

Pacifica Journal

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Asia Pacific Anthroposophical Conference & Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference

April 28-May 7, 2011

The first Asia Pacific Anthroposophical Conference (APAC) took place in October 1997 in Mumbai. This was followed by the first Waldorf Round Table, which took place in Udvada, near Mumbai. Thereafter, the latter was held every time an Asia Pacific conference took place and evolved into the Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference (AWTC) in April 2005 in Ilan, Taiwan.

Now, seven years after the last APAC-AWTC conference, the Hyderabad Waldorf schools (Sloka, Abhaya, Diksha and Prerana) along with the Anthroposophical Group in India and together with Freunde der Erziehungskunst are hosting the conference in Hyderabad, India.

The last 14 years have seen a tremendous growth in the Waldorf movement with many initiatives starting in the Asia-Pacific region. The teaching in these schools is based on Dr. Rudolf Steiner's philosophy. Steiner education is multidimensional, appealing to all the faculties of the child. This education is truly a part of a universal understanding of the child. It is applicable to each child, irrespective of the child's cultural roots, language, religious beliefs or geographical setting. The goal is to educate the hand, the heart, the intellect and foster cultural, moral and spiritual values in each child. Anthroposophy - the knowledge of the human being - is the basis of Steiner education.

We have all been working intensively with the insights

of Steiner into Waldorf education, building up and changing the curriculum to suit the various regions. This has, in turn, inspired many more schools and non-governmental organizations in several of parts of Asia to start their own initiatives and change their teaching methodology.

The AWTC with its theme – "Social Responsibilities of Waldorf Schools and Kindergartens within the Society," April 28-30, will provide a platform to present our research and share our experience with all our Asian colleagues. This changing face of education throughout Asia will benefit a lot with the inputs from across the globe and our collaborative efforts.

The APAC with its Theme – "Rudolf Steiner – An Inspiration for Our Time - His Anthroposophical Impulse in India and the World in the 21st Century," May 1-7, will take a fresh look at his insights and his work commemorating his 150th year. Christof Wiechert will be the keynote speaker for this teacher training conference.

We are positive that the upcoming conferences will help us feel the kindled strength from different countries and give us the impetus to strive on until we meet again, to take the things to a higher and better plane. Contact information:

www.apac-awtc.org



Bird kite in sky over Kathmandu, Nepal. (Photo by Peggy Fok)

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Jharoka Festival, January 2011, with the students of Sloka Waldorf School in Hyderabad, India. (Photos by Anil Singhal)

The Disservice of a 'Rigorous' Education

Steve Nelson, Head of the Calhoun School in Manhattan, New York

Tests, standards, accountability, economic competitiveness, managers, vouchers, data, metrics... does anyone actually care about children?

Public discourse about education is unbearably impersonal. Nearly all the heated rhetoric suggests that children are nothing but small units of future production, especially in the saddest precincts of South Central, Baltimore, Harlem, Cleveland, Detroit and the other abandoned parcels of our divided nation.

In several remarkable books a few years ago, Jonathan Kozol described the lives of children from America's neglected corners, particularly the dark and deteriorating neighborhoods of New York City's South Bronx. In *Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope*, he quoted Mother Martha, a reformed lawyer who served as pastor of St. Ann's Church, in a particularly desolate section of the Bronx. "Peter's dog ate Jefferson's cat." Peter and Jefferson are cousins whose pets had an unpleasant encounter. Both boys were among a handful of often-lonely boys who found companionship and solace with Mother Martha.

Kozol described Jefferson as he sat on the church steps at dawn, cradling the remains of his cat in a cardboard box, aching to talk with Mother Martha about cats and death. The pastor and her colleague helped Jefferson place the cat in a cookie tin, say a prayer, sprinkle water and bury her. Mother Martha said, "I think that he was pleased, because he kept on bringing people out to see the grave. He dug her up three times to show his friends."

While multi-billionaires like Michael Bloomberg, Bill Gates and Eli Broad talk about tough management and data-driven reform, real children languish in abject poverty. That's unfair enough, but then we also rob them of their childhoods. Everything is about money, even their small lives. Social scientists talk about poor kids' education as an "investment" and act as though the worth of children is in their development as resources for the competitive marketplace.

Kozol wrote, "Advocates of children, most of whom dislike this ethos, nonetheless play into it in an effort to gain financial backing from the world of business. A dollar spent on Head Start will save our government six dollars over 20 years in lowered cost for juvenile detention and adult incarceration. It is a pretty dreadful way to have to think about 4-year-olds."

Since Kozol published these words, America has doubled down on the obsession to prepare children to serve some future economic use. Schools are increasingly characterized by "rigor," longer days, summer remediation and high-stakes tests. As Kozol observed, "Burials for cats

somehow don't fit into this picture." The aggressive imposition of high-stakes education isn't ruining childhood for only poor kids.

In affluent neighborhoods just a few miles south of St. Ann's Church, the stressful tests are for private school admission and the summers are for accelerated work instead of remediation. Children in Shaker Heights, Ohio, Grosse Pointe, Mich., Marin County, Calif., or Darien, Conn. and other affluent communities are treated like precious gemstones to be polished hard on the grindstone of their parents' ambition. Burials for cats don't fit into this picture either.

Jean De La Bruyère, a 17th century French moralist and philosopher, once wrote: "Children have neither a past nor a future. Thus they enjoy the present -- which seldom happens to us." In the South Bronx or in Grosse Pointe, children are too often deprived of the present. At each end of the economic spectrum, we are pressing children harder and harder in the service of a "rigorous" education. It is not mere semantic coincidence that the word "rigor" is most often paired with the word "mortis."

As De La Bruyère wrote, the present seldom happens to us. But the present is all that children have. Kozol wrote movingly about another of Mother Martha's children. "Mariposa is not simply 37 pounds of raw material that wants a certain processing and finishing before she can be shipped to market and considered to have value. She is of value now, and if she dies of a disease or accident when she is 12 years old, the sixth year of her life will not as a result be robbed of meaning."

It's heartbreaking to hear administrators and politicians talk about children as raw material to be crafted into productive cogs in the global economy. If they bothered to know the children about whom they talk, they would find fascinating, creative, imaginative and passionate small humans who yearn for real relationships with us and each other. They were born to learn and will learn, in good time, if we love them and don't extinguish their curiosity and squash their spirits with misguided policies. But instead we march them from class to class, dress them in little uniforms and cluck unhappily over their failure to meet our sterile expectations.

We are doing this to our children because we think we have to. Perhaps Bloomberg, Gates, Broad and others would like children to have fun, but they seem to believe we don't have that luxury. Strict discipline, rigor, standards and accountability just don't leave time for an indulgent childhood. But this is a false choice. Children who enjoy the present, children who fritter away the summer in imaginative play, children who bury cats and dig them up to show friends -- these children will also be our poets and visionary entrepreneurs, our scientists and our leaders. That's what so-called reformers claim to want, but it is not what they will get with current policy.

"Juggernaut:" the Standardized Test

Marion Brady, *Washington Post*, February 2, 2011

Picture a huge, ancient chariot being pulled through narrow city streets, carrying a crude idol of a god. So massive is the chariot, citizens are crushed under its wooden wheels. The current education-change experiment, begun in the 1980s at the urging of corporate America, is a juggernaut. The god it carries is The Standardized Test. On board the chariot, surrounding the god and enthusiastically waving the standards and accountability banner, are the president of the United States; the secretary of education; nearly all the governors of the 50 states; the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; the Business Roundtable; the Gates, Broad, and Walton foundations; hedge fund managers; publishers of test and test prep materials; a few big-city mayors; and celebrities such as Michelle Rhee, Oprah Winfrey, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jeb Bush. The chariot riders, true believers, take it for granted that learning isn't a natural act, that it happens only under threat, and that high-stakes, standardized tests provide that necessary threat. Their money, name recognition, political power, public relations skills, and easy access to the mainstream media, are used to steadily increase the number of worshipers of the Standardized Test God.

But the chariot has stalled, so questions must be asked. And of those questions, the most important one for America is this: Can standardized tests measure "higher order" thinking skills—measure not merely memory of something read or heard, but measure student ability to infer, categorize, hypothesize, generalize, synthesize, value, create, and so on? In short, can machine-scored test questions attach useful, meaningful numbers or letter grades indicating the quality of the complex thought processes upon which our survival and success depend? Most educators say "No."

But federal education policymakers say "Yes," and have handed near-absolute power to the Standardized Test God. It's fair, then, to ask them to explain and defend their action to educators whose agreement and cooperation they need if the chariot is to move on.

Establishing a reasonable schedule for a public exchange of views on the issue is appropriate and necessary. Here's how that can be made to happen: For four days, between July 28—31, anti-standardized test educators from across America will meet in Washington, D.C. to stage a protest. At least two weeks before they arrive, the U.S. Department of Education should post ten illustrative or model questions on its website, two each for five different "higher order" thought processes of their choosing. The ten questions, when answered, will produce numbers that compare a particular test-taker's performance with that of all others answering the question dealing with that particular thinking skill. On the website, following each question, provision should be made for dialogue—for a

conversation between experienced educators and policymakers in Washington. To set wise policy, out of that dialog must come a clear answer. Can machine-scored standardized tests measure human thought processes precisely enough to allow standardized tests to shape America's future? Yes, or no?

The ten model questions posted by the USDOE should meet two criteria. First, they must be 100 % machine scoreable and reliable. This is essential, for sooner or later, taxpayers will want to know why they're paying billions of dollars to corporations to score single examples of school work (work taxpayers will rarely or never see), when those same taxpayers have already paid teachers to score a far richer and more visible stream of work? Second, each USDOE sample questions must yield a useful, meaningful score. It must say, for example, that in a practical, real-world situation—a situation familiar to the test taker—the test-taker's inference, hypothesis, generalization, value judgment or other complex thought process deserves an "8" rather than a "7," a "9," or some other score.

At a meeting I attended on Aug. 2, 2008, in Titusville, Florida, prior to his election, President Obama recognized me, asked about my more than five decades of teaching experience, and accepted my question about his future administration's openness to the input of experienced educators on matters of education policy. To his credit, he didn't promise me that such would be the case; his answer came later when, to the great disappointment of many educators, he chose the cliché-prone Arne Duncan to head the Department of Education. After the election, in a much smaller meeting with Secretary Duncan



near Orlando, Florida, my raised hand went unacknowledged, but the secretary said that, although present standardized tests were flawed and in need of major improvement, there would be more of them.

Any trace of logic in that policy escapes me. Why are billions of dollars being spent to buy and administer tests the Secretary admits are flawed? What purpose is served by numbers and rankings that yield no reliable, useful information?

I agree with the late, highly respected paleontologist, biologist and historian Stephen Jay Gould who near the end of his book, "The Mismeasure of Man," summed up what everyone who's given more than a moment's thought to the matter knows: "Human uniqueness lies in the flexibility of what our brains can do. What is intelligence, if not the ability to face problems in an unprogrammed manner?"

The situation calls for action. Now. Students, strongly supported by their teachers, parents, grandparents, and all others who care about the future of education and America, should join The Bartleby Project initiated in 2008 by John Taylor Gatto. In an afterward to his book, "Weapons of Mass Instruction," Gatto invites readers to join him in what he calls "an open conspiracy" to destroy the standardized testing industry.

If destroying the standardized testing industry sounds like an extreme action, you don't understand the problem. Gatto's argument can be accessed at: http://www.newsociety.com/titleimages/TI004012_OI001098_23.pdf

Why Waldorf Works: From a Neuroscientific Perspective

Dr. Regalena "Reggie" Melrose, Longbeach, CA, USA

Why Waldorf works has more to do with how the brain develops and functions optimally than Rudolf Steiner ever could have known. Sure the educator and founder of Waldorf Education theorized convincingly about how children learn best, but until MRIs and other sophisticated measures of the brain were developed, we had no way to prove or disprove any of Steiner's theories, not with the kind of precision and accuracy we can now. An overwhelming body of evidence from the last 20 years of neuroscientific inquiry supports Steiner's theories, including some of the most fundamental foci of Waldorf Education.

Three foci thrill me the most, both as a parent of a Waldorf student and as an international speaker on the topic of learning, behavior, and the brain: holism, play, and nature. An emphasis on all three is consistent with how the brain learns best: when the whole brain is engaged at any given moment, when its foundational neural connections have been given ample time to develop, and when it is in an optimally aroused state.

Knowing how the brain develops is essential to understanding why these three foci are so important to the success of any educational program. Let us first learn some basic fundamentals of the brain. First of all, it is "triune," that is, it has three parts. More importantly, not all three parts are fully developed at birth as we once believed. In fact, very little of a newborn's brain is "online" and "ready to go." When the brains of newborn babies are observed with an MRI, the only part of the brain that is lit up or active is the most primal part - the brain stem, sensing brain, or "animal brain," as it is also called. (Small underdeveloped parts of the auditory and visual cortices are the only exceptions.) This primal part of the brain is responsible for our experience of arousal and stress. It kicks into high gear and mediates our fight or flight response when needed. I like to call it the "sensory brain" because it only speaks the language of sensations, the only language that most consistently enables our survival. When we encounter a bear in the woods, for example, our words will not save us, but our heightened senses do.

The second and third parts of our brain - the limbic, feeling brain and the neocortex or thinking brain, respectively - only begin to develop after birth. This is critical new knowledge that provides a compelling answer to the long, highly debated question of nature versus nurture. We now know that because we only have use of a very small part of our brain at birth, the brain is literally sculpted by the experiences we have interacting with others in the environment. It is not until 3 to 4 months of age, when the feeling brain has become activated by experience that newborns are able to express more than just states of distress or contentment, as it does with only the sensory brain. At this somewhat older age, babies can share a wide range of emotions, thereby giving us a more social baby.

The third part of the brain, the neocortex, thinking brain, begins to develop after the limbic, feeling brain. Indications of this maturation include babbling between 6 and 9 months, a first word around the age of 1, and 2 to 3 words strung together by the age of 2. Whereas sensations are the language of the sensory brain and feelings are the language of the limbic brain, the neocortex speaks the language of words and mediates all of what most educators value. For example, the neocortex mediates impulse control, the ability to plan ahead, to organize, and to understand that a choice we make now may continue to have consequences later. Empathy for another is mediated by the neocortex, as are our abilities to use ration, reason, and logic. We think and analyze with our neocortex, and of course, understand and have use of both receptive and expressive verbal language. If you've heard about "right brain" versus "left brain" functioning, it will make sense to you now that it is the neocortex that controls the functions of the left hemisphere whereas the sensing and feeling parts of the brain control the functions of the right hemisphere. The brain operates optimally when all its parts

are equally developed, valued, and engaged. Why Waldorf works is because it does just that.

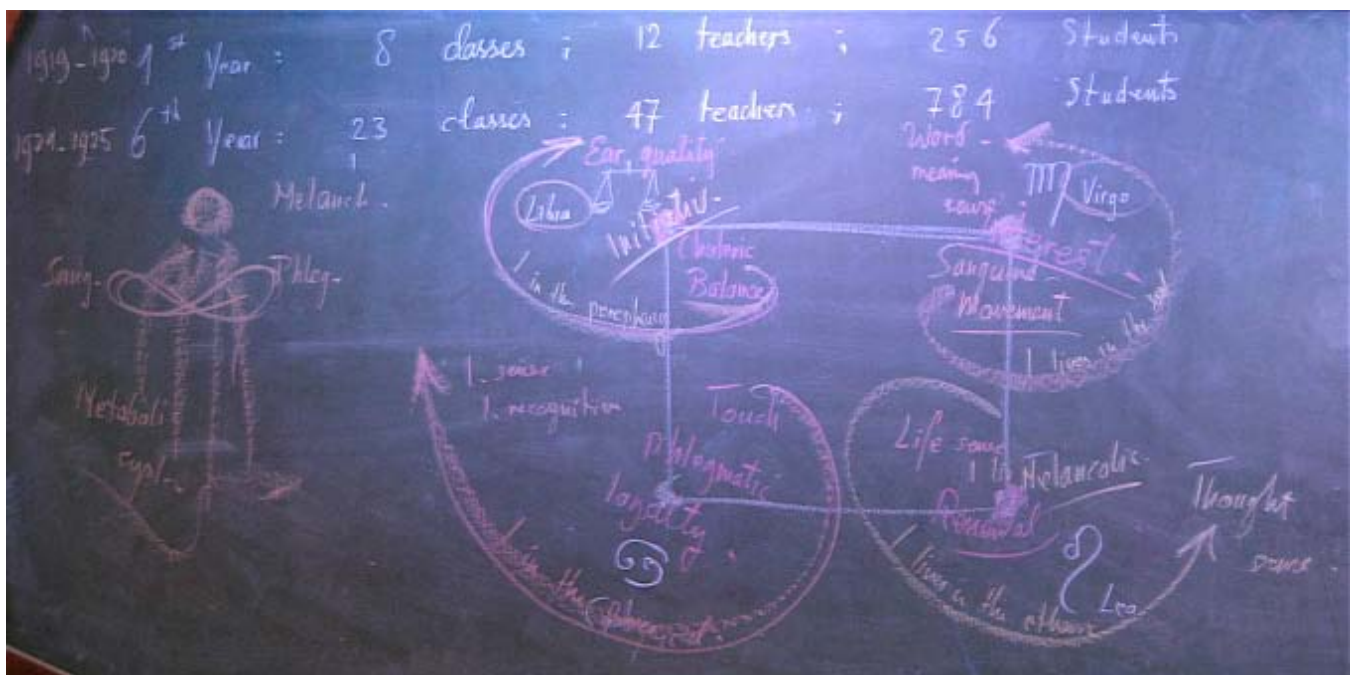
Steiner's approach to education was a holistic one. He recognized that our senses, feelings, and cognitions must all be actively engaged at each stage of development in order for students to maintain, over the long term, a joy and love of learning. Waldorf educators do not make the same mistake made by a number of other more traditional, conventional, and mainstream models of education. Waldorf educators do not overvalue the development of the neocortex and left brain to the exclusion of the right brain, that which senses and feels deeply. It does not focus at too young of an age, before the brain is ready, on purely academic endeavors that attempt with rigor to engage a part of the brain that the child has little access to, the underdeveloped neocortex. (The neocortex is not fully developed until we are in our mid- to late twenties!) Instead, what Waldorf educators do successfully is involve and nourish the sensing, feeling parts of the brain, those easily accessed by young children, so that essential foundational neural connections needed for later academic learning are solidly laid.

Let me expand: You now know that the brain develops in a hierarchical fashion from more to less primitive, from the animal to more uniquely human. What that means is that the healthy development of the more sophisticated neocortex depends upon the healthy development of the feeling, limbic brain which depends upon the healthy development of the sensory brain. The problem with today's mainstream educational models is that they want the brain to walk before it can crawl. Well, let's be accurate: Most school systems today want children to run before they can crawl. We encounter

proud parents who say, "My child was walking at 9 months! She didn't even need to crawl, just up and went! Isn't that terrific?" And what I want to say is, "No! No, that's not terrific! Push her to the floor! Make her crawl!" That might be an overzealous reaction, but it is grounded in sound knowledge that every single stage of development is essential to the next, laying a neural foundation to support what is to come. Our children need ample time and practice to "marinate in their mastery," of one skill or another, at each and every juncture of their development. This is not happening in enough schools across the country today, but it is happening at Waldorf.

Take the case of play. From the very beginning of a child's educational career at a Waldorf school, he or she is supported to play in a variety of different fashions and settings throughout the entire school day. Steiner knew that play is the invaluable foundation for any kind of healthy, human growth, including academic progress. And let's be clear about what kind of play this is. It is what Dr. David Elkind calls "the purest form of play: the unstructured, [spontaneous], self-motivated, imaginative, independent kind, where children initiate their own games and even invent their own rules." This kind of play, he warns us, is disappearing from our homes, schools, and neighborhoods at an alarming rate with great cost to the health, well-being, and achievement of our children.

Numerous studies have shown that play at every stage of development improves IQ, social-emotional functioning, learning, and academic performance. The findings of several studies conducted over a 4-year period found that spending one-third of the school day in physical education, art, and music improved not only physical fitness, but attitudes toward



Blackboard drawing by Christoph Wiechert diagraming the historical development of the Waldorf school and the four-fold nature of the human being at the Asia Waldorf Teachers Conference in Manila, Philippines. (Photo by Van James)

learning, and test scores, according to Dr. Elkind. Furthermore, when the performance of children who attended academic pre-schools was compared to the performance of children who attended play-oriented preschools, the results showed no advantage in reading and math achievement for the “academic children,” but did show that they had higher levels of test anxiety, were less creative, and had more negative attitudes toward school than did the “play children.”

This is precisely the point we are missing in today’s achievement-driven culture. We have bought into a myth in education that “more equals more.” A formula of more time spent on academics, starting earlier in development, with more homework, is not increasing the output of our children. It’s decreasing it! Cutting time out for the arts, physical activity, and time in nature, so our children can spend more time reading, writing, and doing arithmetic is not the answer. It is the culprit. Our children are burning out and dropping out at catastrophic rates not just because more doesn’t equal more, but also because it equals shut-down.

The brain functions its best only when in an optimum state of arousal. Our children cannot attend, listen, process information, retain, or perform well when in an either under- or over-aroused state. Overwhelm is what causes these states. When before the brain is ready children are exposed to and required to participate in academics, media, technology, and organized play, such as team sports, the premature and often prolonged stress they experience can eventually shut the system down. Teachers all over the United States and Canada tell me they see “it” by the beginning of third grade. In far too many of their students, they say “the light has gone out.” The joy, curiosity, and wonder that are essential to the learning process are already dulled by too much of one thing and not another. Whereas the mainstream educational system today focuses almost exclusively on academics, a mostly left brain function, Waldorf educators focus more on the whole brain, emphasizing the right hemisphere at each stage of development. Steiner could only have observed and therefore hypothesized that this keeps our children in the optimum zone of arousal where all of learning and adaptive behavior are possible. With current scientific findings, we now know he was right. Tapping into the sensory gifts of the right hemisphere provides the “flow” necessary for the marathon of achievement, not just the sprint.

Now that we’ve learned about the importance of holism and play to the learning process, let us consider the invaluable role of nature. A given within education is the engagement of the left brain. Learning almost always involves a verbal, analytical process. What is not a given, is the stimulation and expression of the right brain. The functions of the right hemisphere of the brain have somehow been deemed less important to the achievement and ultimate success of our children, at least “success” as most define it in the U. S. Our bodies are supported to move less, our minds to race more.

Cuts have been made not only to recess and physical education, but also to creative endeavors such as theater, music, and fine art, all of which make important contributions to the optimal functioning of the brain, achievement, and success no matter how you define it. What does nature have to do with it? A whole lot, according to the neuroscience: nothing stimulates and resonates with the right brain more powerfully, and therefore, nothing keeps us in the optimum zone of arousal better than nature.

Remember, the optimum zone of arousal, when anxiety is neither too high nor too low, is the only physiological state within which all of learning and adaptive behavior is possible. Nature beautifully promotes that state. According to years of research recently compiled by Dr. Eeva Karjalainen, natural green settings reduce stress, improve mood, reduce anger and aggression, increase overall happiness, and even strengthen our immune system. Nature is one critical antidote to the increases in stress, overwhelm, burnout, and dropout we are witnessing in the educational system today. Lack of exposure to nature causes such a detrimental state to the brain, and is so pervasive today we have a name for it: “Nature Deficit Disorder.” Dr. Karjalainen reports that “after stressful or concentration-demanding situations,” we do not recover nearly as well in urban settings as we do in natural ones. When we experience nature, our blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and level of stress hormones all decrease faster than when we are in urban settings. In children in particular, we know that ADHD symptoms are reduced when they are given the opportunity to play in green settings.

As a mother myself, I can’t imagine a parent on earth that doesn’t want all of these benefits and more for their children. I can’t imagine that once parents and educators know the research findings pointing the way to optimal brain functioning, that any of us would ever agree to the kind of educational system we have now. The alternative of Waldorf exists, and I am grateful. I urge every parent to learn more about it and strongly consider it for their children. I am also aware, however, that not every parent has access to a Waldorf school for financial, geographical, or other reasons. For those parents and all of us really, I have an additional urging, that we vote, petition, write letters, make calls, and fight however we can to ensure that the reform about to take place in the current educational system be founded on the invaluable neuroscientific findings of the last 20 years. We must demand changes that are backed by sound science, based on how we know the brain works best, not just in the short-term, but for all the years to come.

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Should Commercial Influences Have a Place in Preschool Classrooms?

Pualani Ramos, Kailua, Hawai'i

When involved in the educational process, one has to ask: For what are we preparing the children through this educational process? In my Waldorf classroom, I am preparing my students for life—the life they are experiencing as preschoolers and the life they will continue to live as students, adults, and finally, elders.

The first thing people usually notice about the classroom is the beautiful environment—the gently tinted walls, soft curtains blowing in the breeze, wooden toys, handmade dolls, the gardens—the quiet peacefulness. Then there are the arts and crafts—wet on wet watercolor painting, sewing with 100% wool felt which is so delightful to touch, modeling with handmade play dough and beeswax. And of course signs of the festivals—the lovely little box of homemade cookies for Valentine's Day, the beautiful hand sewn book made from a child's painting for St. Patrick's Day, the potluck lunch with barley soup and dragon bread for St. Michael, the handmade lanterns and lantern walk on the beach for St. Martin's, the uniquely inspiring and spiritual Advent Garden at Christmas time and the lively festive May Day celebration in the spring. Most parents are impressed by the quality of “circle” activities—songs sung without recorded music by teachers who know how to sing and the folk tales told so artfully, learned by heart in the tradition of the “story teller.” This attention to quality extends to the organic snack freshly made each day and served family style.

As pleasing as the outward appearances of the Waldorf program are, they are not to be mistaken for the curriculum itself. The Waldorf curriculum is experiential. All outward activities support what

is actually happening inside the child.

So, why are Bert and Ernie of Sesame Street asked to stay home? How does commercialism impact the child's inner experience? Why is commercialism banned from the Waldorf classroom? Commercialism includes selling things to consumers. Commercials, or advertisements, teach children (and adults) to buy while avoiding

any thoughts of “Why would I want this?” or “Do I need this?”

As we all know, young children are imitative and imaginative, but not highly intellectual in the analytical way that adults are. Children lack discernment. If we are to provide the best learning environment for young children, we, the adults, must pre-select what we want our children to experience. Yes, children do need choices and in the Waldorf pre-school we offer many wholesome choices. Still, we believe that commercialism has no place in our educational environment. In fact try to keep our beautiful environment free from the detrimental effects of commercialism. We seek to present an environment with a culturally universal, folk soul theme, so that children can experience their childhood as just that—childhood, a time to explore who they are as human beings in the broadest sense and a time to develop their will forces in a positive way, so they can proceed to kindergarten and grade school as healthy, experiential learners.

Let us compare the attributes of a commercial “Ernie” doll with the qualities of a non-commercial, universal “folk” doll used in the Waldorf preschool. First, there are the materials used to make the dolls. The Ernie doll is made with synthetics and plastic, the Waldorf doll is made with all natural materials: cotton and wool. Then there is the method of manufacture: the Waldorf doll is made by hand, most likely by the child's teacher or by a parent volunteer. The Ernie doll was probably made in a third world country, in unregulated circumstances, as cheaply as possible, so that the manufacturer who is selling it in the west, can apply the largest mark up and will reap the greatest profit. Ernie's expression is fixed, frozen in plastic. The Waldorf doll has no expression on her face, so the child can project his or her own feelings onto the doll's face. The doll might be happy, sad, asleep, awake, in whatever the child's creative play dictates.

“But public television is educational,” one might argue, “Ernie is a good guy who teaches good values.” Public television is educational. I watch it myself. But let us go back to the beginning premise of the needs of a young child: a wholesome, universal folk soul, environment. Yes, Ernie is teaching values, but Ernie is only a face on a screen. Children learn best in the realm of the real, three-dimensional world, not the screen. Children learn through movement, imitation, and through sensing reality, not virtual images on screens. Their brains need the stimulation of movement and touch, in order to develop properly. Brain development in the early years focuses largely on the growth of the corpus collosum, which connects the right and left sides of the brain and the myelination of nerve pathways in the brain. This healthy development depends on movement of the whole body and though sense development of the whole body. Sitting and looking at the screen lacks these essentials. One might also notice that Ernie has no lips, he is a puppet. I have observed children who spend excessive time watching TV with a condition I call “TV talk.” These children have trouble with pronunciation and putting words together in a meaningful way. It's not that they are unable to pronounce



Floral motifs on interior passage walls of the Forbidden City, Beijing, China. (Photos by Van James)

words properly or to use grammatically correct speech, they are just not in the habit of speaking that way. Their teacher was Ernie, the guy with no lips, who talks in a stylized way like a puppet.

Children do imitate what they see, so if they come to school with the latest Sesame Street vignette in their heads, they will want to imitate it in its entirety and just as Ernie's plastic expression on his face doesn't allow the child room for her own thoughts about what her doll might be, so too the fixed scenes from television and movies do not allow the children to create their own themes. When children bring commercial ideas to school, their free play time is spent arguing about exactly what Bert and Ernie said, instead of creating their own games and play from their own impulses.

As for the purely "educational value" of Sesame Street, i.e., teaching letters and numbers, Jane Healy, Ph.D., in her book, *Endangered Minds, Why Our Children Don't Think*, addresses that topic in the chapter, "Sesame Street and the Death of Reading." If you've been following the ideas I've put forth here, you can probably guess what some of her arguments against the educational value of Sesame Street might be. I highly recommend reading this book.

Finally, one might argue that Sesame Street has some good songs. It does, but a song sung by Ernie on TV isn't nearly as meaningful to a child as one sung to her while holding her in your arms. And when parents do sing, I encourage them to include folk songs in their repertoire. At school, we sing seasonal songs and songs about birds and animals. We sing our blessings before and after the meal and before and after story. We sing about love and gardening. We bless our room and each other.

So, as entertaining as Ernie might be, Ernie cannot come to my preschool. We have no place for him at school. Parents might want to ask themselves if he has a place in their homes. Characters from stories serve the purpose of showing examples from an imaginary life and that's where they should stay: in our imaginations and for the children, in their imaginative play. Story characters can enrich a child's life, but when they are marketing tools made into cultural icons, we, as a society have over done it. When we allow TV and movie characters to populate our landscapes, both physical and imaginative, in such a pervasive way, we have abdicated our power of imagination and given it over to the commercial world. We are letting Disney and Sesame Street do the thinking and playing for our children.



For what am I educating the children at Na Pualani Preschool? I am educating them for life. One of the teachers who trained me to teach said that if a child could have only one year of Waldorf education, it should be a year in the preschool/kindergarten.

It is my hope that the values, the stories, the songs, the rhymes, the crafts, the blessings, the festivals, the reverence for the earth and all beings, the self respect and respect for others and last but not least, the joy and love of life, are things that my students will take with them as they live their lives. I hope that their preschool years will provide them and their families with many happy memories to recall. And someday, when they are parents, and even grandparents, I hope they will sing the songs and tell the stories they learned, to their own children.

Schools of the Future Conference

Van James, Honolulu, Hawai'i

The Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools, together with the Hawai'i Community Foundation, hosted a conference on October 14, 2010, in Honolulu, with keynote speaker Sir Ken Robinson. The conference was attended by well over a thousand participants, mostly private school teachers, and was video-cast to two independent school campuses. There were breakout sessions with titles such as: Mobile Technologies in the Classroom; Igniting Teacher Collaboration through Project Tuning; Growing a Garden of Learning Communities; Foundations of Change: Using Protocols to Develop Learning Communities in Support of Project-Based Learning; Assessing 21st Century Learning with Electronic Portfolios, and Zombies or Wizards.

Sir Ken Robinson, Ph.D., is an internationally recognized leader in the development of creativity, innovation and human resources. He has worked with governments in Europe, Asia and the USA, with international agencies, Fortune 500 companies, and some of the world's leading cultural organizations. In 1998, he led a national commission on creativity, education and the economy for the United Kingdom government, and he was the central figure in developing a strategy for creative and economic development as part of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland. For twelve years, he was Professor of Education at the University of Warwick in the UK and is now Professor Emeritus. He has received honorary degrees and a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his services to the arts. Robinson is author of *The Element: How Finding your Passion Changes Everything*, *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*, *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, and *Unlocking Creativity: A Strategy for Development*, as well as numerous articles and videos on the importance of art, creativity and imagination in education. He speaks to audiences throughout the world on the creative challenges facing business and education in the new global economies. www.sirkenrobinson.com



Dr. Michaela Glockler lecturing at the Kolisko Conference held at the Honolulu Waldorf School in February 2010. (Photo by Van James)

During his conference address Robinson mentioned how in a conversation with a distinguished professor of mathematics he asked what determines the awarding of a Ph.D. degree in higher mathematics today. He was told two things are required: originality, because the work must be new within the context of its particular field of research, and aesthetics, because if the work is “beautiful” it is more likely to be true. Originality and aesthetics are not usually associated with mathematics but this is exactly what Robinson’s underlying theme of a complete revolution in education is all about—turning things upside down. As he states in his recent book *The Element*: “The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn’t need to be reformed—it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education but to personalize it...”

Robinson also pointed out that of the three processes in education—curriculum (what is to be learned), pedagogy (how it is taught), and assessment (evaluation of what has been learned)—most policy makers only focus on improving curriculum and assessment, leaving aside the central role of the teacher and the method of educating. He says that when you take all the non-essentials out of education, when you get down to the basic components of education, you are left with the student and the teacher. This is simply what education is really all about—the teacher and the pupil. No textbooks, standardized tests, or other tech support are necessary. This observation is particularly striking because it would indicate that greater attention and understanding should be directed toward this special dynamic between instructor and learner—the

developmental stages of the human being, teacher education, and various instructional methodologies. It would seem that utmost in importance would be the need for understanding how children learn through direct contact with a teacher.

Earlier this year the Honolulu Waldorf School and the Anthroposophical Society in Hawai‘i co-sponsored an International Kolisko Conference which brought together medical professionals and educators to work on questions of this very nature: how does the child learn today. Just over a hundred participants gathered for this conference and it wasn’t broadcast to any other schools. (There were no large video screens to divert attention away from the actual speaker and toward a projected image of that speaker.) The rich, in-depth study of child development and the useful, hands-on workshops were the kind of material that would benefit any teacher dedicated to meaningful, transformational education practices.

The one-day, Schools of the Future Conference was actually part of a five year, five million dollar project to help Hawai‘i schools transform their curricula for the future, in the sense envisioned by Sir Ken Robinson. In order to move out of an antiquated, industrial age education of the present a multi-million dollar project has been set in motion. One trusts that with the guidance of the knowledgeable directors of the Hawai‘i Community Foundation and the Hawai‘i Association of Independent Schools, both former Waldorf parents, a vision parallel to that expressed by Robinson will be possible.

At a time when the technologies industries are realizing the huge potential for educational marketing one wonders if this may sidetrack the obvious need for teacher development,

and quality teacher/student relationship building. The question arises, will these technologies truly help to illuminate the teacher/student interaction? Or will the computer technologies that are being purchased to replace textbooks throughout the country simply substitute one industry for another and need to be overcome in the next generation?

One wonders how the Waldorf schools' child-centered approach can become more visible within the market trend toward "smart-tools" for teachers and students. The inner development of the teacher is not as marketable as a Prometheus smart-board or an online resource center. As consumers we often feel we need a product rather than an inner capacity in order to help us progress. One wonders how much Robinson knows about the Waldorf educational approach—certainly something. Certainly Waldorf schools do not have all the answers concerning what schools of the future can be, but many of the problems that hold back traditional education have, at least in some cases, long since been addressed by Steiner's ideas in practice. The Waldorf-Steiner movement stands ready to contribute to the larger educational challenges of our time—challenges such as when and where is it appropriate to introduce technologies that clearly separate the child from the teacher, separate learning from human interaction. As I understood Sir Ken Robinson, schools of the future will seek to enhance the fundamental dynamic of education and promote the student/teacher relationship. This is the fundamental experience of self discovery and recognition of the "self" of the other.

Putting Art in the Heart of Teaching: Visual Arts Workshops for Teachers in the Philippines

Rinna Soriano, Quezon City, Philippines

No public announcement of Van James's Manila workshop "The Role of Art in Waldorf Education – The Importance of Drawing and Painting in Kindergarten to Grade 8" was necessary for slots to fill up quickly. The teachers of the Waldorf schools in Manila (Manila Waldorf School, Kolisko Waldorf School) and Acacia Waldorf school in the outskirts of Manila and some therapists had quickly taken all of the 30 slots available for the course which was a first attempt by Van to offer a 2-week art training curriculum for Waldorf teachers in 4 days. Many others had to take an hour's flight south to Iloilo City where another workshop was organized by Gamot Cogon Institute. I was advised through the grapevine that there might be more slots available there than in Manila. But, no. The workshop was absolutely full, bursting to the seams. In Iloilo, another big

group of participants gathered for, another first attempt by Van which was to offer the course in 2 days! There was a growing waiting list for those who still wanted to be accommodated in Iloilo. Eventually, all who wanted were able to do the course.

As I waited to board my flight from Manila to Iloilo, I thought of how, since I crossed paths with bio-dynamic farming in Iloilo 13 years earlier in 1997, anthroposophical initiatives in the Philippines had grown not just in number but in the variety of fields and the diversity of people involved. The two workshops full to the brim with people traveling from all over the country to Iloilo offered a wonderful picture of how anthroposophical work in the Philippines has found fertile soil on which to break ground and bear fruit. There are now Waldorf schools and related initiatives in each of the main regions of the Philippines – Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao. There are bio-dynamic farms producing food crops (rice, vegetables, sugar, fruits), ornamental flowers, and herbs. There was even once a golf course which reduced its water consumption by almost half when the greens were treated with bio-dynamic preparations. (I understand the municipality's water department had to pay a visit to make sure the water meter was not being tampered with!) Then there is the art therapy (several stroke patients, my father included, have benefited from art therapy sessions and have even had painting exhibits and cards of their paintings printed--very well received this Christmas) and biographical counseling training as well as a Masters course in Steiner Education with St. Scholastica's College, a Catholic university, and the site of the Kolisko Conference back



in 2006. Teacher training programs organized by Rudolf Steiner Education Philippines (RStEP) continues to provide opportunities for continuing education and development of the teachers and introducing Waldorf Education to more people in the Philippines. There are individual initiatives as well, bridging anthroposophical work, for instance, to mainstream and public education through teacher training workshops sharing aspects of Waldorf Education such as artistry in teaching, storytelling and puppetry, music, etc. There are economic initiatives as well such as a wooden



The Role of Art in Waldorf Education Workshop in Iloilo, Philippines, with Van James. (Photos by Rinna Soriano.)

toy business, doll-making, and merchandising art materials.

With the flourishing of anthroposophical work, however, specifically Waldorf Education, there remained a thirst for the artistic development. Teachers, parents, grandparents, therapists, doctors, artists, community workers -- essentially teachers as well in their own fields of concern and interest -- recognized the need for developing artistic skills for themselves to be effective with their work with children, adults, their communities, their environment. The interest was definitely there. It was in this direction, to build confidence and affirmation for the artist in oneself, that was just waiting to be tapped and where Van's help was needed. And this he did masterfully by leading the participants, step by step, in creating paintings and drawings, helping them tremendously in being comfortable using the different art materials and in appreciating the process as well as the results. The "worst" results still qualified to be as "bad as a Picasso." One participant shared with me how her fears of painting and drawing were allayed after the workshop. She flew back to Manila armed with this new confidence and a bag of many artistic skills she now had to develop on her own -- drawing, painting, form drawing, portrait drawing, black & white drawing, etc. Most of us were awed by the sheer amount of artistic work that we were able to do in two days. One wondered how much more there was to learn.

Van James started the two-day course lying on his back on a table and kicking his long legs and waving his long arms in the air, like what an infant would do, and walked us through the journey of kindergarten and grade school and even a bit of high school when, hopefully, a child would be standing upright, ready to embark on the path of his or her own destiny. Van said it was difficult for him deciding whether he should actually reveal to us what we were still missing out on. One can just imagine what a full artistic training can offer for one preparing to become a teacher. But, alas, it is getting more and more financially prohibitive for teachers to be able to get this kind of training and so more and more traveling training courses such as what Van offers is one way to still help build this very crucial foundation for Waldorf Education and anthroposophical work.

In the St. Clements Retreat House in Iloilo City where Van's workshop was held, there were two images that somehow connected with the work that we were all gathered there to do, and that was to help harness the heart forces we needed to infuse our teaching with. These images were not meant as material for the course. They were just there. One image was that of the crucified Christ, hanging on the wall behind the blackboard where Van made his drawings. The picture was only partially seen, with the upper body of Christ -- his hands nailed to the cross, his arms hanging, pointing towards the heavens. It was as if the chest region of the heart was cropped as a backdrop against which the workshop was set as a relief, reminding us of how education over the past half century has deprived human hearts of the nourishment it needed. We were training how to make our lessons more aesthetic -- a heightened experience of beauty -- for the children and everyone concerned. The other picture was in the dining hall. It was a reproduction of Salvador Dali's "Last Supper." The painting also shows the chest region of the heart, arms outstretched, this time towards the direction of the earth. "God geometrizes," was one of the powerful thoughts that I brought home from Iloilo. A quick internet search on Dali's painting led to his statement that this painting was an "arithmetic and philosophical cosmogony... the pentagon contains microcosmic man: Christ." Thus, the same theme that was with us as we nourished our selves with the soul food that Van shared in the workshop followed us into the dining room as we broke bread together to feed our bodies.

We had to put up with quite difficult conditions of humidity combined with terrible noise pollution during the day and even way into the night from loud speakers blasting pop music to celebrate the victory of local politicians. Still, I think everyone went home with their hearts full and hopes high, that if we put art into the heart of teaching we will be able to bear witness to the children in our care that "with all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams... it is still a beautiful world."

The Artbeat Initiative in Singapore

Linda Hall, Singapore

I came from Australia to live in Singapore in 2004, having been an itinerant teacher here since 2002, traveling back and forth to teach anthroposophically-inspired Artistic Counselling at a Buddhist Education Center. Many of the students of this course were engaged as volunteers working out of the Center's outreach programs and wanting to improve their people-helping skills while at the same time learning personal development activities using artistic practice. Most, if not all of these adults had never encountered Anthroposophy before, but the response was very warm indeed. I have maintained close connection with many ever since and they have referred people and organizations to Artbeat. Such openness to Anthroposophy by local people is a particularly fulfilling aspect of my work. I have always had a picture of my work as 'bridge-building,' a motif mirrored by having been born on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, but I have never felt it as strongly as I do here, working with people from such diverse backgrounds.

Having made a connection with this Buddhist community plus the local Waldorf School (Kindergarten) community, I was inspired to bring my work to Singapore full time. My 'international soul' was very drawn to the mix of people of so many races, cultures, religions and histories, having suffered the confinements of growing up Caucasian in the nineteen fifties in a very segregated society in Australia where Asians were still largely viewed as the Yellow Peril. My vision in coming here was to nourish my soul amongst peoples from the many lands that are represented here while facilitating local Singaporeans and expatriates in their encounter with

Anthroposophy via my work. The ready form was through my work as a Psychophonetics practitioner working out of Psychosophy, but soon my feeling for working with children and their parents and teachers became equally insistent, and it was this that gave birth to Artbeat.

Within a short time, through a meeting at the Buddhist Center, I was gifted with a 'partner' in this vision: Jumiati Nurawan, Indonesian-born Chinese, but long residing in Singapore since her studies in the United States. Her being part of Singapore and yet apart from Singapore gives her a particular perspective and insights. Although new to Anthroposophy, as a mother and as a would-be educator Jumi felt very inspired by this approach to child development, education, and art. Jumi came on board as my trainee Play Group assistant and has made that work her ongoing experiential inspiration for the Master of Psychology (Artistic Counselling), which she is about to complete. Jumi has been taking her insights into her home and her community and finding it to be a great antidote to the devastating effects of the workings of materialism on life here, especially in how it has formed education and parenting. This is a picture given by many local parents and teachers who have shared their concerns with me over the years. They have all expressed in their diverse ways, a common concern for the seemingly overwhelming challenges to the childhood of the children in their care. This concern is magnified when the child in question is a child with Special Needs.

Jumi and I started up two small Waldorf-inspired Play Groups for pre-schoolers and kindergarten-age children in the same premises where I lived and within a short time we had a regular group of six to eight children attending. These first groups were child-only sessions of two hours each week. The children were a mix of local Chinese and Indians as

well as expatriate children from European and Asian countries. Over the next two years many, many children passed through these Play Groups and the growing number of holiday play groups and private artistic sessions that parents increasingly requested. There were children of Chinese, Indian, Spanish, Japanese, French, Italian, Korean, British, Russian, American and many other nationalities, and we celebrated all of the festivals that make Singapore a city of constant festivity: Chinese New year, the Malay festivals of Hari Raya Haji and Hari Raya Puasa, Christmas and Easter, the Buddhist Vesak Day, and the main Hindu festivals, such as Deepavali.

Some parents, in particular the local parents, had their first introduction to Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy via our play-groups. Some of these children grew up from



Teachers show 5th grade paintings done at the AWTC in Manila, 2009.

being little toddlers in our Play Groups and went on to enroll in the Waldorf Kindergarten. From the outset it has been Artbeat's wish to provide a living example of Waldorf-inspired education applied to a Play Group, not only for the benefit of the children but for the direct experience of the parents: a living parenting education rather than abstract theory. Here they get to observe me applying Creative Discipline, they get to do the artistic activities themselves alongside their child, and they get to see the benefits of free play. The latter is perhaps one of the least Singaporean things we provide. In Singapore, as in many countries now, free play, (play without direct, prescribed, academic and didactic intention regarding measurable outcomes), is considered at best a waste of time and money, and even a danger to the child's assumed needs for discipline and productivity. Milk powder companies run most of the parenting seminars and baby-milk itself is vastly advertised as the key to early childhood learning success and later academic (hence financial) survival or superiority. A minority of mothers breast-feed and elective caesarian dominates the birthing statistics. In such an atmosphere free play is considered by many to be absurd and even subversive.

When we moved premises into the current upstairs, walk-up flat, above shop houses in a busy, historical shopping precinct, many of the original children came along with us, for the older children's Play Group and for the various art and play classes, however the ongoing weekly Play Group itself became a Parent & Child Play Group. With a maximum number of six children, this Play Group has seen about three groups of children and their mothers move through over the last two years, and recently the first attendance by a few children with autism.

In the last six months Artbeat has become known for its inclusivity of children with autism, both in the regular Play Group and for private Play and Art Therapy sessions. We are currently exploring facilitating the setting-up of a distinct Play Group for autistic children that will also be open to other children as well. This Play Group will happen off-premises, perhaps in the home of the parents of an autistic child or eventually in other specifically rented premises.

Artbeat offers an introductory course for parents, in anthroposophy, child development, creative discipline, play and art, special needs and so on, in order to empower them to support their children in salutogenic and curative methods and perhaps to be able to eventually facilitate such Play Groups themselves. Artbeat is dedicated to mentoring this vision and sees the possibility of more such Play Groups evolving in Singapore.

Despite being small in geographical size, this 'Little Red Dot', as Singapore is both lovingly and disparagingly referred to, (in reference to how it appears on a world map), manages to attract anthroposophical mentors and teachers from Dornach, Australia, the United States and elsewhere, in particular due to the efforts of the school. The Waldorf teacher training

in Bangkok sees a growing contingent arrive from Singapore for every term. There is also a substantial Indian community here which has direct links with the anthroposophical community in India. I am very glad to see that these exchanges seem to be increasing in frequency as well as in the number of people registering for the various workshops on offer from the visiting teachers.

I observe that there is much coming and going of expats living here and working for the Waldorf impulse, which makes the development of initiatives challenging at times. However, with the existing foundation of the Waldorf Kindergarten here, and its vision of building a Primary School, and with the growing dedication of local people here who will not be moving away, I can see a real chance for Singapore to become an anthroposophical and Waldorf inspiration in south east Asia.

It is my feeling that if these initiatives keep receiving enough mentoring and teaching support they will thrive. It is my experience that the people here are so profoundly grateful for what people in other parts of the Anthroposophical world can almost take for granted: a painting class, a clay workshop, an 'Introduction to Anthroposophy' class, a manikin-making workshop, a Story Telling weekend. Artbeat will continue to serve the community here in any way that it can, supported by Jumi and others who will come on board. Artbeat was born here and nurtured here and finds its friends profoundly supportive of its work. Thank you Singapore!



An ancient Asian artistic theme that is still vital today is the mandala.



The arts in various Asian Waldorf teacher training settings: Japan, China, Thailand and the Philippines.



Every knot reveals a star--a form drawing exercise.

Upcoming:

International Art Retreat--October 14-19, 2011 in the Philippines

The Transformative Power of Art: Drawing the Evolution of Consciousness

with Van James

This course will explore some of the historical developments in art from the point of view of the evolution of consciousness and an Anthroposophical understanding of the human being. This study will be approached by way of practical studio sessions aided by illustrated lectures and demonstrations. All art work will be carried out in pastels on paper. Eurythmy and music will also be a part of the retreat which will take place in the country, room and meals included. Contact: isipphilippines.multiply.com

Eugene Schwartz will be presenting the first-ever online course about Rudolf Steiner in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of this spiritual leader.

In March--contact: <http://iwaldorf.com/online/steiner.html>.

Working Quiet Magic

Michael Burton

After the heart has seen true, it must not stop at that.
The thing it sees is like some creature under an enchantment.
The heart knows what to do to lift the spell.

Love gave you eyes to see what others could not see.
That others come to see it too,
your will must work quiet magic on the thing you love.

This quiet magic is the force that guides all growth.
No thing of beauty flourishes without its care.
You must become a gardener in the realm of soul.

The work of Angels has been handed over to you.
You make slow progress, for to love in this sense is an art.
But all of Nature holds its breath and hopes that you will learn.

News

Rudolf Steiner 150-Year Anniversary

The Vernissage Media Group in Heidelberg, which has published the Vernissage travel and cultural magazines for 15 years, has recently published a Rudolf Steiner 150-Year Anniversary (Jubilee Year) issue for 2011. These magazines are sold in museum shops, railway stations, and bookstores all over Europe. The English language version is online at: <http://rudolf-steiner-2011.com/vernissage.html>

Various biographies marking Rudolf Steiner's 150th anniversary have now been published:

One by the educationalist Heiner Ullrich, who traces Steiner's life and teachings with "the greatest possible fairness," and one by Helmut Zander, subtitled "The Biography," in which he takes the approach of proving that Steiner's entire life was marked by falseness. Both books contain details from Steiner's life and environment that would also interest insiders. In the case of Zander this includes Steiner's illness and the circumstances surrounding his death, which have never been researched and published in such detail. However, Zander's cynical comments are most regrettable.

ELIANT surpassed the goal of one million signatures on December 13, 2010, when the count rose to 1,003,653. Now it is hoped that the financial side of the effort will succeed too. Donation – however small-- are welcome. Contact: <http://www.eliant.eu/new/lang/en/>

The Swiss government has decided that anthroposophic Medicine, together with other complementary methods of treatment, will be covered by Swiss health insurance companies from 2012 to 2017 in response to a referendum. During that time the usefulness of anthroposophic treatment and the situation in general will be re-evaluated.

Dreiseitl appointed Loeb Fellow at Harvard University

Herbert Dreiseitl was appointed as a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University (Graduate School of Design) and has been working there since the end of August. He is one of the few non-U.S. citizens ever appointed as a Loeb Fellow. A Waldorf graduate working out of Anthroposophy, Dreiseitl is famous worldwide for his innovative artistic landscape and urban planning projects, especially concerning water management features. Working out of a water-flow research background and a social-environmental sculpture approach, Dreiseitl combines artistic design with environmental planning, especially in relation to water quality issues. He has a staff of sixty people in his German firm and has done at least one project in the U.S. (in Portland, OR). At Harvard he is researching the history of water and society, among other things.

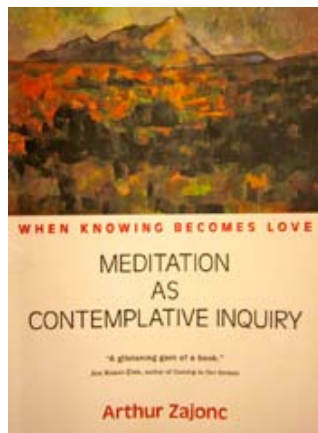
David Adams

Book Review

Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love

Arthur Zajonc

Lindisfarne Books, 2009



“A glistening gem of a book,” one reviewer called this deeply fulfilling and greatly appreciated work by professor of physics and interdisciplinary studies Arthur Zajonc. Extremely accessible this book provides practical exercises in meditation based on a contemporary western approach to inner development. This is an Anthroposophical presentation without any anthro-speak or terminology that requires years of reading Rudolf Steiner. Dr. Zajonc has succeeded in putting together a greatly needed introduction to this field of study/practice that is required for a truly healthy and balanced humanity to unfold.--Ed

“An outstanding contribution to addressing a root issue of our time: How to integrate the quest for scientific clarity, contemplative awakening, and improved personal practices in a way that is clear, integrates Eastern and Western wisdom traditions, and offers readers practical methods and tools. It is highly recommended for everyone who wants to deepen their personal foundations for profound change and presencing-based leadership.” --Otto Scharmer, MIT. Author of *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*

“In this beautifully written book, Arthur Zajonc, a seasoned meditator in the anthroposophical tradition, offers gentle and wise guidance on the path of contemplative inquiry. Drawing both on the writings of Rudolf Steiner and on the world’s spiritual traditions, he presents universal truths that are relevant to all contemplative paths, East and West. With a rare combination of scientific rigor, poetic appreciation, and spiritual insight,

Contemplative Inquiry will enrich the lives of all those who read it and even more so those who put its wise counsel into practice.”

--B. Allan Wallace, author of *The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind*

“The great turn needed to reverse problems like climate change and the growing gap between rich and poor is non other than the one that we can accomplish in our own ways of thinking and living together. I believe much of the discouragement and fear that pervades our world today comes from not seeing this connection between the outer circumstances of our world and our inner landscape. Once we have seen it, however, our core work becomes clear. We must bring our outer and inner change strategies into ever greater alignment. Arthur Zajonc is one of our best guides in the new art of traversing the narrowing gulf between science, consciousness, and social change. This beautiful book embodies the best in his writing. He gives us simple and clear expositions of subtle concepts, touching evocations of timeless insights, and, above all meditative exercises that each of us can start practicing whenever we are ready.” --Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*

“A profound and masterful exposition of the calling, challenges, and above all, the immediate and the harder-to-extract-but-worth-it gifts of meditative inquiry. Disciplining our unruly minds with marvelous exercises in attention and appreciation that use all the senses and intelligences available to us, Arthur Zajonc employs his great skill as a teacher, his loving prose, and his razor-sharp intellect to guide us in the experience of a compassionate practice of knowing. Following his path, we can develop and bring to the fore the full dimensionality of our humanness, for ourselves and for others. A glistening gem of a book.” --Jon Kabat-Zinn, author of *Coming to Our Senses and Arriving at Your Own Door*

Links to Arthur Zajonc interviews:

[Schumacher Lecture: Bringing a New Consciousness to our Technological Future \(Podcast, 1997\)](#)

[NPR Interview on Speaking of Faith \(Podcast June 2010\)](#)

[David Cayley CBC Interview \(Podcast, 2009\)](#)

[Scharmer interview with Arthur Zajonc](#)

[On Contemplative Pedagogy with Teaching, Learning and Everything Else...](#)

[Ways of Knowing interview with Arthur Zajonc](#)



Journal for Waldorf/Rudolf Steiner Education

Orders- please email Neil Carter: waldorf@clear.net.nz to receive back copies or to become a subscriber. Cost: NZ\$10.00 each plus postage and packing. Discounts for bulk orders. Invoice sent with the delivery.



**The Anthroposophical Society
in Hawaii
IN MANOA VALLEY
2514 ALAULA WAY**

**Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of
Rudolf Steiner's birth 1861-2011**

Lecture series on Rudolf Steiner's contribution to consciously deepening the inner life, contemplation as a path of development.

**The Contrast Between Eastern &
Western Paths of Inner Development
In the Light of Anthroposophy**

Presentation by Van James & Florian Sydow
Saturday, February 12th, 7:30 pm

**Meditative Rhythms in Daily
Contemplation**

Presentation by Van James & Florian Sydow
Saturday, March 19th, 7:30 pm

**In Support of Meditation:
The Basic Exercises**

Presentation by Van James & Florian Sydow
Saturday, April 9th, 7:30pm

**Living into the Rhythm of the year,
Calendar of the Soul**

Presentation by Van James & Florian Sydow
Sat, May 14th, 7:30pm

Further lectures in this series will be announced at a later date.





Adam Kadmon – Chalk Board Drawing by Rudolf Steiner (September 30, 1922)

Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's Birth
Sunday, February 27th 2011

Rudolf Steiner and His Mission

a lecture by Hans-Joachim Mattke

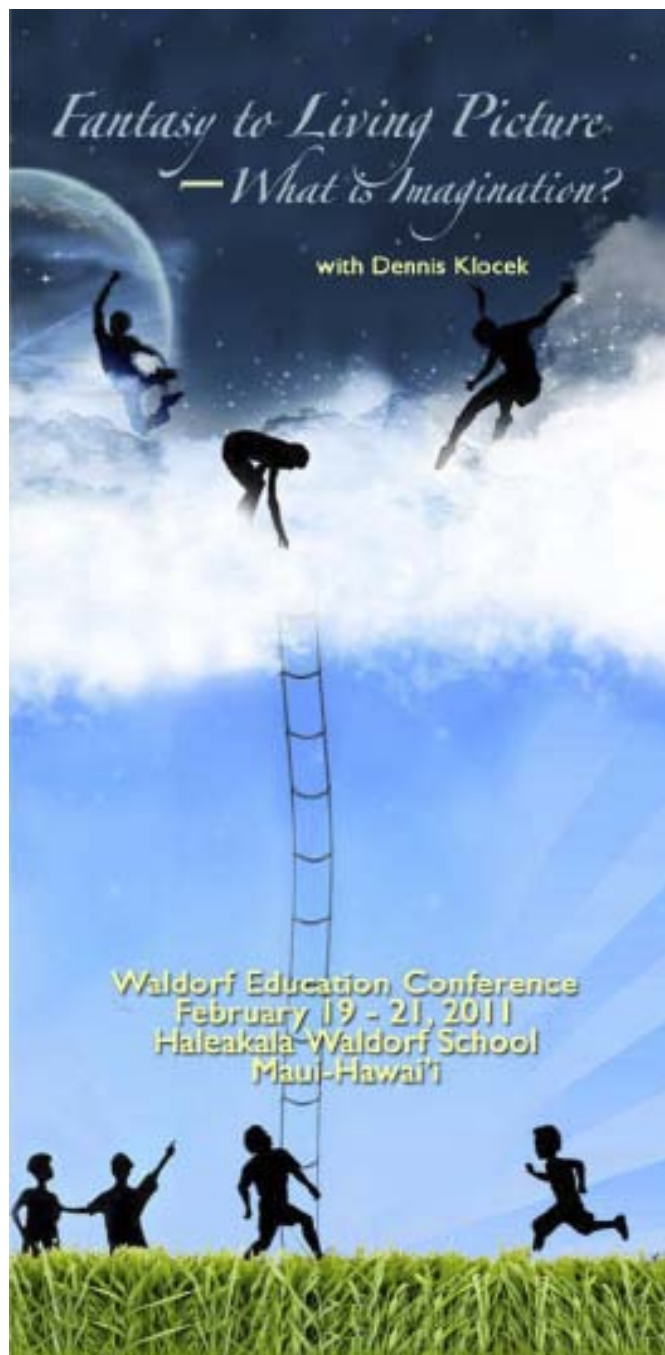
6:30 pm potluck pupus/dessert followed by the talk

Hans-Joachim Mattke is an internationally known educator,
Waldorf school mentor, editor and author.



Rudolf Steiner, 1908





Dennis Klocek

Dennis Klocek is an artist, scientist, teacher, researcher, gardener, and alchemist, who has been the director of the Consciousness Studies Program ("Goethean Studies") at Rudolf Steiner College since 1992. He also travels widely giving frequent workshops on many themes in many communities. Dennis is the founder of Coros Institute, a not-for-profit organization that sponsors dialogues focused on how meditative life impacts one's work in the world such as prison outreach, serving underserved populations, spiritual practice and business practice, California watershed policies, and spiritual activism. Dennis is also the founder of the for-profit organization ClimaTrends which provides long range weather forecasts for agricultural interests.

Dennis has written eight books with a new book just about to be published by Steinerbooks called *Climate: Soul of the Earth*. The book is a compilation of thirty years of weather research linking planetary movements to climate patterns.

Dennis has three grown sons all involved in either graphics or film animation and his wife Barbara is a master kindergarten teacher at the Sacramento Waldorf School.

This conference is the first in a three year cycle:

1st year: Teaching as an Imaginative Art, Maui, 2011

To develop a creative approach to teaching requires that an imaginative faculty be developed that is precise and fluid at the same time. The imagination used in creative work is developed when everyday memory is consciously transformed into a more dynamic state. In this conference the stages of development from memory to imagination will be presented through lectures, exercises and group work.

2nd year: Using imagination as a tool to prevent burnout, Honolulu, 2012

The keynotes for this conference will be four lectures on the theme of how to avoid burnout when dealing with the demands of curriculum, students, colleagues and parents.

3rd year: Imagination is a tool for healing, Maui 2013

A trained imagination is an effective tool for doing inner work when a person wishes to initiate a healing process. To train the inner eye there are several exercises that are very useful. A series of lectures devoted to such training is the focus of the third conference in this series on Imagination in teaching given by Dennis Klocek.

Fantasy to Living Picture - What is Imagination? February 19-21, 2011



4160 Lower Kula Road
Kula, Maui, Hawaii 96790
808-878-2511

www.waldorfmaui.org

[Click here](#) for further details on the Maui Waldorf Education Conference.

February 19-21, 2011

Celebrating Rudolf Steiner's 150th Anniversary: 1861-2011

Week 1

Drawing with Hand,
Head and Heart:
Finding Confidence in
Drawing for Grades 1-12
with [Van James](#)

Encountering Evil:
Exploring the Task
of Our Time
with [Douglas Sloan](#)

Traumatic Experiences
in Childhood: Healing
the Senses and Will
through Education and
Therapy with [Tobias &
Johanna Tuechelmann](#)

Deepening Waldorf
Education through
Study and Art:
Meditatively Acquired
Study of Man, Balance
in Teaching, and
Curriculum Painting
with [Georg Locher](#)

AWSNA Mentoring
Course for
Experienced Eurythmists
with [Leonore Russell &
Carla Comey](#)

Academic Learning
through Artistic
Projects for Children 7-12
with [Elizabeth Auer](#)

Needlefelting:
Painting with Wool for
the Individual and the
Community
with [Marcy Schepker](#)

Veilpainting:
The Weaving of
Human Relationships
and the Divine
with [Iris Sullivan](#)

Teaching World
Languages in Grades
6, 7, and 8: Unique
Encounters with the
Genius of Language
with [Lorey Johnson &
Kati Manning](#)

Music in the Light of
Anthroposophy
with [Juliane Weeks &
Monica Amstutz](#)

Healing Aspects of the
Waldorf Curriculum
with [Christof Wiechert](#)



2011 Renewal Courses



Week 2

A Celebration of the
Life and Work of
Rudolf Steiner after
150 years
with [Virginia Sease](#)

Form and Flow:
An Inner Schooling for
Understanding Water
with [Jennifer Greene](#)

Recreating the
Human Vessel:
Educating through
Rhythm and Craft with
[Aonghus Gordon &
Master Craftsmen in
Soapmaking, Felting,
Woodworking, and Clay](#)

Unveiling a New
Mythos: The Parzival
Story, the Philosophy
of Spiritual Activity,
and our Journey into
the Time of Michael
with [Philip Thatcher](#)

Puppetry Arts: Producing
The Bee Man of Orn
with [Janene Ping](#)

Picture your Life:
Rudolf Steiner's Life
as an Inspiration for
the Unfolding of Our
Own Biographies
with [Regine Kurek &
Linda Larson](#)

Making Math
Meaningful and
Inspiring in
Grades 6, 7, and 8
with [Jamie York](#)

Personal and
Organizational
Renewal: From Survival
to Success
with [Leonore Russell &
Torin Finser](#)

Transformation of
Self through Intuitive
Thinking and Artistic
Perception
with [Georg Locher,
Douglas Gerwin &
Hugh Renwick](#)

Week I: June 26-July 1 · Week II: July 3-8

Evenings include:

Lectures — Eurythmy — Music

Slides of Rudolf Steiner's Blackboard Drawings — Artistic Café-Soirees

See our complete course listings at: www.centerforanthroposophy.org

Program sponsored by Center for Anthroposophy, Wilton, New Hampshire
Karine Munk Finser, Coordinator
603-654-2566 · info@centerforanthroposophy.org



Welcome to Åland - the Island in the Baltic Sea. Remember to register before February 1 to get reduced fee: 180 €. <http://www.innerlight2011.com/en/registration>

Åland Conference August 3-7

«I am – the inner and outer light – about the contemporary human being»

Åland Conference August 3-7 is one of four major events in 2011, celebrating the 150th anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's birth in cooperation with the Goetheanum.

The theme

The theme of the conference is Christ in the etheric. We are all co-creators of this conference and we take our responsibility for our days together. Every day is a new day. Only the groups stays the same.

The program

Alandica Culture and Congress Centre in the heart of Mariehamn is the center for the Åland conference. The program for the days is designed as a daily rhythm. Morning meeting offers an artistic prelude to the day - with eurythmy, lectures and a short piece of music, and in the afternoon - gathering the threads together.

At midday we are all in groups, artistic and workshops, interrupted by a long lunch, allowing withdrawal and experiences in the Åland nature. Select an artistic group and a workshop – the same through all three days.

Language: The conference language are English and Swedish. The groups will be in Swedish, Finnish, English, German, Norwegian and Danish.

Registration

Registration for the Åland Conference 2011. Please fill out the form and sign up directly online! Participation fee is 230 €. Before February 1, 2011, you will get a reduced fee: 180 €.

There is also possibility of excursions and activities on Wednesday and Sunday. Accommodation is additional.

Evenings

Wednesday evening there will be get-together welcoming party, Thursday an artistic evening in Alandica, open to the public. Friday is free and Saturday evening we will meet outdoors at Sjökvarteret and have a good meal.

Registration - <http://www.innerlight2011.com/no/pamelding>

Antroposofinen Liitto Markku,
Maula Nylandsgatan 25 A 4,
FIN-00120 Helsingfors,
Tel 00358-9-6962520
toimisto@antropos.fi

Åland and Mariehamn

Åland islands are situated between Sweden and Finland, in the northern part of the Baltic Sea. The Island is demilitarized and autonomous and constitutes a Swedish speaking area of Finland with its own flag. Åland also has its own stamps and internet top-level domain (.ax). 27,500 people live in Åland, and about 11,000 of them in Mariehamn, Åland's only town. The town was founded in 1861 and today it is the commercial and political centre. Mariehamn is also Åland's seat of government, called the provincial government.

Accommodation

Accommodation is additional. Arkipelag hotels and Pomerania hotels are offering reduced rates until February 1. Both hotels are located in the center of Mariehamn. There are a number of other hotels, B&B, camping and cottages. Please remember Åland islands and Mariehamn is a popular resort in the summer season, so make sure to book in advance.

Travel

The easiest way to get to Åland is by ship to Mariehamn from Stockholm, Kapellskär and Grisslehamn in Sweden and Helsinki and Turku in Finland. The crossing is very reasonable, if you are traveling without a cabin. Be sure to also book car space in advance, if you go by car. Flying to Åland is also possible.

Organizers

The conference on Åland is arranged by The Nordic Antroposophical Societies together with Föreningen Vård i Livet på Åland and Föreningen Steinerpedagogikens vänner på Åland.

YOUNG Åland

Young people will be invited to the conference at Åland August 3-7. There will be a meeting in Järna where you want to plan how to organize for the young participants at the conference at Åland in January. More information about the YOUNG Åland will be published after January 15.

The registration fee

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Teachers at Sloka Waldorf School in Hyderabad, India, create a festive rangoli or form drawing.



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"Thoughts are not the living reality; they are dead gestures which merely point to that reality; and at a certain stage one feels that, to attain reality, one must begin to create; must pass over to art. Ideas alone simply cannot present the world in its rich full content."

--RUDOLF STEINER