Table of Contents

1. Faculty & Group Photo
2. Schedule
3. Faculty Biographies
4. Fellows Contact information
5. Diaries
Faculty Group Photo, (L-R): Dr. Sebastian Rösch, Dr. Romain Kania, Dr. Howard Francis, Dr. Christopher Arnoldner, Dr. Cem Meco, Dr. Nikolas Blevins, Dr. Gerhard Rasp, Dr. Samuel Selesnick, Dr. Alexiades

Group Photo of Faculty and Fellows
## 2017 Salzburg Weill Cornell Seminar in Temporal Bone Surgery
### Sunday 29 January – Saturday 4 February 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sunday 29 January</th>
<th>Monday 30 January</th>
<th>Tuesday 31 January</th>
<th>Wednesday 1 February</th>
<th>Thursday 2 February</th>
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<td>07:00 – 08:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>08:00 – 09:00</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Pre-Seminar Test</td>
<td>Tymanoplasty</td>
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<td>Bone Anchored Hearing Aids</td>
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<td>Techniques, and</td>
<td>Adhesives and Middle Ear Surgery</td>
<td>Howard Francis, MD</td>
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<td>Graft Options</td>
<td>Nikolas Blevins, MD</td>
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<td>09:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>Temporal Bone</td>
<td>Canal Wall Intact</td>
<td>Canal Wall Down</td>
<td>Petrous Apex: Otologic Approaches</td>
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<td>Anatomy</td>
<td>Mastoidectomy and</td>
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<td>George Alexiades, MD</td>
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<td>Nikolas Blevins, MD</td>
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<td>11:30 – 12:30</td>
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<td>Endoscopy</td>
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<td>Faculty Only Meeting to Review the Week</td>
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WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR
in
SALZBURG

"Temporal Bone Surgery"
January 29 – February 4, 2017

FACULTY
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 Zuckerkandlpreis 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.

Wolfgang Aulitzky, MD

Director, Open Medical Institute
American Austrian Foundation

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

Associate Professor of Urology
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Samuel H. Selesnick, MD, FACS (Course Director) is Professor and Vice Chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology and Professor of Otolaryngology in Neurological Surgery at the Weill Cornell Medical College, and is a member of the Department of Neurological Surgery at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

Dr. Selesnick has held and continues to hold leadership positions in key national and international medical societies. Dr. Selesnick is President of the American Otological Society. Dr. Selesnick is a Past President of the American Neurotology Society which is the largest medical society in this field. Dr. Selesnick has received The Certificate of Honor bestowed by The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, and has been named one of the best doctors in his field by numerous lay publications. Dr. Selesnick sits on the Executive Council of the American Otological Society. Dr. Selesnick has served on the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery. Dr. Selesnick has served on the Executive Council of The American Neurotology Society, and has served on or chaired numerous committees for the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, The American Otological Society, The Triological Society, The American College of Surgeons and other medical societies. Dr. Selesnick sits on the editorial board of the journal 'Otology and Neurotology' and has served as guest editor of 'The Otolaryngologic Clinics of North America'.

Dr. Selesnick has lectured in 17 countries, across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, speaking on neurotologic and ear related topics in, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Austria, Denmark, Spain, Greece, Australia, Japan, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, India, the Ukraine, Canada and Mexico. Dr. Selesnick is committed to fostering international collaboration and teaching. He has organized residency exchange programs between New York and Paris, and, in addition, has hosted other international scholars in training. In 2014, Dr. Selesnick has been named the inaugural “Visiting American Doctor at the American Hospital of Paris” and serves as consultant to the administrative and medical leadership at that institution.

Dr. Selesnick has researched topics in neurotology - skull base surgery and otology, and has published extensively in peer reviewed journals. The second book he has co-edited was released in November 2010.

At the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, Dr. Selesnick has pioneered skull base surgery for acoustic neuromas as well as other skull base tumors. He has pioneered the use of lasers for the treatment of hearing loss in otosclerosis, and for the treatment of cholesteatoma, during mastoidectomy.

Dr. Selesnick’s administrative role in his department includes involvement with resident and staff oversight, recruitment and practice management.
Dr. Selesnick received a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan University and graduated from the New York University School of Medicine. He completed his training in Otolaryngology at The Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital - Cornell Residency Program and went on to advanced Fellowship training in Otology, Neurotology, and Skull Base Surgery at The University of California, San Francisco.

Dr. Selesnick has been frequently interviewed by the television, radio, and print media. He is an Honorary Police Surgeon in the New York Police Department. His website address is http://www.weillcornell.org/physician/samuel selesnick/index.html.

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Gerd Rasp, MD, PhD (Co-Course Director) is an Otorhinolaryngologist and Chairman of the Salzburg Paracelsus University ORL department. Born in Bad Reichenhall, Germany, he grew up in southeastern Bavaria and graduated with the Abitur in 1979. After 15 months of military service with the 1. Gebirgsdivision, German Army, he began his studies in mathematics and physics at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich. In 1981, he switched to human medicine and graduated in 1987. He finished his thesis about the “primary structure and inhibitory properties of the ovine Inter-alpha-trypsin-inhibitor” magna cum laude.

In August 1997, he began his Fellowship at the Dept. of Otorhinolaryngology at the University of Munich, Grosshadern medical center under the instruction of Prof. Ernst Kastenbauer and Prof. Alexander Berghaus. He became a resident in 1992 and senior resident on 1 December 1994. He completed his specialties in ENT on the 8 April 1992, Allergology on 13 January 1994, Facial Plastic Surgery on 8 January 1996 and Special Head and Neck Surgery on 20 December 2001. His PhD focused on Clinical Investigations of inflammatory mediators in the nasal mucosa and he became an Associate Professor for ENT (Privatdozent) on 14 August 1997. He became Vice-Chairman on 1 July 2002 and apl-Professor for Otorrhinolaryngology in 2003. He was elected Chairman of the ORL-Department, Katharinenhospital, Stuttgart from 1.10.2005. On 14 February 2008, he was elected Chairman and Professor of the ORL-Department of the Paracelsus Private Medical University, Salzburg. From September 2009 to September 2010, he served as President of the Austrian ENT Society. Since February 2013 he serves as Dean for Research at the PMU. He lives near Salzburg with his wife Dr. Karin Rasp, pediatrician, and their daughters Julia, Jana and Louisa.

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Head, Department of Otolaryngology
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George Alexiades, MD, FACS is an otolaryngologist who specializes in otology/neurotology. Dr. Alexiades grew up in New York City and completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry at S.U.N.Y at Binghamton. He received his MD from New York University School of Medicine and completed his residency in otolaryngology at New York University Medical Center. Afterwards he completed his fellowship training in neurotology at New York University under the guidance of Drs. Noel Cohen and J. Thomas Roland. Dr. Alexiades’ research interests include cochlear implantation, cholesteatoma and skull base surgery. Recent publications include work on estimating cochlear duct length using CT scans in *Otology & Neurotology*. He is a peer reviewer for *Laryngoscope* and *Otology & Neurotology*.

Dr. Alexiades is currently on the faculty of Weill Cornell Medical College/New York Presbyterian Medical Center as Associate Professor of Clinical Otolaryngology. He lives in New York City with his wife Gari.

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**Christoph Arnoldner, MD** is an otolaryngologist at the Medical University of Vienna (Austria) who specializes in Otology, Neurotology and Skull Base Surgery. Dr. Arnoldner grew up in Vienna and went to medical school in Vienna and Paris. He did his otolaryngology residency in Hanover (Germany) with Prof. Lenarz and in Frankfurt am Main with Prof. Gstöttner. He then returned to Vienna with Prof. Gstöttner and passed his habilitation in 2010. In 2012 he became Associate Professor for Otolaryngology at the Medical University of Vienna. From 2012 to 2013 Dr. Arnoldner underwent a fellowship in Otology and Skull Base Surgery with Prof. Chen and Nedzelski at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Arnoldner’s research interests include two areas. (1) psychoacoustic studies with cochlear implants. In these studies Dr Arnoldner and his team tested different speech processors, algorithms, electrodes as well as cochlear implants to improve performance with CIs. His studies led to two US patents that were both successfully sold to industrial partners. (2) His lab research focuses on animal models of cochlear implantation to restore and preserve hearing in acoustic as well as mechanical trauma to the inner ear. His team mainly uses Poloxamer formulations to achieve a sustained release of pharmaceutic agents to the inner ear. Dr Arnoldner’s efforts have earned him grants from the Austrian Science Fund and MedEl corporation. He has authored more than 50 peer reviewed articles and one surgical textbook.

Dr. Arnoldner is currently on the faculty of the Medical University of Vienna as Associate Professor of Otolaryngology. He is the Vice Chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology of the Medical University of Vienna.

Assoc. Prof. PD Dr. Christoph Arnoldner  
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Nikolas Blevins, MD is the Larry and Sharon Malcolmson Professor of Otolaryngology at Stanford University. He is the Chief of the Division of Otology and Neurotology, and is the Director of the Stanford Cochlear Implant Center. His clinical interests include the treatment of hearing loss and tumors of the cranial base. His research is focused on the development and application of technology to augment microsurgical approaches to the skull base. This includes the use of computer modeling and immersive surgical simulation for education and preoperative planning. Additionally, he and his collaborators are developing minimally-invasive techniques for inner ear microendoscopy, surgical micro-robotics, and other technology applicable to hearing restoration.

Dr. Blevins is a California native, and received his bachelor’s degree from Stanford University. He completed medical training at Harvard University, before returning to California for residency in Otolaryngology at the University of California at San Francisco. He remained at UCSF for a fellowship in otology/ neurotology. Dr. Blevins joined the Stanford Department of Otolaryngology in 2003.

Nikolas H. Blevins, MD  
Larry and Sharon Malcolmson Professor  
Chief, Division of Otology/ Neurotology  
Medical Director, Stanford Cochlear Implant Center  
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Univ. Prof. Dr. med. Dr. h. c. Klaus Böheim is an Austrian otolaryngologist who has specialized in active middle ear implants and cochlea implantation in the last 15 years. He graduated from medical university in Graz, Austria and received and completed his ENT training at university of Innsbruck where he continued his ENT speciality as a senior physician, received his docent ship and is still affiliated as Associate Professor. He was also a lecturer of otolaryngology at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School Boston, Mass. He was head and director of the ENT department of Landesklinikum St. Poelten, Austria, for more than 20 years. He is now working in private practice in Vienna and as a teaching surgeon and visiting professor in several European hospitals.

Dr. Böheim’s recent clinical research focused on active middle ear implants in sensorineural and conductive/mixed hearing loss. His publications analyse audiological outcomes with active middle ear implants. He also recently edited a book on active middle ear implants.

Dr. Böheim was president of the Austrian ENT society 3 times, received an honorary doctorate from Victor Babes University, Timisoara, Romania, and is member of several scientific societies and scientific boards.

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Howard W. Francis, MD, MBA is professor and vice department director of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. A neurotologist with expertise in the management of conditions of the ear, skull base and associated nervous system, Dr. Francis is director of the cochlear implant program of the Johns Hopkins Listening Center. He holds joint appointments as professor in the departments of Neurosurgery and Radiation Oncology where he participates as a member of both surgical and stereotactic radiation teams in the management of skull base tumors. Dr. Francis’ research interests include the evaluation of best practices of acoustic neuroma treatment, the study of functional outcomes of cochlear implantation in young children and older adults, and the study of best practices in surgical education. Recent publications include *Multifactor influences of shared decision-making in acoustic neuroma treatment*, *Clinical and psychosocial risk factors of hearing outcome in older adults with cochlear implants*, and *Personal characteristics of residents may predict competency improvement*. He serves on the editorial boards of Otology and Neurotology and the World Journal of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery.

After completing his high-school education in Jamaica, and his bachelor’s degree at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, Dr. Francis earned his medical degree from the Harvard-MIT division of Health, Science and Technology at Harvard Medical School, and then completed his internship, residency and fellowship training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. He completed his Master’s in Business Administration with a focus in medical services management at the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School. In March 2017 he will be moving with his wife Sarah to Durham, North Carolina where he will become Chief of Head and Neck Surgery and Communication Sciences at Duke University.

How to reach Dr. Howard W. Francis, MD, MBA, FACS
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Romain Kania, MD, PhD is an Otolaryngologist Head & Neck Surgeon at Lariboisière University Hospital, Paris Sorbonne Cité, Paris, France. Professor Kania’s clinical interests include otology, neurotology, skull base surgery and deep head & neck tumors. His current research interests are the relationship of bacterial biofilms to otitis media, middle ear gas exchange, otoneurotological diseases, nerve monitoring in head & neck diseases and thyroid surgery, integrated in a patient-reported outcomes research unit.

Professor Kania has researched topics in otology, neurotology – skull base surgery, and has published extensively in peer reviewed journals. This Biofilm in Otitis collective book is a major review about biofilms in otology book as an international state-of-the-art publication in the field. He is committed as a member of the Vestibular Schwannoma Working Group for the European Academy of Otology and Neurotology Guidelines.

Professor Kania has lectured in 20 countries, across Europe, Asia, America and Middle East, speaking on neurotology and ear related topics in England, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Greece, Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, United States, Canada, Brazil, Lebanon, Israel and Turkey. Professor Kania is committed to fostering international collaboration and teaching.

Romain Kania grew up in the south of France near Aix en Provence where he completed his undergraduate studies. He did his military service as a general surgeon in Africa, Dakar, Senegal. He is graduated from Paris Sorbonne Cité University, Paris, France where he completed his residency and fellowship in ENT and Head & Neck Surgery and academic degrees (PhD, Professoral Thesis for Authorization for Research Conduction).

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Cem Meco, MD, FEBORL-HNS is a Professor of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery. He received his medical degree in 1993, from the Medical School of Ankara University, in Turkey. He started his otolaryngology training in Salzburg, Austria in 1996 under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Klaus Albegger. During his residency at the Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery (ORL-HNS) in Salzburg Paracelsus Medical University, he mastered a wide range of operative procedures in otology, rhinology, as well as head and neck surgery. Throughout his training he not only visited numerous prominent clinics including Cornell University and Graz University as a rotating resident, but also attended several outstanding courses, seminars and major congresses worldwide as a part of his education. Following his residency he continued to work in Salzburg for several years, where he has done fellowships on Otology - Neurotology with emphasis on Cochlear Implantation, Skull Base Surgery, as well as Rhinology - Advanced Sinus Surgery.

Since the end of 2004, nearby continuing to be a faculty member at Salzburg Paracelsus Medical University, he also started to function as a faculty at Ankara University Department of ORL-HNS where he became the Chairman in 2015. As a member of the Salzburg Cochlear Implant Center he initiated the Cochlear Implant Program in Ankara University in 2005. There, he also joined and enhanced one of the leading skull base teams in Turkey especially with endonasal endoscopic techniques. He is the author or co-author of many presented or published papers. He held numerous invited lectures and panel discussions at important congresses, seminars and courses. His main research area has been the diagnosis and management of cerebrospinal fluid fistulas. In his practice, he mostly deals with rhinologic, oto-neurotologic and skull base disorders. Currently, his main area of interest is the advanced endoscopic sinus and skull base surgery.

Among many society memberships, he is a member of the Austrian, Turkish and German ORL-HNS Associations; the American Academy of ORL-HNS Foundation; the European, Turkish and American Rhinologic Societies, European Academy of Otology-Neurotology and the European, German and Turkish Skull Base Societies. Since 2016, he serves as an Executive Board Member of the Turkish Skull Base Society.

In 2010 he was one of the first to pass the European Board Examination in ORL-HNS, thus, carry the title “Fellow of the European Board of ORL-HNS”. He has been included to be an Examiner in this exam since 2011. Subsequently, he has been serving in this organization as an Executive Committee Member since 2012, where he heads the Rhinology group since 2016.
Furthermore, he is the General Secretary of the 4th European ORL-HNS Congress, which is the biggest and most important European Congress that will be held in Barcelona in 2017.

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"Temporal Bone Surgery"

January 29 – February 4, 2017

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This past weekend, participants from across the globe travelled to Schloss Arenberg for an informative Salzburg Seminar on Temporal Bone Surgery. Fellows from as far away as Mexico came with the hope of learning the most up-to-date techniques from expert faculty in Temporal Bone Surgery. The seminar was flawlessly led by Course Director Samuel Selesnick, Professor of the Department of Otolaryngology and Vice-Chairman at Weill Cornell College New York, United States, and Co Course Director Gerhard Rasp, Department of Otorhinolaryngology at the Paracelsus Medical University Salzburg, Austria. Alongside the seven additional faculty members, the course directors set up a week of optimal learning and improvement.

Throughout the week, the faculty presented lectures on various topics within Temporal Bone Surgery. The talks covered issues such as “The Otological Setup and Endoscopy”, “Powered Middle Ear Implants”, “Cochlear Implantation”, and “Surgery for Glomus Tumors”. The lectures were also supplemented by hands-on afternoon laboratories, in which the participants improved their surgical technique in a clinical setting. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoon the fellows could practiced the methods discussed within the lectures regarding Tympanoplasty, Stapedectomy, and Cochlear Implantation. Additionally, the fellows were given the opportunity to submit a relevant, unique case from their home countries, seven of which were selected for publication on the Open Medical Institute’s Online Case Library. These case presentations provided a base for discussion between the fellows and the faculty, and enabled the participants to gain valuable insights into different challenges faced around the world in the field of temporal bone surgery.

However, although the main objective of the seminar is to increase the fellows’ knowledge and to improve their technical skills, there was still some time left for leisure. On Thursday, the faculty and fellows enjoyed a chamber music concert given by a talented young pianist. Afterwards everybody gathered at the reception to be treated to free drinks.

At the Farewell Dinner on Friday, many toasts were made and everyone enjoyed the cheerful atmosphere celebrating the accomplishments of the week. Everybody left with the hope of maintaining their newly formed friendships and confident to apply the newly obtained knowledge in their practices. This combination of cultural, social and intellectual exchange is what makes the AAF seminars so valuable and unique.
29th January, Sunday – After 5 hours of travelling by train, finally I arrived in Salzburg. I caught a taxi on the railway station and told him to take me to Schloss Arenberg. We stopped at an elegant, light pink coloured 19th-century palace. The reception was downstairs. I checked-in, and got a cozy ensuite room at the 4th floor. Since this was the first time I’ve been there, I decided to take a short walk on the riverbank of Salzach before the welcome dinner. The Schloss is near to the city centre so I found the old town and the river easily. I was fascinated by these tiny streets and tried to imagine how beautiful it can be during the summer. In the evening, the welcome ceremony started at 7 pm. The professors welcomed the faculty members and outlined the goals of the seminar in a few words, then we had a marvellous dinner.

30th January, Monday – The session started at 7.30 am., Professor Selesnick the evening before discussed with us to start the lectures half an hour earlier every day in order to have more free time on Friday afternoon, which was an excellent idea. We completed a pre-seminar test, to assess our knowledge (or weakness), after Prof. Blevins started the first lecture about temporal bone anatomy with 3D demonstrations. It was magnificent and spectacular, I think visualisation is the best way of learning anatomy. After a short coffee break, Prof. Selesnick gave a very good lecture about histopathology and crossectional anatomy of the temporal bone, and Prof. Rasp demonstrated the instruments of otological surgery. Before lunch, we went down to take a picture of the group in front of the Schloss and we had a delicious lunch. The day continued with lectures on otosclerosis and external ear canal surgery, then we listened to the fellows’ case presentations, and we discussed them. After lunch, many of the fellows went to the city to have some fun, and they found an Irish pub nearby. Since my head was full of a lot of new information, I preferred to go to sleep early.

31st January, Tuesday – In the morning, we started our day with fellows’ case presentations, then the first lecture of Prof. Alexandres was dedicated to tympanoplasty techniques. During the next few hours, using the 3D technique again, professor Blevins and Francis spoke about canal wall intact and canal wall down techniques, so after that morning, I finally started to have a clearer picture on these topics. Further fellows’ case presentations were given, including mine as well. I was really nervous, I’ve never spoken in English in front of so big audience formerly, but in such a friendly environment even I could solve it. We had a very short lunchtime, and after this little break, we started the most exciting part of the course, the lab-work. We were transported to the temporal bone laboratory of the Paracelsus Medical University of Salzburg, which is in the other part of the city. After fast dress-up, we formed pairs and started the invasion of the territory. Everything was well-organized, everyone got a temporal bone, and each pair had a microscope, where we could drill alternately. In the meantime, in the middle of the room, the faculty members used a 3D microscope to show us the steps, and the professors circulated in the room to help the fellows. There were huge differences in experience between the fellows, there were some who were so well-trained that they started cochlear implantation after an hour, and there were beginners also. As me and my pair were in the latter group, we tried to follow the theomatics of the workshop, and started with basic things, canaloplasty, tympanoplasty and mastoidectomy. By the end of the lab work, everyone was satisfied and exhausted. At 4.30 pm the taxies were waiting for us and we went back to the Schloss to have some rest before dinner. During dinner around the table, every fellow talked about their new experiences enthusiastically. The weather was rainy and cold, so we cancelled our plan to go to the city in the evening. After some pleasant talking at the lobby, everyone went to sleep.
1st February, Wednesday – Some coffee in the morning, and we listened to the last case presentations. The professors summarized all the important information and novelties on ossiculoplasty, middle ear surgery, cochlear implantation and the surgical approaches of the petrous apex. For me, the lecture of Prof. Meco was the most interesting, the rhinological approaches of the petrous apex. I was amazed by the remarkable development of the endoscopic surgery. After lunch, the group went back to the temporal bone laboratory, and we resumed to improve our drilling skills. We finished our sedulous work around 5 pm, and some fellows went to the city centre to see Mozart’s house. Luckily, the weather was quite good, so we could take a refreshing walk in the tiny streets and buy some presents. I had an early dinner, and pyjama time!

2nd February, Thursday – The morning passed quickly while we learned about vestibular and facial nerve surgery, and the management of glomus tumors. I have found the latter presentation especially useful, because time to time such patients appear at our department as well and planning the operation is often complicated. It was the last day of the lab-work, so every fellow tried to do their best. For that day, the schedule suggested cochlear implantation and labyrinthectomy. The faculty members explained the procedures patiently, while we paid attention to the artistic preparation of the anatomy of temporal bone at the middle table by the professors. In the evening Miss Vivien Chang gave a magnificent piano concert as a spiritual charge.

3rd February, Friday – The last day of this wonderful seminar arrived, the time flew away so quickly, I didn’t even notice during the busy program. That day I obtained some new information about the surgery of the temporal bone malignancies and skull base surgery. We closed the day with a post-seminar test. As we finished the fellows’ case presentations earlier, we had the whole afternoon to take the last trip to the city of Salzburg, and to the Hohensalzburg Castle.

The graduation dinner was a proper ending of this unforgettable seminar. Professor Auliczky held his final speech on the importance of spreading the knowledge. Fellows got their certificates and awards, photos were taken of the faculty. The dinner was spent in a confidential mood, silent conversations and joking around the tables, later.

I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to take part in such a high-standard seminar. We appreciated very much the devoted work of the Faculty and the Schloss Arenberg administration. This seminar gave us invaluable help in our professional development and we had the chance to meet wonderful people, make international friendships and gain unforgettable experiences.
Sunday, 29th January

You’ve got more chance of winning the jackpot than coming to Schloss Arenberg, Salzburg, Austria for the third time. And it has actually just happened to me. I still cannot believe.

I feel almost at home in this picturesque surreal town.

As I enjoy the view, I notice that it is getting quite busy. A lot of my colleagues arrive as well to Arenberg and settle in their rooms. At 6 p.m. there is a reception in the hall. Prof. Selescnick and other lecturers welcome us. It is time to meet each other. I can see several familiar faces and I am glad to see them again. I meet new colleagues from all over the world. Everybody is a bit tired from the journey, a bit confused, but happy. We have a lot of work tomorrow. Therefore we go straight to bed after dinner.

Monday, 30th January

I wake up after a good night’s rest feeling fresh. This time I am not alone in the room. I have a roommate, a colleague from my homeland. I met her yesterday, and it feels like we have a click. It is already clear we’ll make a great team.

We enjoy the breakfast and then hurry up to the lectures.

Prof. Selesnick, course director, welcomes us again, and presents important organization details.

First we all have to do a preliminary test. We are focused, trying to properly understand questions and give the best answers.

The first lecture is about the Anatomy of the Temporal Bone given by prof. Nikolas Blevins. We are all fascinated. Using 3D glasses we study 3D simulation of temporal bone. We are in the ear and we move through cavum tympani around ossicles. We follow the facial nerve. It is incredible! It leaves us breathless.

We explore 3D anatomy parallel to the CT slices of temporal bone. I can finally better relate some details. I also have some new ideas that I must note. I want to consider them again tonight while my impressions are fresh. I cannot wait to share my insight gained in this lecture with my colleagues in Serbia.

We are all under impression of this great lecture and discuss it during the break, while enjoying coffee and delicious cakes.

Photo shoot in front of the castle is next on the agenda. It is very cold outside. Surprisingly even the fresh and sharp winter air feels pleasant today.

Next lecture is given by professor Selesnick. We study anatomy again, this time by means of histological demonstration. It is a clear and practical lecture about the growth and progress of
cholesteatoma, surgical landmarks of facial nerve and risk of damaging the facialis during the surgery. After this lecture I can clearly see red alert blinking in front of my eyes: CAUTION, CAUTION, CAUTION.

The last lecture before the lunch break is given by prof. Rasp. It is an interesting lecture about otoendoscopy, otological setup, patient preparations, instrumentarium. We receive many practical and clear guidelines.

All the lectures today make a great introduction and prepare us for the temporal bone dissection, we all look forward to.

Lunch! It is tasty, healthy, carefully prepared food to meet different culinary expectations of people from various cultures. We have recharged out batteries and it is time to go back to work...

Prof. Kania gives a great lecture on otosclerosis surgery. It seems so simple when he explains it... However, I know that apart from a lot of drill, extensive knowledge of the subject, as well as excellent surgical technique, every step must be carefully planned. It is also very important to properly inform the patient, a step that is often skipped in my country. The patients should be clearly presented all the possible treatment methods, so that they are able to make informed consent. I will devote more time to this step in the future.

The next lecture is about the surgery of the external auditory canal given by prof. Arnoldner. I have always considered it as a safe surgery for the rookie surgeon, but facialis might be an issue again...

We all have a bit of stage fright as we need to start our own presentations... No need for that however, as we all win the room.

It has been a long day full of impressions. However I do not feel tired. After dinner we enjoy music and chatting. We are all from different countries, but still it feels we are similar...

Good night!

Tuesday, 31st January

And today is a dissection day!

Waking up early and having a very early breakfast as we start at 7:30. This course is known as very popular – having the largest number of participants. In order to have enough time for all case reports, we have to start early and get up early.

We start the day with fellows’ case presentations. The colleagues present interesting cases. We discuss them, ask questions or support the particular approach.

The lectures today are focused on middle ear surgery. Prof. Alexiades presents tympanoplasty in the first lecture. The next ones are about canal wall intact mastoidectomy and canal wall down mastoidectomy, as well as obliteration techniques. Our attention is fully occupied by the interesting lectures and case studies given by prof. Blevins and prof. Francis.

A break at the right moment to have a cup of coffee and a cake, which is a moment of the day we really look forward to...
All three lectures this morning open widely the door to the complex world of middle ear surgery. I have just heard about the new materials used in tympanoplasty. We have all learned about important surgical landmarks for mastoidectomy, as well as when to opt for the canal wall intact and when for canal wall down technique.

We have a quick lunch.

Elizabeth, who takes care that everything runs smoothly, was very clear. The taxis to the Paracelsus Medical University leaves at one o’clock sharply! That’s why we absolutely must come on time. We eat like pelicans – just throwing food in our beaks... and run to catch the taxi.....

And finally – dissection! A practice superbly organized - every little detail is perfect! Equipment, specimens (the bones), microscopes... and the most important: professors ready to explain and help with utmost patience. And again – we have 3D technology at our disposal enabling us to follow what our professors present. I am only afraid that we will run out of time. Time flies!

At five o’clock we finish. We do not smell nice after the afternoon in the lab full of formalin. However, we are happy and riding on adrenaline after the exciting afternoon in the lab.

What a great day!

Having a quick shower and rushing to get ready for dinner! We all still have a lot of energy for getting to know each other better.

Wednesday, 1st February

This morning it is hard to get up early.

Coffee and breakfast definitely help me wake up.

At 7:30 we are all set and follow the presentations of the colleagues. It is my turn to give a presentation. I am a bit nervous because I have to present my case in English. I hope everybody can understand me.

It went smooth. I can relax.

We continue with the lectures on middle ear surgery. We first listen to prof. Nikolas Blevins explaining ossiculoplasty, adhesives and middle ear surgery. Prof. Alexiades lectures on petrous apex: otologic approaches and prof. Meco on rhinologic approaches. Three lectures with interesting insights about materials used in ossiculoplasty, as well as techniques to approach petrous apex. Many cases are presented, as well as various treatments of cholesterol granuloma. Rhinologic endoscopic approach fascinates me.

Fellows’ case reports are on stage again.

I am impressed by the patience of the faculty members. Every fellow gets their full attention! And I must admit I had problem following some of the presentations. Some of them could barely be understood – either due to the low, uncertain voice of the presenter, or due to the less precise and rare use of English. All the comments and suggestions are well intentioned and offer a different view of the issue.

Time for coffee and some sweets!
The next lecture is given by prof. Rasp on Cochlear Implantation. It is beautiful to listen to it as it sounds so simple and clear!

Quick lunch again and ride to the temporal bone lab!

It’s 5 p.m. We are done! We are all tired and smell of formaldehyde.... It is raining outside.

Shower gives me instant feeling of rest and refreshment. I am ready to go and enjoy the dinner. The atmosphere is great. We laugh a lot! We all know each other better and exchange many interesting stories. It is wonderful to see so many young, interesting people full of enthusiasm.

Thursday, 2nd February

Time flies! Two days are left only! There is so much info to share! I enjoy it immensely and have a lot of impressions to process.

We finish with case reports today. I heard some wonderful case presentations. The best ones will be selected and archived in the case report library. We can already agree about several outstanding case reports.

The topics today are the one that make my heart beat faster. A truly wonderful lecture about bone anchored hearing aids given by prof. Francis has encouraged me! Although expensive devices are needed, this simple surgery is very interesting to me. This is something I would like to proceed with. I will enquire about in-depth courses in this direction.

The next lecture is very important to me as well – it is about temporal bone trauma and facial nerve surgery by prof. Arnoldner. I cannot find the right words to stress its significance.

Coffee break – getting to become one of our favorite socializing moments! Coffee, cakes, chatting and laughing... Also very important!

Prof. Alexiades proceeds with the lecture on vestibular surgery. A lot of new developments and breakthroughs here! The surgery of vestibular sulcus is attractive again! It has a high success rate as the surgical treatment of Meniere’s disease. I would really like to dig deeper into it. It is an exceptional lecture!

Next is prof. Kania, a brilliant lecturer. I feel we all look forward to his presentation. It is about surgery for glomus tumors. It opens a lot of new topics to explore.

Lunch! And lab again! Yes!

We all have to finish today the bone we obtained to dissect! At the end of the day we are all ready and satisfied! Professors as well!

We get a treat – a concert in the castle!

It looks fantastic and surreal! The town of Salzburg, the castle, the music composed by Bethoven, Mozart, Ravel and Prokofiev performed by Vivian Cheng, one of the greatest pianists in the world. I feel the music deep in my heart! And I also feel gratitude for everything I received in the last five days. I am aware of the privilege to be here and enjoy this wonderful happening! For a moment I close my eyes and count my blessings! And I feel endless gratitude!

Good night!
Friday, 3rd February

Today we start at 8 o’clock! More time to sleep! I enjoy the breakfast! And the conversations with the colleagues over a cup of coffee! I enjoy it even more than the previous days! Old known sign that the course is coming to an end?

And for the end – the most complex surgery!

I am fully absorbed by the lecture on Powered Middle Ear Implants given by prof. Boeheim. A great lecture with a lot of interesting details!

The next lectures keep the levels of my curiosity and focus high: Surgery for Cancer of the Temporal Bone by prof. Francis, Skull Base Surgery Neurootologic Approaches by prof. Selesnick and Skull Base Surgery Rhinologic Approaches by prof. Meco. Exceptional and dynamic lectures!

We have the post-seminar test. It is much easier now! After the lectures we have some ready answers and solutions to the dilemmas we had at the first test. I expect excellent results.

After lunch we have afternoon off! It is also beautiful weather! We go for a visit to the town of Salzburg! I enjoy a long walk with Masha. Along the way we stop for an espresso and apfel strudel! Salzburg has a treat for all my senses!

8 p.m. Graduation dinner! We all look elegant! The atmosphere is solemn! Mr. Wolfgang Aulitzky, Medical Director of the American Austrian Foundation, greets us and expresses his gratitude to all the renowned professors. The best fellows are honored the prizes for the best test results, the best dissection and the best case presentation. Everybody has only the words of praise and thanks for all the efforts to create a perfect course.

I consider all of us honored. It is a privilege to be selected for this course and to participate in such a wonderful happening. The main prize is the further expertise we gained, as well as new contacts and friendships created. I am also aware of all the new possibilities open by the Open Medical Institute, like observership program, satellite symposia... Every next step opens some new doors and new chances unfold.

It is time to say good bye. We leave Salzburg richer for another great experience.

Saturday, 4 February

It is 5 o’clock in the morning. I am on the train to Vienna. I feel like I was immersed in another dimension last week. I feel protected from the things happening in the outside world. No disturbances... Focused only on the importance of the present moment full of new insights, approaches, ideas... I plan how to implement the new discoveries. I want to start otosurgery! Am I late for it? I feel doubt for a moment... And the next moment I know for sure – I can do it! The next step is observership program, certainly!

Galina Joković