

Birthday Homage for Margret Meyerkort

Margret Meyerkort is honored in my book, *Kindergarten Education; freeing children's creative potential*. (Hawthorn Press) My daughter, Anna Rainville, was spending her junior year from University of California at Santa Cruz at Prior Weston in England. I wanted to come over to study that summer because there was a summer class being taught at Emerson College by Daniel Bittleston. I sat in his class hearing what I had believed and taught feeling all alone in my ways of teaching and was thrilled to hear that the Waldorf people had been doing just this for fifty years. At that time, we learned our trip to Switzerland had been canceled, so Mia (now Mia Michael), Anna and I all sat on a bench, with our voices and hearts saying, "Dear God, here we are with plenty of time and

money. What is the next step?" It was that afternoon that Daniel said, "I think you would enjoy Margaret Meyerkort's workshop at Wynstones." So off we went! Never have I seen such beauty in a Kindergarten classroom. Never had I heard such beauty of ideas and heartfelt passion. She has since been the speaker at our Kindergarten Forum here in Saratoga, California, where we presented her with the Summer Rose Award. This award is given to one who gives her life to the teaching of the young child. Her gift to the kindergarten teachers of the world is priceless and I shall ever be grateful for her inspiration and sharing her passion for beauty of spirit with me.

Betty Peck, Saratoga, CA

Margret's courses for teachers in the Washington, DC, area in the 1980's were memorable and deeply inspiring. She taught not just about early childhood, but about the true nature of the human being, thus calling on us to develop our own moral, soul-spiritual capacities and to become more worthy of imitation.

Nancy Foster, Maryland

I am continually inspired by Margret Meyerkort. Her example of trying to understand why one would choose to create a kindergarten environment a certain way or having a reason why one brings certain activities is a vital image of giving attention to the details and trying to perceive from every possible perspective. She holds the cosmic and the worldly pictures at the same time which gives her a depth of understanding and creates in her a vessel for intuition to enter. Margret is wise and well-read and open-minded and funny and fun, and a great influence on both the Waldorf/Steiner kindergarten movement as well as the Anthroposophical movement worldwide. She always sees the potential, the becoming in each of the children (and adults) she meets. Margret, a student of Steiner's writings, always acknowledges his thoughts and deeds in her lectures and workshops. I have profound gratitude for all I have experienced through my association with Margret, we have collaborated on various activities over the years, and I always found a balance of gravity and levity in that work, of humor and fun as well as thoughtful plumbing of the depths of anthroposophical thinking. I still hear her resounding in my memory, "What right do I have to stand before the children if I do not develop myself?" When I first met her, I asked if she would be my mentor, and she refused saying instead she would be my colleague. She has since been a beloved colleague and dear friend whom I miss seeing in person since her trips to the States ended.

Stephen Spitalny, Santa Cruz, California

Margret Meyerkort, you have brought and continue to bring so many, many gifts to ever so many people in this world. You have entered into a new decade in your life and that calls for a birthday gift to you. I would like to share one of many pictures I have experienced with you.

The picture-image is the *quiet space* you created in your talks, offerings, sharings with ever so many students, teachers and parents. Especially potent was the open quiet moment in the room at the end of your offerings. I witnessed this at every one of these I attended, and there were many, many of them, as I am sure you remember. Why this *quiet space*? What was living in it? I experienced that you touched these students, teachers and parents as human beings, and something was quickened in their hearts. They felt, heard, understood and accepted, perhaps even feeling a bit uncomfortable, even though you may have done much of the talking! They felt you open your humanity to them, as you wove interesting stories about children with a thread-line that pointed toward some aspect of our modern human soul condition, and how we can move in a different direction to support the lives of young children. What was also in that *quiet space* was an awakening in the thinking where certain aspects of life had never been so convincingly and amazingly connected, where Athena arose out of the head of Zeus. And that left everyone with a sense of one of your "hobby-horses," GRATITUDE. Yes, it was gratitude that lived in these *quiet spaces*, a place beyond words.

It is with Gratitude, from myself and I know, many others, that I wish you a nourishing birthday year filled with LOVE!

Janet Kellman, Penryn, California