

STEINER EARLY CHILDHOOD AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

In November 2019 I was lucky enough to be able to attend an inspiring and exciting conference at the V&A in London. It was entitled “Future Museums: Play and Design” and brought together pedagogues, play workers, psychologists, architects and designers as well as those working within museums to consider how museums can be powerful advocates for creativity and learning through play. The V&A are planning to transform the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green into a world leading museum of design and creativity for children, families and young people.

In a workshop entitled *In the footsteps of pioneers* – exploring the key principles underpinning the three approaches which have significantly influenced our understanding of play and learning of babies, young children and adults today.



Janni Nicol (see photograph) from the SWSF spoke about Rudolf Steiner and the Steiner Waldorf approach to children’s play and learning as a basis for building creativity, firing imagination, developing resilience and being joyful in this 'conversation between friends' which looked at links, similarities and differences between the three approaches and their relevance to our current early years practice. Tina Bruce CBE, spoke about Friedrich Froebel and the Frobellian approach (see photo) and Barbara Isaacs, Montessori Ambassador contributed to this talking about Maria Montessori and the Montessori approach. It was very interesting to observe the points of connection between the three approaches and it was evident that the needs of young children are at the heart of all of the work of these three inspiring practitioners.

I left the V&A feeling hopeful about the work being undertaken around the UK to ensure that young children have places and opportunities for play and creativity into the future.

Sam Greshoff, SWSF Early Childhood Coordinator