well as spinal endoscopy, and in open surgical strategies for patients who will benefit most from these. Dr. Virk earned his MD and PhD degrees at Oregon Health Sciences University College of Medicine. He completed his residency in neurological surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian Weill Cornell, and completed a post-doctoral fellowship in the Rockefeller University laboratory of Nobel laureate Dr. Paul Greengard. Dr. Virk then completed a Minimally Invasive and Complex Spine Fellowship at the University of California at San Francisco. Dr. Virk's ultimate treatment goal is to help patients regain function to the greatest extent possible, with minimal pain and short hospital stays, so that they can return to enjoying their lives.

Fellow Booklet Neurosurgery (Spine)



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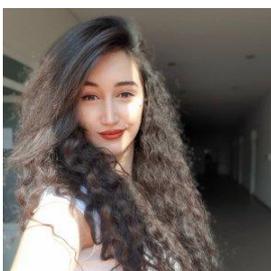
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DIARY



Roland Madarász, MD
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Sunday, September 25, 2022

Finally, the day of my journey had arrived! One of my Hungarian colleagues picked me up at my house and we began our six-hour trip by car. We had plenty of discussion during the drive and we got to know each other a bit better. Unfortunately, the weather was relentless with heavy rain, but that did not discourage us, and we arrived safely at the beautiful Schloss Arenberg in the late afternoon. After a short rest, we attended the welcome reception where the faculty and OMI staff welcomed us with a heartwarming speech. Then, we had our first dinner together where I met the fellows for the first time. I realized that fellows had come from so many different and diverse places within Eastern and Central Europe, Africa, and North America. During dinner, I shared a table with fellows from Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Tanzania, and I have to say they were lovely to get acquainted with.

Monday, September 26, 2022

The first day of the seminar began with a short introduction and the pre-seminar test. The test itself was not so hard, but it emphasized the topics which I was not very well familiar with and would need to focus on during the week. After the test, the seminar officially began. Dr. Thomé showed a case and asked us which treatment option we would choose. Most of the fellows chose a reasonable option, but Dr. Thomé said that the patient would have died if that treatment were performed. I happened to choose the accurate option, but I was still shocked by the result! After that very educational case, Dr. Hartman, Dr. Sun, and Dr. McGrath

presented excellent lectures as well. They really cleaned up the mess in my mind regarding different topics of spinal surgery. After the lectures, the fellows' case presentations began. It was the most challenging part of the seminar for me because I had never spoken English in front of such a big crowd before, especially not for professionals! Somehow, I managed to cope with my anxiety and presented my case as I had planned. At the end of my talk, I had a short discussion with the members of the faculty, which was again very educational. They provided some very helpful comments. After the day's program had come to an end, I went out with my Hungarian colleague and with the Hungarian ambassadors of the Medtronic team for dinner at a local restaurant, where we had a pleasant night.

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

The second day seemed to be a bit easier and shorter after the tight scheduled and overwhelming first day. Today I heard a very interesting lecture about spinal endoscopy, which is a modality that is not really used and known in my country. Then, the following lectures were very useful to hear because they included topics about diseases which occur very often in the everyday practice of a spinal surgeon. During dinner, I got to know some very kind people from Estonia, Romania, and Slovakia. Today our afternoon was totally free, so I went out with my colleague for some sightseeing in the city. I also collected souvenirs for my family, including my mom who had her birthday recently!

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Perhaps the most important day of the seminar had arrived. In the morning after a short breakfast, we went to the Paracelsus Medical University for the cadaver lab, where we had the opportunity to perform operations on three cadavers. On the first one, we made a lumbar "over the top" micro decompression and an MIS-TLIF under the supervision of Dr. Balsano. On the second one, I had the opportunity to make dorsal cervical laminoforaminotomies and place transmassa screws with Dr. McGrath. The third one was the most exciting for me, because I placed percutaneous transpedicular screws in the thoracic spine with intraoperative navigation and O-arm, which I had never done before. In this session, Dr. Virk answered every one of our questions very thoroughly. The whole session was truly fantastic! After the cadaver lab, we had a pleasant lunch at the Schloss and then visited the rest of the city. After some nice sightseeing, we spent the rest of the evening in a local restaurant with a bunch of my colleagues.

Thursday, September 29, 2022

Today we heard very educational lectures about minimal invasive spine surgery overall and in the case of spinal tumors from Dr. Härtl. Then, Dr. Gebhard gave us a comprehensive summary about the existing classification systems for spinal trauma and how they have changed over the years. Dr. Fu introduced us to surgical decision-making in the field of adult spinal scoliosis, after which the author of the well-known classification system, Dr. Lenke, told us about basic rotation maneuvers used in the adult deformity correction. After the lectures, the second session of fellows' case presentations began. This time I did not have to be nervous, because I already presented my case on Monday! I could just be comfortable in my seat and enjoy the excellent presentations of very diverse topics from my colleagues. In the evening after dinner, we had the opportunity to attend to a wonderful chamber music concert, which was held just for us in the Schloss!

Friday, September 30, 2022

On the last day, we were given excellent and in-depth lectures about the surgical management of cervical and thoracolumbar spinal injuries, as well as of idiopathic scoliosis. After the last presentation, we took the post-seminar test to gauge how much we had learned during the week. This time I could easily answer the questions which were blind spots in my knowledge beforehand. In the evening, the graduation dinner was held, where we were awarded certifications for our participation in the course. Looking back at the week, it was a wonderful experience to be part of the seminar. I got to know very talented fellows and exceptionally experienced and honored faculty members from around the world. Overall, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the OMI! I'm pretty sure I will apply for other neurosurgical courses held by the OMI, and I can only hope that I will have the chance to visit this beautiful community at least once more in the future!



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Sunday, September 25, 2022

Last night, I suddenly felt anxious about coming to the OMI seminar, it all felt so real and scary. This morning when I reached security at the airport, I heard a familiar voice cheerfully calling my name. It was my colleague from The Clinical Center University of Sarajevo, and from that point on, we continued traveling together. We used the travel guidelines sent from the OMI, which were very helpful, and we found Schloss Arenberg without a problem. When approaching the venue, I was blown away by the beauty of the building itself. At that point, I started feeling like I was truly doing an important thing in my life. From the moment I received my acceptance letter, I have been well informed, and it made me feel like royalty. Later that night, I met people from all around the world: Armenia, Turkey, Latvia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Portugal, Nigeria, Estonia, South Africa, etc. They all had interesting stories to share, and it felt great to learn a bit more about their homeland. So, by the time I went to bed, all my anxiety was gone.

Monday, September 26, 2022

Today was the first lecture. Dr. Thomé presented and looked like he belonged up there. He spoke so naturally; it was a real treat to listen to him. Later in the day, I learned that case presentations would be held today as well as Thursday, and guess what? I was listed to present my case today. It went well, and besides my headache, I felt happy. You could truly sense the excitement in the air.

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

It felt as if I had already been here a few months. I sat with the other women at breakfast, and we talked for the whole time. Today, I truly saw that all the faculty members here are brilliant. We can ask them whatever we want, and they will answer it with big smiles on their faces. They told us there are no stupid questions, and they meant it. It really showed that they love what they do, which was very inspiring. I kept thinking "the sky is the limit". In the afternoon, we had free time and I used it to get to know the city. I ran into the women from breakfast this morning and we ended up spending the whole afternoon and evening together. Salzburg, by the way, blew me away. All the pictures on the internet just don't do it justice. Even though it was raining on and off, the old part of the city was so charming, you can easily fall in love with it.

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Today is reserved for the cadaver lab at PMU. We were divided into morning and afternoon groups. I was not too thrilled to be in the morning group, but the moment we entered PMU I'd forgotten how tired I was. This was my first cadaver lab experience, and judging by the palpable anticipation in the air, it was others' first as well. We spent four hours in the lab, but it felt like four minutes. It was great! Our awesome day didn't end there, as we had a free afternoon. Although, it was raining again, I didn't mind.

Thursday, September 29, 2022

I am feeling a bit sad because the lab is over and we are back in the classroom now, chatting a lot since many of us have gotten to know each other well. There is a sense of belonging here. The schedule for today was busy and the time went fast. I know that soon enough I will be traveling home. Tonight, we got a real treat, the chamber music concert was performed by a string quartet. They performed Mozart and the whole show was indescribable. A few tears started to stream from the corner of my eye. It was the highlight of my week.

Friday, September 30, 2022

After last night's spectacular concert, the lack of sleep is starting to get to me. I am starting to reminisce about the last few days here. There are so many memories I am going to bring home with me. I am excited and at the same time truly sad to leave this magnificent place. In the evening, we had a farewell reception and graduation dinner, which was a beautiful finale for the week. However, the show must go on and one thing is for sure, I will be back!



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Sunday, September 25, 2022

As soon as I arrived in Salzburg, I knew I was going to enjoy my stay. My first impression of Salzburg was that the people are very nice. I asked for directions from someone at the bus stop, but got more than that, as I was accompanied to Schloss Arenberg. I was grateful for the company and the opportunity to learn about the city from someone that lives here. The room at Schloss Arenberg is nice and comfortable. The welcome reception was great, and Dr. Thomé and Stephanie's welcome addresses were warm. We had the opportunity to meet with some of the faculty and had a good meal for dinner. It was a great opportunity to meet with several colleagues from several countries.

Monday, September 26, 2022

After breakfast, we proceeded to the grand hall where we had the opportunity to introduce ourselves to everyone. It was interesting to see colleagues from so many countries and continents. It was indeed a global neurosurgery event. We had a busy day with lectures from great faculty, Dr. Claudius Thomé, Dr. Sun, Dr. Hartmann, and Dr. McGrath, who took us through several topics. We had the opportunity to ask several questions after each lecture and it was really an opportunity to learn new things and gain new insights about previous knowledge. There were also several interesting case presentations by colleagues, which gave us the opportunity to see what our colleagues do in their different countries. We also listened to an OMI presentation by Stephanie Faschang, which was inspiring to see the great things the OMI is doing. After the lectures and a period of rest, some of us took a long walk through the city of Salzburg to the Augustinerbräu. I had a great beer that lived up to its history and reputation.

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

Today we heard several interesting and interactive lectures by Dr. Meyer, Dr. Balsano, Dr. Riew, Dr. Korge, and Dr. McGrath. It was very educational! We finished before 3:00 pm and after a period of rest, most of my colleagues went out in groups. The majority visited the castle, but I climbed the Kapuzinerberg mountain to the summit. I met a young polish tourist and mountain climber, Jan, and we explored the mountain together for more than two hours before I returned to Schloss Arenberg.

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Today was unforgettable. Under the guidance of all the faculty members, we had a hands-on training session with cadavers, in which we were taught and guided in procedures such as TLIF, cervical decompression, lateral mass screw insertion, and the use of neuronavigation. I learned for the first time how to use neuronavigation to insert pedicle screws.

Thursday, September 29, 2022

It was a very fascinating day. We had great lectures by Dr. Härtl. He is a great teacher! His lectures were inspiring, interactive, interesting, simplified, and easy to understand. There were several other interesting and interactive lectures by the legendary Dr. Lenke, Dr. Fu, and Dr. Gebhard. Thereafter, we had the opportunity to listen to several case presentations by the fellows, which was very interesting. After dinner, we were treated to a special chamber music concert. Of course, Mozart was played. With each concerto, we were taken on a promising journey. Sweet excellence!

Friday, September 30, 2022

Today started well with morning lectures from Dr. Virk and Dr. Gebhard. The lectures were insightful and based on evidence from their wealth of experience and literature. Overall, this has been a great experience for me. I thank the Open Medical Institute for this opportunity. I thank the Weill Cornell faculty members and all the supporting staff who have done their best to give us a great learning experience. I look forward to returning to the beautiful city of Salzburg. Danke!