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**SALZBURG WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)**

May 27 - June 2, 2018

| • 33 fellows from 27 different countries and regions |
| • 9 faculty members from the United States and Austria |
| • 20 lectures and 5 workshops given by faculty |
| • 25 interesting cases presented by fellows |
| • Cadaver Lab at Paracelsus University Salzburg in cooperation with Medtronic |
| • 6 cases selected by faculty to be published in the Online Case Library |

**Faculty Photo, (L-R):**

Roger Härtl, MD; Karsten Schöller, MD; Han Jo Kim, MD; Harry Gebhard, MD; Eric Elowitz, MD; Moritz Perrech, MD; Claudius Thomé, MD
## 2018 Salzburg Weill Cornell Neurosurgery (Spine) Seminar  
Sunday 27 May – Saturday 2 June 2018

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<th>Sunday 27 May</th>
<th>Monday 28 May</th>
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<td><strong>07:00 – 08:00</strong></td>
<td><strong>BREAKFAST</strong></td>
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| **08:00 – 09:00** | Introductions  
Pre-Seminar Test  
Harry Gebhard, MD | Cervical Trauma  
Classifications  
Karsten Schoeller, MD | Cadaver Lab at Paracelsus University  
(first half of course)  
3 Cadavers:  
O-Arm Spinal 3D Navigation  
Microscope Lumbar Decompression and Fusion  
Microscope and Cervical Decompression and Fusion  
Microscope | Cervical Deformity Surgery  
Kai-Ming Fu, MD | Minimally Invasive Spinal Surgery  
Roger Haertl, MD | **DEPARTURES** |
| **09:00 – 10:00** | Lumbar Degenerative Disease  
When to Decompress and When to Fuse?  
Eric Elowitz, MD | Spinal Metastases  
Karsten Schoeller, MD | O-Arm Spinal 3D Navigation  
Microscope Lumbar Decompression and Cervical Decompression and Fusion  
4th Group: Case Presentations  
Faculty | Approaches to the Cervical Spine: Posterior Techniques  
Claudius Thomé, MD | Cranio-Cervical Surgery: Anatomy, Techniques  
Roger Haertl, MD | **COFFEE BREAK** |
| **10:00 – 10:30** | **COFFEE BREAK** | **COFFEE BREAK** | **COFFEE BREAK** | **COFFEE BREAK** | **COFFEE BREAK** | **COFFEE BREAK** |
| **10:30 – 11:30** | Spinal Cord Injury – Pathophysiology and Treatment/ Protection  
Karsten Schoeller, MD | Management of Spinal Infections  
Moritz Perrech, MD | Degenerative Lumbar Scoliosis – Classification and Treatment  
Han Jo Kim, MD | What Have We Learned about Spinal Deformity Surgery?  
Results from the ISSG  
Kai-Ming Fu, MD | Cervical Trauma  
Roger Haertl, MD  
José Piquer, MD | **LUNCH** |
| **11:30 – 12:30** | Spinal Cord Tumors  
Moritz Perrech, MD | Degenerative Lumbar Scoliosis – Classification and Treatment  
Han Jo Kim, MD | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** |
| **12:30 – 14:00** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** |
| **14:00 – 15:00** | Surgical Techniques: Pedicles Screws, Iliac Screws  
Harry Gebhard, MD | MIS Lumbar Fusion Techniques: XLIF, TLIF, MAS PLIF  
Eric Elowitz, MD | Cadaver Lab at Paracelsus University  
(second half of course)  
As Above | **Approaches to the Cervical Spine: Anterior Techniques**  
Claudius Thomé, MD | Global Neurosurgery Teaching Lessons Learned  
José Piquer, MD | **Workshop** |
| **15:00 – 16:00** | Spinal Deformity Principles  
Han Jo Kim, MD | Workshop Fellows’ Case Presentations  
As Above | **Case Video Presentations: How I Do It – Step by Step**  
Thomé/ Kim/ Fu/ Haertl | **Workshop**  
Fellows’ Case Presentations | **Workshop**  
Fellows’ Case Presentations | **Post-Seminar Test**  
Evaluation & Discussion |
| **16:00 – 17:00** | Workshop Fellows’ Case Presentations | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** | **LUNCH** |
| **17:00 – 18:00** | **17:00 – 17:15**  
OMI/AAF Presentation | Realspine Surgery Simulation  
Werner Korb, MD | **17:00 – 17:15**  
OMI/AAF Presentation | **17:00 – 17:15**  
OMI/AAF Presentation | **17:00 – 17:15**  
OMI/AAF Presentation | **17:00 – 17:15**  
OMI/AAF Presentation |
| **18:00 – 19:00** | Faculty Only Meeting to Review the Week | | | | | **Farewell RECEPTION** |
| **19:00 – 20:00** | Welcome RECEPTION  
Faculty Dinner in Private Home | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** |
| **19:00 – 19:30** |  
19:00 – 19:30  
Welcome RECEPTION | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** | **DINNER** |
| **19:30 – 20:00** |  
19:30 – 20:00  
Welcome DIINNER | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** |
| **20:00 – 21:00** |  
19:30 – 20:00  
Welcome DIINNER | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** | **DIINNER** |
WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR in SALZBURG

"NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)"

May 27 – June 2, 2018

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.

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Roger Haertl, MD (Course Director) is Professor of Neurological Surgery and Director of Spinal Surgery 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 and serves as the Neurosurgeon for the New York Giants Football Team. Dr. Haertl's clinical interest focuses on simple and complex spine surgery, minimally invasive spinal surgery and computer-assisted spinal navigation surgery. In order to achieve the very best in patient outcomes, Dr. Haertl's practice emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach to disease processes and he works very closely with other specialists such as neurologists, pain specialists and physical therapists. Dr. Haertl has been repeatedly named to the lists of New York's 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 150 scholarly articles in peer reviewed journals and is the editor of a recent book on minimally invasive spinal surgery. Dr. Haertl 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. One of his patients, boxer Danny Jacobs, was recently featured in a TV ad from NewYork-Presbyterian.

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Claudius Thomé, MD (Co-Course Director) completed his medical education at the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universitaet Munich, Germany and at Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford/Ca., 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 serving 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 is past-president of the Austrian Spine Society. He currently serves as board member of the Austrian Society of Neurosurgery, the German Spine Society and AO Spine Europe. Dr. Thomé’s commitments in the societies focus on education as training delegate of Austria in the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies and as member of the education committee of the German Spine Society and the Spine Society of Europe.

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Eric Elowitz, MD is a neurosurgeon specializing in minimally invasive spinal surgery for the treatment of degenerative spinal disorders including herniated cervical and lumbar discs and spinal stenosis. Dr. Elowitz grew up in Queens, New York and continued his studies in New York City. He obtained his medical degree from State University of New York (SUNY) - Downstate Medical College in 1986, with Summa Cum Laude honors. He received his neurosurgical training also at SUNY Downstate in Brooklyn, completing his Chief Residency in 1993. He joined the Beth Israel Medical Center staff in 1993 and was later appointed Director of Neurosurgery. In 2010, Dr. Elowitz joined the Spine Center in the Department of Neurological Surgery at Weill-Cornell Medical College/NewYork Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Elowitz has presented many scientific papers at national neurosurgery meetings and in 1998 received the Young Investigator Award from the Joint Section on Tumors of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. The main focus of his research interests is in outcome studies relating to minimally invasive spine surgery. Dr. Elowitz is currently on staff at Weill-Cornell Medical College/NewYork Presbyterian Hospital as an Associate Professor in Neurosurgery. He resides in Manhattan with his wife, Barbara, who is a radiologist, and their son, Jake.

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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 specializes 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. Radiological studies to determine disc-aging are under way, with very interesting preliminary results. 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 lead 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 helping to develop an interdisciplinary spine clinic in three Hospitals. He also was involved in the inauguration of the first AOSSpine 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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Han Jo Kim, MD is an orthopedic spine surgeon at Hospital for Special Surgery, specializing in cervical spine and scoliosis surgery. After his residency at HSS, he completed a spine fellowship in adult and pediatric spinal deformity and scoliosis surgery followed by a subspecialized fellowship in cervical spine surgery at Barnes-Jewish Hospital at Washington University in St. Louis. Currently serving as the Director of the Spine Fellowship, he is also the lead investigator for numerous research studies and has won multiple awards in the national and international arena. He is also actively involved in the education of residents, fellows and physician assistants. Dr. Kim has dedicated his time as a volunteer surgeon at the FOCOS hospital in Ghana, West Africa where he has surgically treated some of the most rare and complex spinal deformities in pediatric and adult patients. The severity of scoliosis he has seen and treated are so rare that the average spine surgeon may only see one to two cases a year. Over the course of his career, he has successfully operated on hundreds of rare and complex spinal deformities. Dr. Kim has authored more than 110 peer-reviewed scientific articles and more than 35 book chapters, including his own textbook which he co-authored with Dr. K. Daniel Riew on cervical spine surgery titled The Riew-Kim Manual for Cervical Spine Surgery. Through the AO Spine Foundation, he has been invited by international leaders in spine surgery to author surgical reference guides that teach other spine surgeons performing scoliosis surgery. He was also selected by the Scoliosis Research Society for the prestigious Edgar G. Dawson Fellowship in 2013 and subsequently was selected for the Scoliosis Research Society Traveling Fellowship in 2017. He is also an active member of the Cervical Spine Research Society.

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Moritz Perrech, MD is a neurosurgeon who specializes in spine surgery. After growing up in Bochum, Germany, Dr. Perrech graduated from the School of Medicine of the Westfälische Wilhelms University Muenster. Afterwards, he worked at the Neuroimmunology Lab of the Department of Neurology of the University Bochum, where he focused on the bioenergetics of neuroinflammatory and degenerative diseases. He completed his neurosurgical residency at the Department of Neurosurgery of the University Hospital of Cologne. During this time, he also took part in the training program of the EANS (European Association of Neurosurgical Societies). His training in spine surgery consisted of a two-year spine fellowship at the University Hospital of Cologne and participation in the training courses of the German Spine Association (DWG). Recently, he completed a 3-month clinical observership program with Dr. Haertl at the New York Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Perrech’s research interests include factors influencing clinical and radiographic outcomes after minimal invasive spinal procedures. A recent publication focusses on factors influencing the amount of indirect decompression after extreme lateral interbody fusion. Dr. Perrech is currently acting as a consultant focusing on complex spine surgery at the Department of Neurosurgery of the University Hospital of Cologne.

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José Piquer, MD, PhD was born the 11 April 1960, in Valencia, Spain. He finished their Degree of Medicine in 1983 at the University of Valencia with the qualification of Excellent - Extraordinary Award-. He obtained Doctor Grade (PhD) in Medicine at the University of Valencia (1988) with the qualification Cum Laudem - Extraordinary Award. He is Academic of the Real Academy of Medicine of Valencia. He obtained the Prize of the Real Academy of Medicine of Valencia in 1984, the First Accésit of the same Prize in 1985 and the First Accésit of the Prize "Gómez Ferrer" in 1996. He carried out their formation of Neurosurgeon in the Service of Neurosurgery Clinical Hospital of Valencia (Prof. Barcia Salorio) during five years (1984/89) and in the Service of Neurosurgery of the Hospital of Bellvitge of Barcelona (Prof. Isamat) during two years (1989-90). He obtained Board Certified in Neurosurgery (Spain, 1990). He was Staff Neurosurgeon in the Neurosurgery Service of the University Hospital La Fe of Valencia from June 1990 until February of 1999. He was named Chief of the Unit of Neurosurgery of the Hospital de la Ribera (Alzira) in March 1999- present. He is the President of the Company “Quirúrgica Neurologica” (Neuroval, SLP): Neuroval is surgical Professional Society Limited Company incorporated on 06/06/2001 in Valencia, Spain It main activity is to develop neurosurgical specialized medicine in private hospitals, mainly Nisa Hospitals of Valencia. He was Professor Assistant of Neurosurgery at the University of Valencia: courses 84-85, 85-86, 86-87, 87-88, 88-89, 89-90, 90-91. He has visited different International Neurosurgical Services and Universities Departments: University of Navarra Dpto of Orthopaedics and Traumatology, (1988), University of Hannover (Profd Sammi; Neurosurgical Clinic Krankenhaus Nordstadt, Germany, 1992), University of Cincinnati (Prof Tew; Department of Neurosurgery, USES, 1993), Bethesda Medical Center (Department of Neurosurgery, USES, 1996), Hospital OLV of Alstt (Belgium, 1999), Methodist Central Hospital, (Memphis-Tennessee October-2000); Orthopedic Service (Bordeaux, June-2001) Department of Neurosurgery University Hospital of Helsinky, (Finland, June, 2002) , Saint Louis University (Prod P. Young; School of Medicine, Practical Anatomy Workshop Laboratory, 93-94-98-00-02,04). He obtained different grants for many research projects. Actually, he is a co-researcher in four different projects “Glioblastoma and Secondary Glioblastoma: Clinical-pathological Characterization and Genetics”; “European Web server-accessible decision support system for brain tumours MR diagnosis (eTUMOUR)” (EOI.FP6.2000); “Neurophysiologic characterization of patients with brain tumour” and “Anatomy of the Insula and Temporal lobe”. He attended at many practical courses or international workshops on spine surgery, skull base and neuroanatomy. He has organized together Prof Young (Department of Neurosurgery of Saint Louis University) 29 practical courses related with the spine, anatomy, nurse-neurosurgery and pathology vascular brain, facilitating to establish an agreement between this Department of St Louis University and the Practical Laboratory of the Hospital de la Ribera (Alzira, Spain).
He has organized several Symposia, Interhospital meetings and Congress related with the neuroncology, anatomy and spine. He is member the committee of the Spanish Group of Neuroncology (GENO) and of the Group of Neuroncology of the Spanish Society of Neurosurgery. He is member of Spanish Society of Neurosurgery, European Society of Neurosurgery, Spanish Skull Base Society, Levante Society of Neurosurgery and EANO. He was the Secretary of Spanish Neurosurgical Society (SENEC) and member of National Neurosurgical Committee of Ministry of Health (Spain). He was Assistant Professor of Medical School Neurosurgery (83-91), Faculty of Medicine of Valencia (Prof. Barcia). Department of Neurosurgery. It has recently been appointed Professor of Neuroanatomy and Neurosurgery, Faculty of Medicine at Catholic University of Valencia (2008-2014). He is the author of 1 book, 4 monographs, 6 book chapters and 86 papers published in various national and international journals. He has presented 208 oral communications on scientific meetings and participate as a speaker inside and outside our country on 51 conferences. Finally, Dr. Piquer is the President and founder of the foundation NED (Neurosurgery-Education-Development) dedicated to the development of neurosurgery in the poorest countries mainly in East Africa, where they have made over 60 humanitarian missions. NED sent more than 600 volunteer to developing countries to teach different neuromedical specialities. Her has also been elected to the board of USA-international foundations Madaktari & FIENS, becoming the European neurosurgeon occupies that position. Recently, he has been elected as Director of Neuroscience Chair of CEU University of Valencia and he has been appointed Professor of Neuroanatomy and Neurosurgery of this University (2014,15).

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Karsten Schoeller, MD is the Vice Chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery and senior teaching faculty at the Justus-Liebig-University in Giessen, Germany. His clinical work focusses on brain and spine tumors, minimally invasive and complex spine surgery, as well as neurotraumatology and vascular neurosurgery. Dr. Schöller graduated from the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich and conducted his doctoral thesis working on an experimental stroke model at the Experimental Neurosurgery Workgroup (Head of Workgroup: Prof. Alexander Baethmann) of the Institute for Surgical Research in Munich, where he also performed his habilitation thesis on early brain injury after subarachnoid hemorrhage. He completed his neurosurgical residency followed by subspecialty training in spinal neurosurgery under Prof. Jörg-Christian Tonn in Munich, and he acquired further expertise in minimally invasive spine surgery and neuronavigation during a fellowship with Prof. Roger Haertl in New York. Dr. Schöller’s research interests include minimally invasive and modern spinal techniques, cervical spine, as well as neurotrauma and neurocritical care. His scientific activities have earned him grants by prestigious German institutions including the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). One of the most recent publications, a meta-analysis on open vs. minimally invasive decompression of lumbar spinal stenosis associated with spondylolisthesis, was awarded the Neurosurgery Top Spine and Peripheral Nerve Paper of the Year by the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS). He is a peer reviewer for multiple major neurosurgical and spine journals and associate editor of the Journal of Spinal Studies and Surgery. Momentarily, Dr. Schöller is heading the “Junges Forum” (forum for young spine surgeons) of the German Spine Society (DWG).

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WEILL CORNELL SEMINAR
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SALZBURG

"NEUROSURGERY (SPINE)"

May 27 – June 2, 2018

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27 May, Sunday: I arrived by car in the afternoon and was impressed with the beautiful nature, mountains and lakes near the road. As neurosurgeons like to say, I approached the Schloss Arenberg through some narrow streets but it was surprisingly easy. Facility themselves were very nice, surrounded by dense nature and some nice sculptures, which are part of the Museum of Contemporary Art. After the welcome reception we enjoyed a very tasty dinner and were introduced to each other and continued the talk in the front of the castle.

28 May, Monday: And here It begins...welcome note...and we immediately want to see what do you have?! Pre-seminar test was done quickly and they promised us another one after the last lecture on Friday. The first lecture form Dr. Eric Elowitz was interesting to me, but the most interesting thing here were the ongoing dilemmas and no universal answer to some of them...when and how to fuse and when only to decompress degenerative lumbar disease. We compared which technique is the best, with what we are using in the everyday practice. I think that most of the people in the room, including me, didn’t go any further from posterior approaches to lumbar spine. Of course, that is not an excuse for not knowing other things and be eager to learn. Lectures were continued on the topic spinal cord tumors and injuries, and the faculty really put forth an effort to present the contemporary guidelines and literature. After that, Dr. Kim gave a lecture on the topic of sagittal balance trying to show us what should be considered when evaluating surgical treatment. Some of the colleagues from orthopedics were very interested in discussing the spinal column deformity surgery, but personally I am not so enthusiastic with those “long constructions” that correct the spinal column. Although I must admit that some of the results, at least in postop X-ray pictures, are really impressive. After dinner all of us gathered in two or three separate groups, went for a walk through the city and end up in one of the biggest breweries. You can imagine the discussion of young neurosurgeons, orthopedics and trainees on the big table and over a couple of beer mugs...

29 May, Tuesday: Wake up early without any problem and the lectures continued at the same tempo. Something about degenerative spinal changes, again about approaches and assessment for operative treatment, and for me an interesting lecture on spinal metastases. During the afternoon I presented my case that I prepared, and it turned out to be very good and noticed. After dinner, because the
weather was so nice, a group from the Balkan went for sightseeing, Ice cream with the taste of Mozartkugels, and a long walk through the whole old town. We stopped in one of the nice, small squares on our side of the river for a relaxing conversation and a couple of draft beers. It was really no problem to sleep after that, and fresh mountain air only accelerated the process...

30 May, Wednesday: We had a free morning so I decided to go and visit the Hohensalzburg castle. Panoramic picture of city, river and mountains will stay in my memories for a long time, as well as the taste of a traditional pretzel and a nice espresso I had for breakfast on one of castle's terraces. During lunch one of my colleagues and I discussed different neurosurgical approaches. After that we got ready for the cadaver lab training and presentations at Paracelsus University. Faculties really put forth an effort to teach us some practical things, but MIS TLIF and O-arm stations were most interesting to me. Since the weather was good and warm throughout the whole week, after dinner I again went for walk with other colleagues and we ended up in the same big brewery. That was good and for some of the guys it became a tradition....

31 May, Thursday: This morning started with some very interesting lectures. Dr. Claudius Thome explained in detail practically all about surgical approaches and dilemmas in the degenerative pathology of the cervical spine. Dr. Kai Fu followed with the classification of spinal column fractures, and in the end Dr. Haertl explained the ULBD steps with the video case. Honestly, I was most interested in today's lectures because some of the advice I got would mean a lot for my further practice. During today's fellow presentations somehow everything became interactive and everyone entered the discussion with critical questions, but also with their solutions for the given situation. It was kind of different and interesting. After dinner there was a chamber music concert in Schloss Arenberg – it was really very nice, and after that we continued talking on the balcony and in the park in front of the castle until late hours. At one point I joined a jolly group in the Armenian lounge of the castle, and a very friendly competition in table football began.

1 June, Friday. We should call it MIS Friday morning. The topic was once again very interesting for me, and after that Dr. Claudius Thome changed some perspectives and gave a lecture about evidence based medicine. In a world where technology and economy are pushing every aspect of our lives it is very hard sometimes to stay on the ground and keep in mind that we are here to try to help the patients in the best possible way. That is why these chances for education and training, with dedicated teachers, are very important not only for us personally, but also for the wider community we live in. Another thing that is also worth mentioning...after exchanging experiences with colleagues from various countries, I of course always learn something new, but I also realize that dilemmas and high level of personal and professional care are always something that is easy to understand among colleagues and connects us no matter where we live or work...

In the end, it's really hard to find the right words to express gratitude to everyone in the organization of this excellent seminar...saying a simple thank you doesn't feel like enough...

Bojan Jelača (Serbia)
May 27. The train was going from Vienna to Salzburg, and the wonderful view of Vienna was still in my eyesight: the center of the city, the St. Stephen’s Cathedral, beautiful parks ... My impressions were indescribable. At last, the train stopped at the main Station of Salzburg. I took one more bus and I was in the Volstgarter bus stop. In approximately 10 minutes I was in Schloss Arenberg. I was a bit late, and everybody was having the welcome dinner. The staff at the reception desk were polite and friendly. I introduced myself to Dr. Wolfgang Aultzky and the faculty. First of whom I met were colleagues from Russia and Hungary. We easily became friends due to the same ways of thinking. After the dinner, tired but with great impressions, I went to sleep.

May 28. We had a group photo with the faculty and fellows. At 8 a.m. the seminar started. In the pre-seminar test there were interesting questions from important topics. Unfortunately, we didn’t get the results, so I hope we’ll know the correct answers during the lectures. The first lecture of Dr. Eric Elowitz about the lumbar degenerative disease was very useful and highly informative. Then we had a coffee break and enjoyed the company of intelligent, interesting and friendly colleagues. The atmosphere was pleasant.

After the break, we had a lecture about the spinal cord injuries and spinal cord tumors. The lecturers were Dr. Karsten Schoeller and Dr. Motitz Perrech. I truly enjoyed the lectures, which had been clearly presented. After the delicious lunch, the lecture about the surgical techniques, pedicle and iliac screws presented by Dr. Harry Gebhard was informative and easy to follow. The next topic was about the spinal deformity principles by Dr. Han Jo Kim. He has an awesome personality, wonderful and punctual teacher.

The colleagues presented very interesting cases. There was an interactive discussion. After the dinner, we went to the one of the beer houses of Salzburg- Augustiner Braustubl. We liked the atmosphere there. It was not so much a famous place for the tourists and there were almost only native Austrians. The beer was great. Interestingly, we had the same sense of humor. We had huge smiles together. The nice evening with new friends was the end of that day.

May 29. We had breakfast and coffee. Dr. Harry Gebhard from Switzerland held a nice lecture about the cervical spine trauma classifications and the explanations about the treatment concepts. He showed interesting cases. Then Dr. Karsten Schoeller from Germany had a talk about the spinal metastasis.
After a coffee break, we had a lecture about the management of the spinal infections by Moritz Perrech and about the classification and treatment of the degenerative lumbar scoliosis by Han Jo Kim. Their talks were inspiring.

During lunch, we had a chance to speak to each other. We had found that we mostly think in the same way and have approximately the same problems in our countries. We invited each other to our countries and decided to stay in touch.

Dr. Eric Elowitz from the USA gave a lecture about the minimal invasive surgery lumbar fusion techniques. He mentioned the words of Oscar Wilde, “Experience is simply the name we give to our mistakes.” It made us think one more time about improving our knowledge and skills.

There were interesting case presentations from the fellows and a talk about the real spine surgery stimulation by Werner Korb. It would be fantastic chance for improving skills.

It was a long day. After the dinner, we went to the city center and discussed interesting topics in a beer house.

May 30. We woke up early in the morning, had breakfast and went to the Cadaver Lab at the Paracelsius University. It was my first experience with cadavers. There were three cadaver groups. Dr. Karsten Schollier patiently showed us how to work with O-Arm spinal 3D navigation. It was the most interesting experience for me. Dr. Eric Elowitz kindly explained how to do a lumbar decompression. Dr. Han Jo Kim at first explained and showed in detail on the board by scheme how to do a cervical decompression and fusion. Then we did the procedure by ourselves.

Lastly, we discussed some interesting cases with Dr. Moritz Perrech and Dr. Kai-Ming Fu.

Thus, the educational part of the day was over and the cultural part was started.

After having lunch, I went to the Hohensalzburg castle with my colleague Aibek Bekzhanov from Kyrgyzstan. Aibek is a clever, interesting person. There was a railway from downtown, but we decided to walk to the castle and enjoy the view of the city. It was an amazing view from the top and we could see the city like in the palm.

With great expressions, we came back, had dinner, and went to the center of the city with the other colleagues. We had a nice evening. Our colleague Aleksanders Krigers from Austria told us about his residency in Austria and about his chief Claudius Thome’. Later, during the next days I would appreciate how kind, experienced, generous and open-minded of a mentor he was.

I want to also mention something about my Russian colleague, Stanislav Ivanov, who is very famous surgeon in Russia. He is a talented surgeon and works in Saints Petersburg. I appreciate his modesty. I had a chance to watch a TV program with his participation on the first channel of Russia.

Late in the evening we went to the Schloss.

May 31. After the breakfast we had informative and educative lectures about the approaches to the cervical spine by Claudius Thome’. Then we had a chance to listen to Dr. Roger Haertl, who had a lecture about the cranio-cervical surgery. Dr. Kai-Ming Fu gave a lecture about the cervical deformity surgery.

After lunch, we had a lecture about the approaches to the cervical spine and case video presentations. Then fellows presented their cases. I would like to mention that I was very happy to know two wonderful persons, Ona Lapteva from Lithuania and Daria Tcaciuc from Moldova. Although they were worrying about their case presentations, they did it perfectly.

After the dinner, we enjoyed a chamber music concert performed by three Romanian musicians with a program of Puccini, Brahms, Bizet, Franciax and Lehar.

I proudly found that there was an Armenian Lounge on the fifth floor, where we organized a table football competition. At first we couldn’t find the ball and started to play with a chocolate ball. However, I’d like to say for further fellows that would probably like to play- the ball was hidden in the table recess!

We went to bed late that day.

June 1. After the breakfast, Dr. Roger Haertl gave a lecture about minimally invasive spinal surgery. After the break Dr. Claudius Thome’ started an interesting topic about the spinal surgery and evidence based outcomes. Then Dr. Jose’ Piquer told us about the global neurosurgery teaching lessons.

The last part of the seminar was fellows’ case presentations and the post-seminar test.
Later we had a graduation dinner. The atmosphere was amazing. Dr. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky gave the certificates.

After the dinner, we had an afterparty in the Armenian Lounge. We didn’t notice how the week passed. The time to say goodbye came near. There were mixed feelings of happiness and sadness. Each of us would go to our countries in our own way, but we shouldn’t be sad, because we would meet again. It’s a small world after all...

Dr. Jose’ Piquer mentioned in his talk the words of Lao Tzu, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” I hope that during our journey in medicine we’ll do our best to help the patients. Special thanks to Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky, Stephanie Faschang, Olivia Rothmann, the staff Of Schloss Arenberg, the faculty and fellows for this unforgettable week and for helping us to take one more step closer towards our dreams and goals.

Nara Lalazaryan (Armenia)
27 May, Sunday evening: After a long way from Smolensk I arrived to Salzburg by plane. It was my first visit to this beautiful town, and I was attracted by numerous corners of nature within the town. It was very easy for me to find Schloss Arenberg, the bus number 10 took me to the right place. After arrival I filled in some formal papers and got the room key. The welcome reception and a very tasty dinner gave us opportunity to get to know each other and meet time with the members of our faculty for the first. Dr. Wolfgang K. Aulitzky, medical director of AAF, has welcomed us to the seminar and wished us success. The atmosphere in Schloss Arenberg was very friendly and calm, and broke the first communication barriers between us.

28 May, Monday: I woke up at 6 o’clock without any difficulties. Then breakfast at 7 am. Stefanie Faschang has welcomed us to the seminar and the seminar started. Pre-seminar test was very discussable: too many questions that we were usually speaking about that gave multiple answers, but now we need to put only one!!! After the test the awesome lectures of the medical doctors from the USA, Switzerland and Germany started. Their forms of material presentation were very interesting to learn and I took pleasure in learning. They talked easily about complex cases, then from simple to more complex cases and it was very easy to understand their material. The name of the lecture “When to Decompress and When to Fuse?” by Dr. Eric Elowitz was like “To Be or not to Be,” because this theme is highly relevant and controversial.

Then we enjoyed the coffee-break and Group photo with Faculty.

After the break we learned about Spinal Cord Injury, pathophysiology and treatment and protection rules (Karsten Schoeller, MD). It was extremely important for me because sometimes I treat the same patients. Another interesting lecture for me was “Spinal Cord Tumors” by Dr. Moritz Perrech because I have learned a lot of new things and later I’ll use it in my work.

The lecture about Spinal Deformity Principles presented by Han Jo Kim seized me. I was thinking it over for many hours later. Dr. Kim gave a lecture on the topic of sagittal balance, trying to show us what should be considered when evaluating surgical treatment. Some of the colleagues from the orthopedics were very interested in discussing the spinal column deformity surgery. Results, at least in post-OP X-ray pictures, are really impressive. His approaches will be very useful in my everyday practice.
After the lecture about surgical techniques for pedicles and iliac screws, presented by Harry Gebhard, MD, the fellows started their case presentations. We discussed the clinical cases from the colleagues’ practices. We didn’t notice how the day passed. A friendly atmosphere and opportunity to ask questions helped me to understand and remember the given information more easily. All lectures gave more theoretical information. Now I can express my first opinion about the seminar: it was very smart to combine two types of specialists in one course – orthopaedic- and neurosurgeons. After dinner I went to sleep, some of us went to the city to enjoy a little bit more from Salzburg’s night atmosphere.

29 May, Tuesday: After a tasty breakfast I was full of energy to attend new interesting and useful lectures for me, especially of Cervical Trauma Classifications (Harry Gebhard) and Management of Spinal Infections (Moritz Perrech).

After the coffee break my attention was focused on Degenerative Lumbar Scoliosis – Classification and Treatment. The lecture of Dr. Han Jo Kim, again just as yesterday, impressed me deeply and helped me to understand the philosophy of deformity surgery and some points of measurement of outcomes and treatment results in degenerative spine. Discussion with Dr. Min continued outside the lecture hall also.

After the next lecture of Dr. Eric Elowitz (Minimal Invasive Techniques) the fellows started their case presentations. My presentation was the 3rd. I must say I was a little nervous, but the friendly and kind position of Dr. Roger Haertl gave me confidence. It was difficult for me to compress my presentation about traumatic spondylolisthesis of C2 vertebra into 7-8 slides, but I did it. I’m very pleased with Faculty members for the interesting discussion after my speech.

After dinner my new friends and I had promenade in the historical center of Salzburg.

30 May, Wednesday: Lectures without practice are useless. Our organizers know this, so they give us a good opportunity at the cadaver lab training to discuss presentations of clinical cases at Paracelsus University. Minimally invasive surgery with navigation and O-arm stations were the most interesting to me because it is a modern, high-technological advancement in spine surgery. Dr. Han Jo Min and Dr. Harry Gebhard introduced surgical anatomy, principles and showed us the technique to C1-C2 posterior screw fixation. Also they gave some advice on how we can avoid complications in this type of surgery. Dr. Claudius Thome introduced us a minimally invasive posterior lumbar technique, showed and explained nuances, and after that we had a unique opportunity to try and to perform this surgery by ourselves. Special thanks to Dr. Min for the informative explanation. He showed me personally how to do the C7 pedicular screw fixation in the easiest and safest way. Four hours in the cadaver lab passed as 45 min. After dinner my colleagues and me had a walk and we could speak about everything interesting that happened this day. My colleagues confessed that they have never seen- but only read or heard about- the operations which they have performed here.

31 May, Thursday: It was very interesting for me to get to know the culture of Austria and its tradition of celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam) on the 31st of May.

The day off for Austria, but for us it was an ordinary one. It started as usual at 6:00 am. Cervical spine surgery was a pearl of this day. The main lectures were Claudius Thome and Kai-Ming Fu. Dr. Kai-Ming Fu explained to us the most difficult and common part of modern spine surgery – cervical deformity. It is very important for me because I had many questions and obscurities before; the main part of these obscurities was cleared up. I hope that I’ll turn this knowledge into action. Also of great practical significance to me was the lecture about the Thoracolumbar Fracture Classification and Treatment Options by Dr. Kai-Ming Fu. After dinner, there was a chamber music concert in Schloss Arenberg – it was very relaxing. We enjoyed it.
01 June, Friday: The last day was full of interesting lectures. I learnt a lot about minimally invasive surgery, cervical and cranio-cervical pathology. But as for me, a surgeon with 10-years experience, the most significant topic was about Spinal Surgery and Evidence Based Outcomes (Claudius Thomé) and a very informative lecture about Global Neurosurgery Teaching Lessons Learned (José Piquer), which was about medicine and the work of neurosurgeons in Africa. At the end of the lecture day we passed a Post-seminar test. The experience of colleagues from different countries helped me to face many new perspectives in my future work. It’s an extraordinarily important experience for me. New techniques, new methods! I found many new friends, an exchange of knowledge and experience between participants and staff was very useful. At Graduation Dinner, despite the solemnity and awards, it was a little bit sad. For this short period we became attached to each other. Wolfgang Aulitzky held his final speech, congratulated us with successful and fruitful training, which was confirmed by the Post-seminar test results, handed the certificates, then we took photos with Faculty.

2 June, Saturday: The day of departures. I looked back at the last week and felt mixed feelings, I was very happy because I found new friends, I have learnt a lot, and yet at the same time I was very sad because the seminar was over. But I hope, in future, I’ll have opportunity to attend many new interesting and useful seminars like this one.

In conclusion, I want to express a great gratitude to everyone in the organization of this perfect seminar. Thank you so much!

Denis Ivliev (Russia)