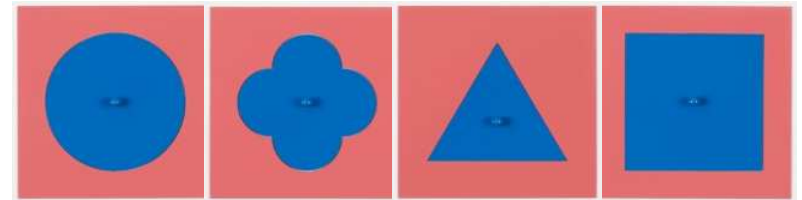


*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

## Invitation

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Montessori Days of Neuchâtel 2012

20 & 21 January 2012

At Swiss Montessori Centre

Beaux-Arts 11, Neuchâtel

Switzerland

Friday Jan.20: 17.00-20.30H

Saturday Jan.21: 09.00-16.30H

T 0041325444886

[www.swissmontessoricentre.ch](http://www.swissmontessoricentre.ch)

<mailto:info@swissmontessoricentre.ch>

*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

Program Montessori Days of Neuchâtel 2012

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*Friday evening January 20, 2012*

- 17.00-17.15 Arrival participants: tea and refreshments  
17.15-17.20 Opening Day I by Elisabeth HOUWELING,  
Director Swiss Montessori Centre  
17.20-17.30 Introduction Chris WILLEMSSEN, Sales  
Manager Nienhuis Montessori, Netherlands  
17.30-17.45 Patrick COSSETTINI: *Chef de Service de*  
*L'Economie* of the Neuchâtel Government  
17.45-18.45 Paola TRABALZINI: Maria Montessori from  
Rome to a worldwide fame  
19.00-20.30 Apéritif with snacks

*Saturday January 21, 2012*

- 09.00-09.30 Morning coffee  
and tea  
09.30-09.35 Opening day II by  
Elisabeth  
HOUWELING

*\* Almost all lectures will be  
interpreted into French*



*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

- 09.35-10.45 Prof. Benedetto SCOPPOLA: Neuroscientific perspectives in Psychogeometry  
10.45-11.00 Break: coffee-tea-refreshments  
11.00-12.00 Paola TRABALZINI: Relationship Montessori and Piaget through historical analysis  
12.15-13.15 Lunch Chez Max & Meuron, Passage 4  
13.15-13.45 A visit to Piaget's birth-house at 8, Rue de L'Orangerie, Neuchâtel



1896



2009

- 14.00-15.00 Prof. Benedetto SCOPPOLA: A Highlight: the construction of a Geometry Book  
15.00-16.00 Philippa ROMIG, AMI lecturer, assisted by Elisabeth CHASTEL: Workshop of Geometry Montessori materials 3-12 years  
16.00-16.10 Chris WILLEMSSEN & Elisabeth HOUWELING close the Montessori Days  
16.10-16.30 End of the Conference - tea and refreshments

*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

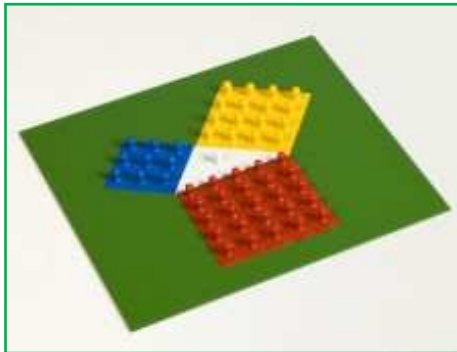
Introduction to Psychogeometry,  
Maria Montessori (2011)

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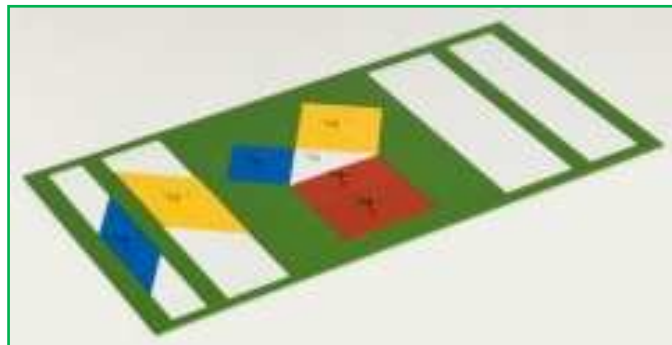
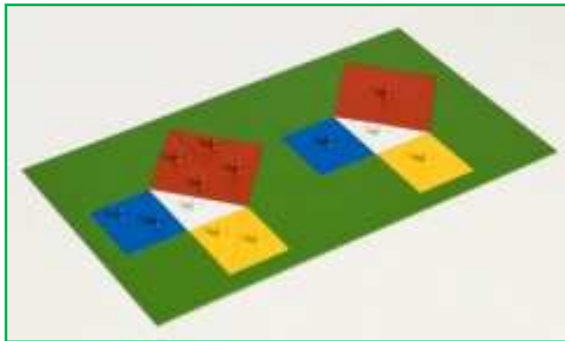
Montessori, through her many observations in many countries had found absolute evidence that geometry and arithmetic need to be driving and stimulating subjects, However they need to be presented to the children at the right time, and in a manner that correlates with the psychological characteristics of the child's development. The "*sensitive periods*" reappear regularly in Montessori's work (Scoppola, 2011). A sensitive period appears suddenly with explosive force and causes the individual an intense interest for repeating certain actions at length (Montessori, 1967). It is significant that the sensitive periods are presented in the book Psychogeometry with special reference to geometry itself. Montessori intended to stress that early teaching of geometry is favourable for child development. "*Discovery*" is another driving force behind the didactic approach. Geometry is a discipline that lends itself to the autonomous discovery of the relationships between the various parts of figures themselves. The idea of making children "*perceive*" deep relationships in order to prepare the mind for geometry is fascinating and it is with great logic expressed in Montessori's text. Guidelines can also be found for teachers to construct a geometry exercise book, which every child should develop gradually (Scoppola, 2011).

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## Theorem of Pythagoras



2011-11-03



According to David Kahn (NAMTA, North American Montessori Teachers' Association) Professor Benedetto Scoppola should receive high praise in his own right for the balance of concrete teaching experience and scholarly approach he brings to the book *Psychogeometry*. This way it is useful to educational theorists and practitioners. He considers psychogeometry as a comprehensive demonstration of what a psychodiscipline means. Scoppola reflects the overview, the study of the whole discipline and its parts, which constitute developmental keys in the form of materials for development through exploration. It shows clear correlations to the developmental psychology of the child (Kahn, 2011). *Psychogeometry*, published in Spanish in 1934, and now -2011- available in English introduces the way in which geometry can emerge from the child's psychology. It reads like a contemporary text thanks to Scoppola's critical editing, which brings out the genius of Montessori through bright statements, footnotes, and geometry exercises with refined colour illustrations. Montessori makes her clearest case for the recursive connection of the centre (the central processing of the child's mental life) to the periphery (the sensorial manipulations of the hand). (Montessori Society AMI UK).

### **Bibliography**

Montessori, M. (1967). *The absorbent mind*. New York: Delta

Montessori, M. (2011). *Psychogeometry*. Amsterdam: Montessori-Pierson

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Figures from the book  
*Psychogeometry* by  
Maria Montessori  
(2011)



Figure 112



Figure 114



Figure 137

*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

Swiss Montessori Centre



Beaux-Arts 11, Neuchâtel

*Special offer: During the Conference 20%  
discount on cash Montessori materials and  
10% discount on orders*

*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

*Enrolment form Montessori days of Neuchâtel, 20 & 21 Jan. 2012*

Family- & Christian name .....

Address & tel. number .....

E-mail address.....

Website .....

Country and business/school .....

**I agree paying CHF 100.-/€ 80.- (lectures, apéritif, lunch, breaks) to participate in the Montessori days of NE-2012.**

**Bank account SMC: Elisabeth Houweling-Swiss Montessori Centre, 2000 Neuchâtel**

**IBAN: CH80 0029 0290 5160 2101 M**

**BIC: UBSWCHZH80A**

**Please return this enrolment latest December 24, 2011**

Place and date .....

Signature .....

[www.swissmontessoricentre.ch](http://www.swissmontessoricentre.ch)  
<mailto:info@swissmontessoricentre.ch>

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## Speakers

### 1. Benedetto SCOPPOLA



Benedetto Scoppola works at the Università di Roma "Tor Vergata" as an associate professor in mathematical physics. He is a member of the Mathematics Department.

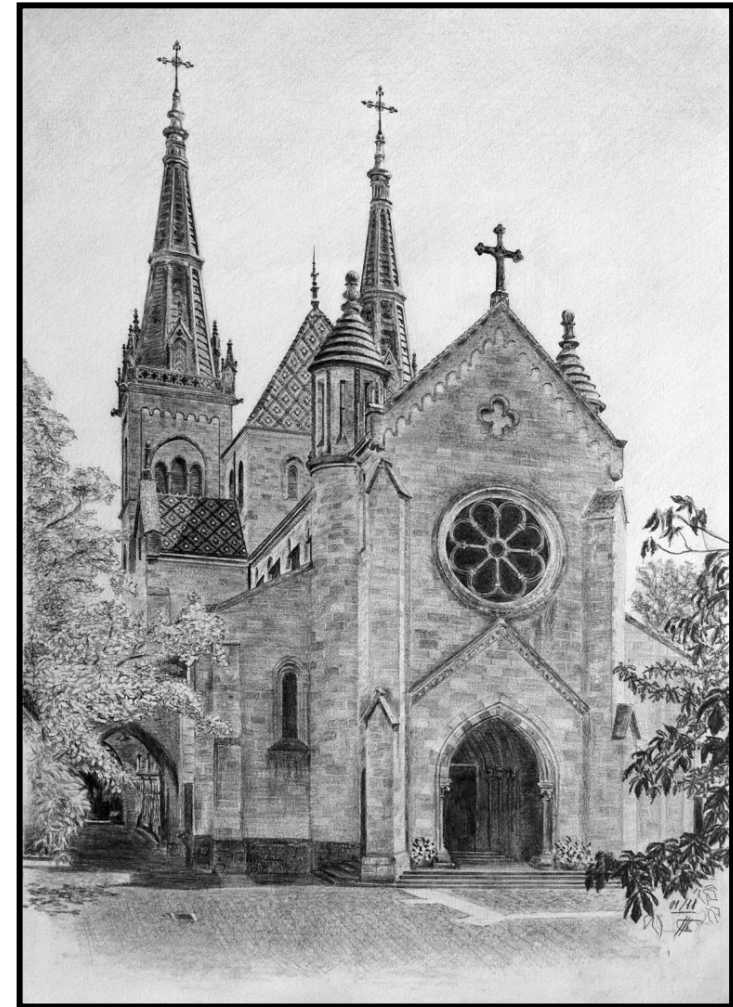
Likewise he works at L.U.M.S.A. (Libera Università Maria Ss. Assunta), Rome. Professor Scoppola edited the book *Psychogeometry* by preparing the Italian manuscript and adding notes when helpful. When his Italian work was completed the manuscript was translated by three English-Italian translators. He became fascinated by Montessori's work and was very much interested in reading and working with the original Italian manuscript of "*Psicogeometria*". Dr Kay Baker and Prof. Scoppola, together, undertook a critical review of the great number of illustrations. Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) writes in the foreword of *Psychogeometry*: "We are thrilled that *Psychogeometry* is now available in the Montessori series; we are indebted to Professor Scoppola and Dr Baker for the devotion, tenacity, and brilliance with which they have accomplished this project".

## 2. Paola TRABALZINI



Paola Trabalzini graduated in Philosophy. She carries out her educational activity in the Education and Training Sciences Degree Course of the Rome "La Sapienza" University at the chair of History of Education. She is lecturer in the teachers' training courses carried out by

the Opera Nazionale Montessori (Italian Montessori Society) regarding educational-historical issues. For the Montessori Higher Institute of Research and Training in the year 2000 she supervised the Critical Edition of *Il Metodo della Pedagogia Scientifica*. She writes for Italian and international educational magazines. In 2005 she published the book *Maria Montessori da Il Metodo a La scoperta del bambino* (Maria Montessori from The Montessori Method to The Discovery of the Child). In the NAMTA Journal (Spring 2011) she published the book *Maria Montessori through the seasons of the "method"*. From 2005 to 2010 she has been a member of the Editorial Board of the "Vita dell'Infanzia", the monthly journal of Opera Nazionale Montessori.



*Collégiale church by Jacques Kaufmann, November 2010*

# *Swiss Montessori Centre*

## *Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

### Neuchâtel

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Neuchâtel's atmospheric **Old Town** is extremely attractive, and random wanderings through its steep alleys are as good a way as any to appreciate the golden beauty of the architecture, as well as the 140-odd street fountains, a handful of which date from the sixteenth century. The highlights of the Old Town are poised on the very top of the hill, accessed by the steeply winding **Rue du Château**. The **Collégiale** church, is a graceful example of early Gothic. Beside the church is the imposing Château, begun in the twelfth century and still in use as the offices of the cantonal government: The nearby turreted **Tour des Prisons** has panoramic views over the town.

#### Hotels

**Hotel Beaulac:** Located at Neuchâtel's harbour, Hotel Beaulac is just a 2-minute walk from the historic city centre and the university. It houses a restaurant with a lakeshore terrace and a sushi bar

**Hôtel Des Arts:** Only 200 metres from the lake and close to Neuchâtel's centre and the funicular (taking you to the railway station in 3 minutes), the Hotel des Arts is a convenient place to stay

#### Auberg'inn

The Auberg'inn is situated in a protected 16th-century building in the heart of Neuchâtel, few minutes' walk from the lake and from many restaurants, bars and shops

#### Hôtel Alpes & Lac

Overlooking Neuchâtel's rooftops or Lake Neuchâtel, Hotel Alpes & Lac is opposite the Main Train Station. It offers comfortable rooms, free Wi-Fi and there is free parking available nearby

# *Swiss Montessori Centre*

## *Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

### 3. Philippa ROMIG



Philippa Romig, born in Britain, raised in New Zealand and Australia, discovered Montessori just after having completed her BA in California, USA. She

spent a year as an assistant in a class of children aged between 6–9 years, and witnessed the amazing capacities of these children working in the environment prepared for their age group. She then spent a year at the Maria Montessori Training Organisation in London taking a 3–6 training course. She became editor of the Montessori Society UK's journal, and helped set up and run several Montessori schools in the London area during the next few years. Philippa followed her husband to Switzerland in 1980 and devoted herself to her growing family. She worked for many years at the International School of Geneva before starting a small bi-lingual Montessori Children's House in 1996. This school has recently expanded to take children from 18 months to 6 years of age. Philippa also trained with the Association Montessori Internationale to become a Montessori teacher's trainer. She has participated in training courses for Montessori teachers in London, Ireland and Geneva. She is a board member of the Association Montessori (Suisse) romande et italienne.

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**4. Elisabeth CHASTEL**



Elisabeth Castel holds the AMS 3-6 year old, as well as the AMI 6-12 year old diplomas. She also obtained nursing- and paediatric nursing diplomas. After eighteen years of nursing experience in Europe and Africa, she has been working close to twenty three

years as a Montessori teacher for 6-12 year olds in several Montessori schools in France and Switzerland. She is currently Pedagogic Director and French-speaking teacher in the 6-12 year old classroom at the Montessori School Seeds of Knowledge in Nyon, Switzerland. As Vice-President of the Association Montessori (Suisse) romande et italienne, Elisabeth organizes and teaches workshops on the 6-12 year old Montessori pedagogy. Elisabeth has three daughters.



*Geometric Solids*

*Swiss Montessori Centre*  
*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

Exposition Antonio COÏ

Antonio Coï, triptyque, dimensions: trois fois 100 x 30 cm



Swiss Montessori Centre offers it's pupils a rich and lively cultural education through regular expositions of painters & graphic designers. In 2011-2012 Antonio COÏ (Switzerland-Neuchâtel and South-Italy) shows his Mediterranean, Geometric Houses.

## Résumé of main lectures

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**Swiss Montessori Centre is pleased to offer you intensive instruction about Psychogeometry and Montessori & Piaget**

1. **Benedetto SCOPPOLA** will discuss the history of the book *Psychogeometry* and some general principles emerging from it. He will especially give neuroscientific perspectives by showing how modern research on the brain mechanisms confirms Montessori's insights. In the second talk he will present some pedagogical proposals of *Psychogeometry* in a concrete manner by teaching the construction of a geometry book.
2. **Paola TRABALZINI** will talk about Maria Montessori "On the wings of her method" from Rome to worldwide fame. The second lecture will cover the relationship between Montessori and Piaget through historical analysis. Some aspects concerning education and work of the two scholars will be taken into account, considering similarities and differences.
3. **Philippa ROMIG & Elisabeth CHASTEL** will run workshops to study the materials discussed in 'Psychogeometry': the metal insets, the geometry cabinet, the constructive triangles, the fraction material and more. The aim is to show how these materials help build the child's appreciation for and understanding of geometric form when presented at the appropriate moment in his development. This book shows clearly the different approach necessary at each stage of development – and how, if presented to the 'periphery', these materials can lead the child to exciting levels of discovery.

## 5. Laurence THEUS-Allenbach: interpreter



Laurence Theus attended the Ecole Montessori de Genève, which was founded by her mother. In 1983, she obtained an AMI diploma (3-6) in Perugia, Italy. Afterwards she deepened her knowledge at the department of Science of Education at the Geneva University (FAPSE) while working at the school. When her mother passed away in 1987, she

became directress of the Montessori school. At the same time she has been active in the committee of Association Montessori (Suisse). She was in charge of the relationship with AMI and responsible for the organisation and translation of conferences, presented by Montessori connoisseurs like Maria-Antonietta Paolini, Margot Waltuch, Silvana Montanaro, Luciano Mazzetti, Patricia Spinelli and Renilde Montessori. In 2007, because of the World Peace Day (UN) and the Montessori Centenary, she organized a Montessori event for Peace, with her husband. Its highlight was a free concert, in the Victoria Hall (Geneva) given by the Quire and Orchestra of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. Today Laurence is working on a project aiming to associate Montessori education, biological agriculture and sustainable development.

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*Psychogeometry - Montessori & Piaget*

**6. Christian WILLEMSSEN**



Next to his study International Marketing at the University of Economics in Arnhem, The Netherlands, Christian Willemsen undertook a Montessori training 3 to 6 and 6 to 12 years at the Pedagogical University of Arnhem, The Netherlands. During this course he wrote a special paper on the age group 0 to 3. For

almost six years now he has been working for Nienhuis Montessori as an Export Manager. Because of his knowledge about Montessori education, he is also a member of the product development team at Nienhuis Montessori. One of his latest contributions has been the developing of a wide range of 0 to 3 materials in cooperation with Patricia Wallner (AMI 0 to 3 teacher's trainer). Through his work as an Export Manager and while visiting many international conferences, Christian Willemsen has been able to collect a lot of additional information about the Montessori philosophy and history. His working area is Europe, Middle East and Far East, this way he has observed Montessori education functioning in many different cultures.

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**7. Elisabeth HOUWELING**



Elisabeth Houweling is the director and owner of Swiss Montessori Centre (SMC), founded on April 24, 2010. She holds a Dutch Kindergarten Teacher Diploma (1964) as well as a

Montessori Diploma for children ages 3 to 6 from the Municipality Training-College (1965), The Netherlands. Whilst travelling through the world and teaching in Children's houses in Amsterdam (Netherlands), Mozambique (Africa) and in Honduras (Central America), she acquired invaluable teaching experience. In 1986, she founded the International Montessori School (IMS) of Neuchâtel, which she sold after 17 successful years in 2003. The IMS was a busy Montessori institution offering bilingual education (English and French) to children of ages 3 to 12. In parallel to her managerial duties at the IMS, Elisabeth Houweling taught on a daily basis in the English Children's house (3-6). While directing the IMS, she attended education workshops, as well as international congresses concerning the Montessori Method. In 2004, Elisabeth Houweling decided to undertake a Psychology and Education Certificate (Certificat Formation Permanente) at the University of Neuchâtel which she completed in 2009.