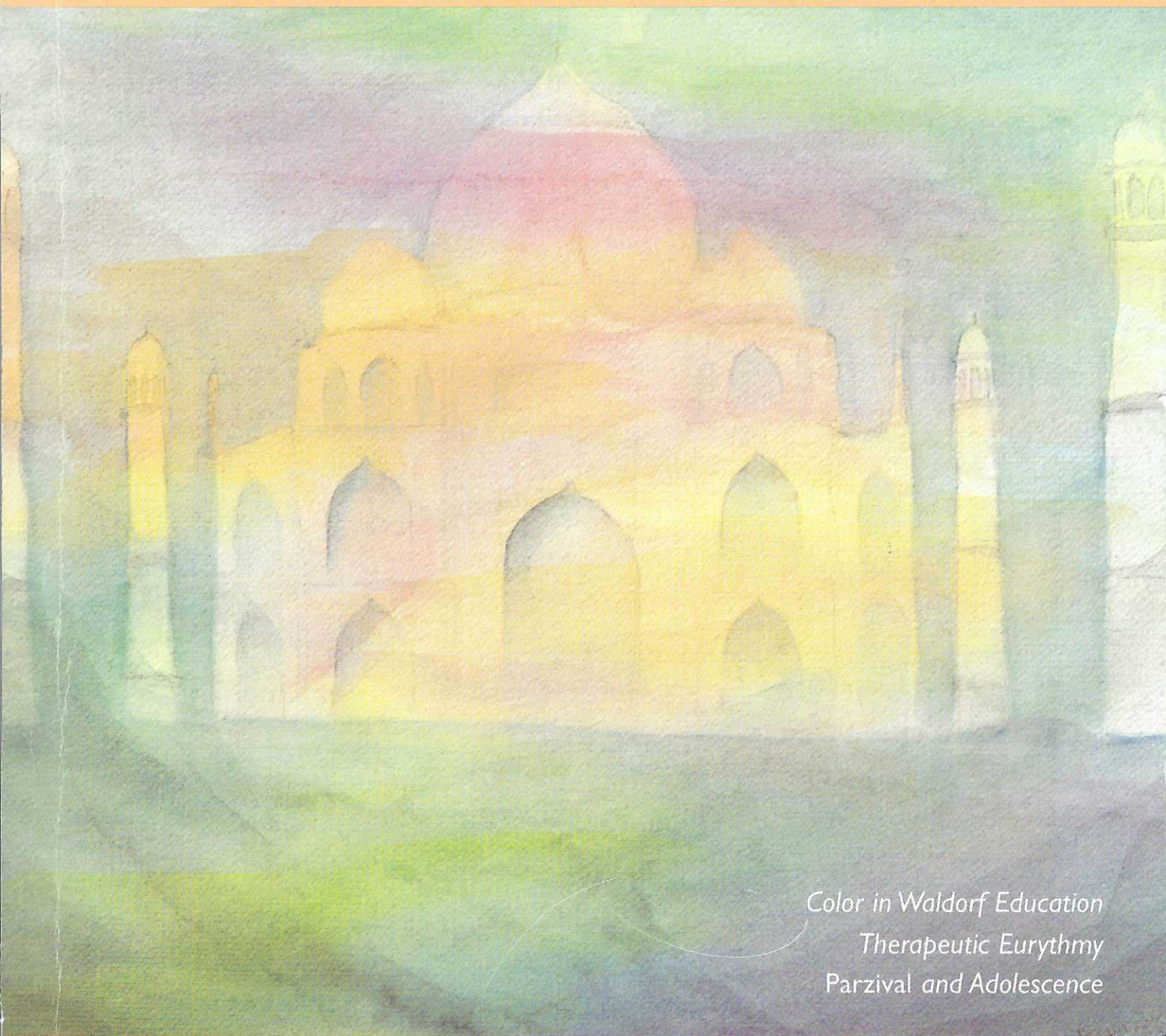


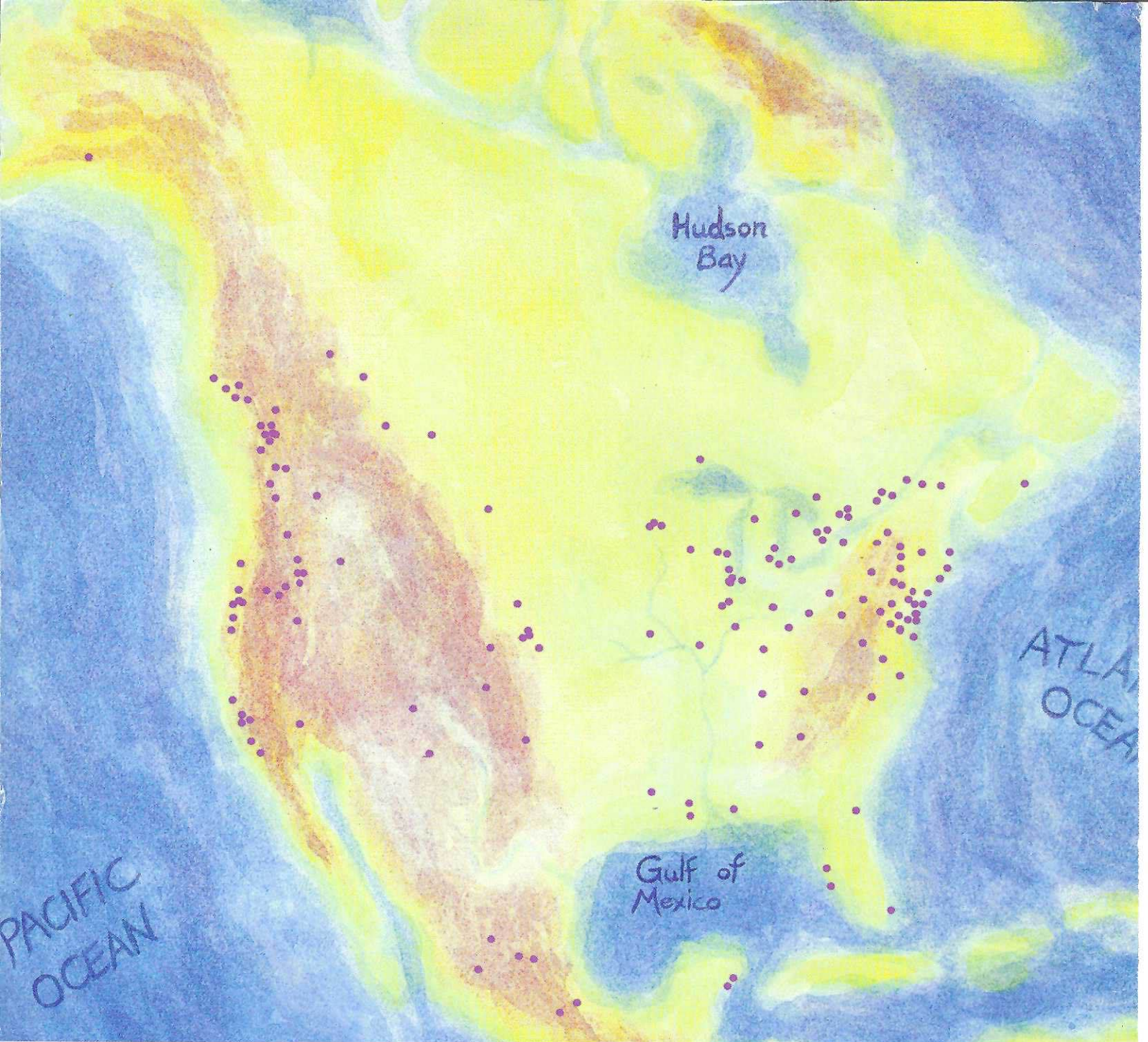
Renewal

SPRING/SUMMER 2006 - VOLUME 15, NUMBER 1



Color in Waldorf Education
Therapeutic Eurythmy
Parzival and Adolescence

A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION



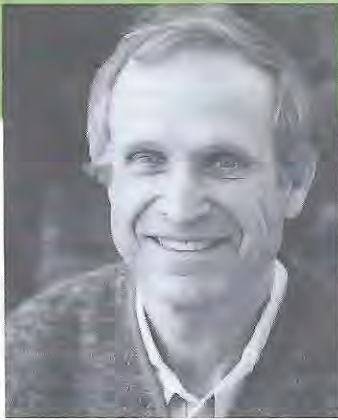
AWSNA

ASSOCIATION OF WALDORF SCHOOLS OF NORTH AMERICA

Connecting the dots from school to school, from heart to heart across the continent

There are over 200 independent Waldorf schools and Early Childhood programs in North America. Internationally, there are 900 Waldorf schools in more than 80 countries. The first Waldorf school was founded in Germany in 1919, based on the teachings of Austrian scientist, philosopher, and spiritual teacher Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925). *Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education* is a publication of AWSNA.

COVER ART: A watercolor painting of the Taj Mahal by Noemi Kobayashi, using the veil technique, done for a geography class when she was in the eleventh grade at the Sacramento Waldorf School.



From the Editor

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PhD

This issue of *Renewal* contains articles on the use of color in the Waldorf school and Waldorf curriculum, on music and singing, eurythmy, *Parzival*, movement education, and on other topics that obviously relate to *Renewal's* focus on education. But one article, tucked unobtrusively into the back of the magazine, seems to go a bit awry. It begins by describing the ancient Temple of Solomon as a beacon for human souls approaching the Earth, souls guided by high spiritual beings and on their way to incarnate again in human bodies. "WOW!" one might legitimately exclaim, "What have we here?"

In Colin Price's article, "Temples of Light," what we have is a whiff of Anthroposophy, the worldview on which Waldorf Education is based. Also known as Spiritual Science, Anthroposophy was articulated by Rudolf Steiner long before he founded the first Waldorf school in 1919. Waldorf Education is one of a number of practical applications of Anthroposophy that Steiner developed in the last years of his life.

Rudolf Steiner made clear that Anthroposophy should not be taught in the Waldorf school, and students are likely to go through thirteen years of Waldorf schooling without even hearing the word. Some Waldorf schools do offer lectures and study groups on Anthroposophy. These are meant for parents and the general public and are intended to inform, not to proselytize. A basic understanding of Anthroposophy can make some of the inscrutable aspects of Waldorf Education, well, less inscrutable.

Several years ago, I began performing my stand-up comedy show "The Beeswax Conspiracy" at Waldorf schools around North America and also abroad. Feeling that there is a need for a clearer understanding of the foundations of Anthroposophy and sensing that the context of an evening of humor is as good as any, I devised what I call "Anthroposophy 101." This is a five-minute introduction to the basic ideas of Spiritual Science. I include this now in almost every show, usually slipping it in toward the end.

With apologies to my fellow anthroposophists, I offer it here. It consists of ten basic ideas, which, if they are not true, should be true.

1. Behind every material phenomenon and process, even those that appear inert and lifeless, is a spiritual reality

with consciousness, thought, and intention. We live in a conscious universe. This spiritual dimension of reality is primary and creative and the material manifestation derivative. Spirit survives the transformation and disappearance of the material. This is a counterpoise to the materialistic view of the primacy of matter.

2. The invisible, spiritual world comprises a multiplicity of beings. These include: the elemental spirits that ensoul the phenomena and processes of the natural world; the group souls of the minerals, plants, and animals; the souls of the so-called dead—human beings who are in the life between death and rebirth; the folk souls of different ethnic and national groups; and the nine celestial hierarchies—from the angels and archangels up through the cherubim and seraphim. The hierarchies are manifestations of attributes of a single creator God, but are also independent beings.
3. The human being is a creation of the celestial hierarchies. With conscious intent and out of self-sacrificial love, they have created the human being and the world as a manifestation of cosmic wisdom. The human being is the crowning jewel of the creation. The entire universe has been brought into being so that the human being might come into existence. We are not the chance product of an impersonal, mechanistic evolutionary process.
4. The human being, in fact the entire cosmos, is a work in progress. The aeons-long, divinely guided process of creation and development is still going on and will go on indefinitely into the future.
5. Each individual human being is going through his own unique history and spiritual development. This individual destiny is realized over multiple earthly incarnations. Each human individuality has an undying spiritual essence that incarnates or takes on human form in different cultures at successive points in history. One's circumstances and personality in one life are largely determined by one's karma, the carried-over effects of one's decisions and deeds in former lives.

continued on page 12

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Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education is published twice a year by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

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Subscriptions are \$12 for one year and \$24 for two years and can be purchased by contacting the AWSNA office. Foreign subscriptions are \$20.

Selected articles from past issues of *Renewal* appear on the AWSNA Web site: www.awsna.org

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Fairy Tales

Gruesome Old Stories or Necessary
Soul Nourishment for Our Children?

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the brothers Grimm, Jacob (1785–1863) and Wilhelm (1786–1859), collected the tales that had been told and retold for centuries by the common people of Central Europe. The Grimms feared that with the decline of rural culture, these tales, existing only as oral tradition, would disappear. The resulting anthology, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Tales*), known now as *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, soon became part of the basic cultural heritage of most of the Western world. Stories such as "Hansel and Gretel," "The Frog Prince," "Rapunzel," and scores of the other almost three hundred original tales entered the childhood experience of generations of children throughout Europe, North America, and other parts of the world.

In recent years, the tales have gone somewhat out of fashion. They are seen as too gruesome, scary, and harsh, as too revelatory of the evil and destructive aspects of human nature and of life in the world. The world of the fairy tale, in which the villains and evil-doers are totally and irredeemably evil and typically come to a horrible end, falls short of political correctness.

Marcy Axness, an expert in child development and parenting issues, writes:

"But, they're so gruesome!" This is a response I often hear from parents when I recommend *Grimms' Fairy Tales* as basic reading fare. The idea of regaling young children with stories of orphans and witches, kidnappings and murders—at bedtime, no less—is, understandably,

repugnant. As parents we tend to want to present something of a Hallmark card world to our children, so we naturally gravitate to soothing, sunny children's books, including sanitized versions of fairy-tale classics. Wishing to shield children from the darker aspects of human nature—greed, cruelty, anger, and anguish—we wean our children on the proposition that people are all good. The problem is that even the youngest child

knows differently in her heart of hearts.

Sanitized versions of the tales have been published with some of the gruesomeness and harshness excised. That in "Cinderella," for example, one sister actually cuts off her heel in order to fit into the golden slipper and that, at the end, both sisters have their eyes pecked out by birds as punishment for their wickedness are parts often left out of contemporary versions of the tale.

In Waldorf schools, however, the unexpurgated fairy tales of the brothers Grimm—as well as similar folk and fairy tales from non-European cultures—are alive and well. The stories are told in the kindergarten and

through the early grades by the teachers. Parents are encouraged to tell the stories to their young children at home. On this issue, as on many others, including early reading, computer use, and standardized testing, the Waldorf approach differs radically from that of the mainstream.

According to Rudolf Steiner, the stories and images of fairy tales originate in the distant past, when the human being still had the ability to directly perceive and experience the invisible, spiritual world. The fairy tales



The stories and images of fairy tales originate in the distant past, when the human being still had the ability to directly perceive and experience the invisible, spiritual world.



portray archetypal beings, personalities, and stories, as well as universal truths—that, for example, there is evil in the world, but ultimately the good will triumph over the evil. The fairy tales communicate these archetypes and truths not as intellectual concepts but as living, imaginative pictures. And, Steiner held, the child literally hungers for the archetypes and truths and for the living pictures of the stories. He wrote:

The child's soul has an overpowering need to let the fairy-tale substance flow through itself, just as the human body needs to let food substance circulate through it.

Half a century ago, Helmut von Kugelgen, a student of Rudolf Steiner and a noted Waldorf educator, wrote:

A true fairy tale speaks pictorially of transformation, enchantment, and release, telling over and over in this way the secrets of human existence. Man's spiritual origin, his challenges, victories, and deliverances, all are described in childlike imagery for a childlike humanity. . . .

The child experiences an "imagination," an inner soul picture from the fairy tale that fills him with pure delight, that uplifts and strengthens [him].

[Everyone, child and adult] has an inner soul space in which the soul forces can be active. If I do not offer the child the imagery and language of fairy tales, his soul space will be filled with the vulgar and the ordinary—auto and plane models, concern about empty trivial commonplaces—and a field of weeds is the result.

Marcy Axness also sees the importance of fairy tales for the child:

One needn't look so deeply into the child's psyche to realize that all children struggle with psychic pressures of various kinds—inner impulses of the soul that are a natural part of growing and developing through that stage of life. If we as parents offer them nothing that suggests that we recognize and sanction these powerful forces, both light and dark, children may expend precious life force repressing them. When we offer children

lovingly told fairy tales, we give them an exquisite mirror in which to meet themselves. . . . The highly imaginative, unambiguous world of fairy tales ingeniously provides a home for the child's deepest soul stirrings, a crucible through which the child, unconsciously, becomes conversant with and gains mastery over inner conflicts.

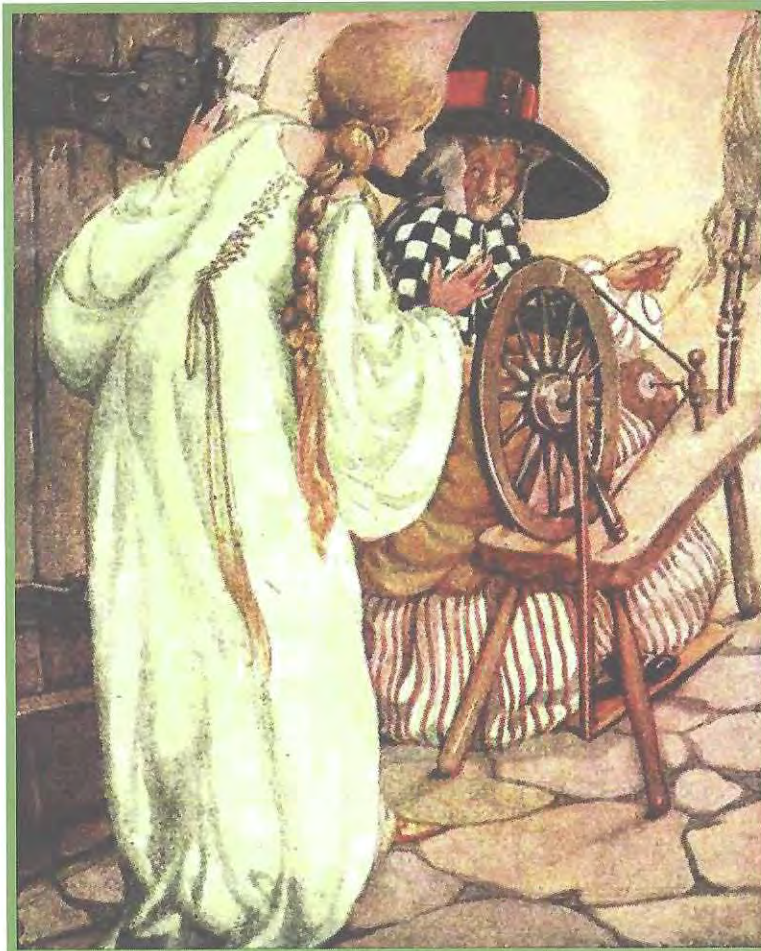
Children do not have to be protected from the harshness of the stories. Von Kugelgen writes:

The so-called "gruesome" scene [in "Little Red Cap"] of the children dancing around the well in which the wolf has drowned, which an intellectual adult regards as shocking,

is to the child nothing but the blessed victory of good over evil.

Marcy Axness concurs:

In telling such a story to such a child, a parent should not undermine it by saying, "No, sweetie, there is really no such thing as a witch (or a giant, or a wolf that speaks)!" This lessens the tale's power to enchant and robs the child of the experience of bringing her own imaginative and soul forces to find the tale's relevance to



The fairy tales portray archetypal beings, personalities, and stories, as well as universal truths—that, for example, there is evil in the world, but ultimately the good will triumph over the evil.



herself and her unique dilemmas. Nor need we explain the meaning or the moral of the tale.

Several decades ago, Bruno Bettelheim (1903–1990), a noted developmental psychologist, studied fairy tales and their effect on children. In the December 8, 1975, issue of the *New Yorker*, Bettelheim published an article entitled “The Uses of Enchantment” and the following year published a book with the same title.

Bettelheim, an academic with no connection to Waldorf Education, strongly affirms the value of fairy tales in the healthy development of children:

For a story to truly hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity. But for a story to enrich his life, it must stimulate his imagination, help him to develop his intellect and to clarify his emotions, be attuned to his anxieties and aspirations, give full recognition to his difficulties, suggest solutions to the problems that perturb him, and promote confidence in himself and his future.

... My interest in fairy tales is not the result of such technical analysis of their merits. It is, on the contrary, a consequence of my asking myself why, in my experience, children—normal and abnormal alike, and at every level of intelligence—have found fairy tales more satisfying than all other children's stories. The more I tried to understand why these stories are so successful in enriching the inner life of children, the clearer it became to me that, in a much deeper sense than any other reading material, they start where the child really is in his psychological and emotional being.

Bettelheim goes on to consider the possible effects on children of not having been exposed to fairy tales:

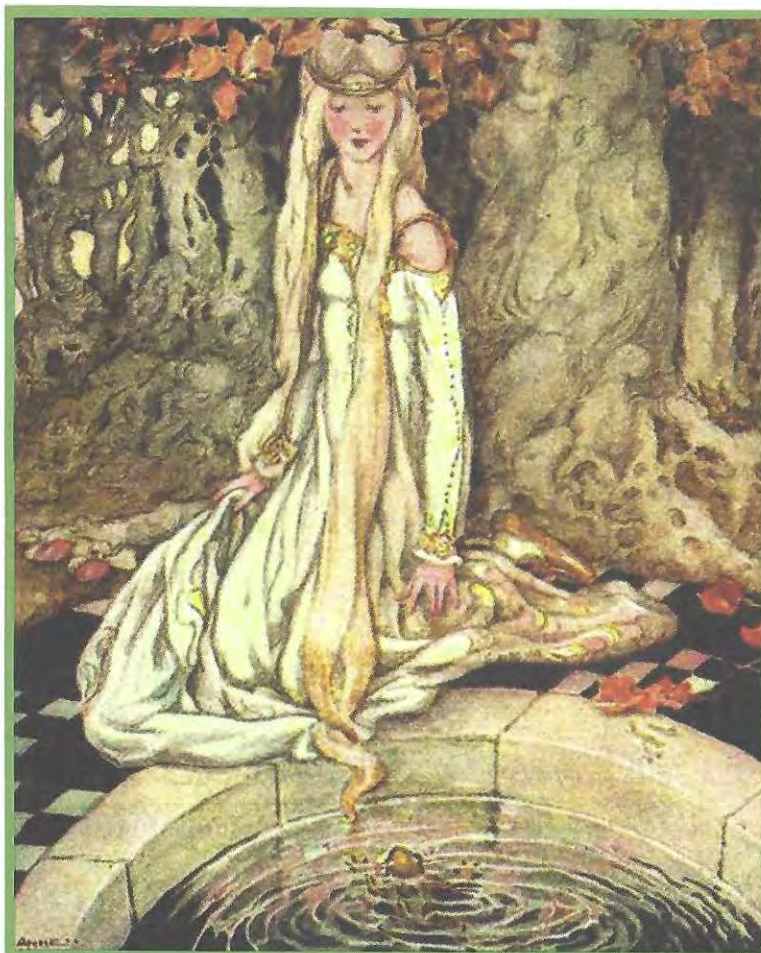
I have known many young people who, particularly in late adolescence, come to a belief in magic, to compensate for their having been deprived of it prematurely in childhood. It is as if such young people felt that now was their last chance to make up for a severe deficiency in their life experience—that without having had a period

of belief in magic, they would be unable to meet the rigors of adult life. Many of the young people who today suddenly seek escape in drug-induced dreams, apprentice themselves to a guru, believe in astrology, practice “black magic,” or in some other fashion escape from reality into daydreams about magic experiences, were prematurely pressed to view reality as adults view it.

An interesting question arises here. If fairy tales, such as those collected by the brothers Grimm, are necessary to the healthy development of the child, and if lack of exposure can lead

to problematic behavior, can fairy tales have a therapeutic effect on adolescents and adults? Could emotionally disturbed or mentally ill older persons, those suffering from depression or hyperactivity, incarcerated criminals, perhaps all of us—apparently moral and healthy or not—benefit from being told fairy tales?

CREDITS: Images are by Anne Anderson, a British illustrator from the first half of the twentieth century. To view more of her illustrations, see www.grandmasgraphics.com. Images, in sequence, are of “Beauty and the Beast,” “Hansel and Gretel,” “Cinderella,” “Briar Rose,” “Rapunzel,” “The Frog Prince,” and “Snow White.”



I have known many young people who, particularly in late adolescence, come to a belief in magic, to compensate for their having been deprived of it prematurely in childhood.



Color Me Waldorf

The Use of Color in the Education of the Child

BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI

On entering a Waldorf school, the first-time visitor often finds most striking the experience of being surrounded, even embraced, by a rainbow of harmonious, natural colors. Classroom and hallway walls, paintings and craftwork on display, the toys in the kindergarten, even the dress of the teachers evince a color aesthetic quite different from that which prevails in most contemporary environments. The visitor is a world away from garish purple dinosaurs, jarring yellow polyester birds, iridescent McDonald's advertisements, and also stark black and whites. This approach to color and the calm but vibrant ambiance it creates is part of a conscious, consistent approach to the schooling of the perceptions and feelings of the child.

We human beings are profoundly influenced by color. Though we perhaps are seldom aware of the fact, colors in our environment affect us deeply. A room with red walls will put us in a different mood than a room with green walls. Dark blue clothing renders us a somewhat different person than an outfit of bright red and yellow. Color affects children very strongly, potentially impacting their physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

Acutely aware of this, Rudolf Steiner incorporated an entire color "curriculum" into Waldorf Education. Steiner made suggestions for the wall colors in the classrooms of the different grades; gave indications on the use of colors in the painting, handwork, and eurythmy curricula; and even prescribed colors of clothing as a therapeutic intervention.

Painting and Drawing

All educational approaches aim to foster clear and logical thinking, to develop basic academic skills, and to guide students to self-knowledge. Waldorf Education also seeks to foster the capacity to feel deeply, to be sensitive to beauty, and to experience compassion for others. Particularly during the elementary school years, the education of the feeling life of the child is addressed. The arts are essential in cultivating a receptive and sensitive soul, and painting with color can be very effective in this process.



A blackboard drawing by Waldorf teacher Marianne Gray for an eighth-grade lesson on Asian geography

In Waldorf schools, the child is introduced to painting in the preschool years. It is presented not as a lesson but as a structured kind of play in which the child imitates the teacher. With first-grade children or kindergartners about to enter first grade, a painting session

can be more formal, but still the playful element is emphasized.

Usually, through using watercolor on a damp paper, the child is introduced to the primary colors of yellow, red, and blue. In this “wet-on-wet” technique, the child experiences the colors as intense and dynamic. She applies each color over large areas of the moistened paper using broad brushes. This medium does not allow much detail and discourages painting any object or human figure, so the experience of the color dominates. [Please see the article about wet-on-wet painting on page 13 of this issue.]

In the early years, the child experiences the colors in their particular qualities—the energy and forcefulness of red, the “look-at-me” quality of yellow, and the relative placidity and expansiveness of blue. Only later will the child use the colors to express something in forms and/or representational images.

This approach is unique in the Waldorf schools and can be mystifying to Waldorf parents. The paintings of the early years should be thought of as color studies rather than as objets d’art to be displayed on the refrigerator door.

These early explorations and adventures in painting are the child’s introduction to and basic research about the qualities of the colors. The child experiences in a direct, nonintellectual way how the colors relate to each other, how

some juxtapositions of color create harmony and joy and others create tension, and what miraculous transformations take place when the colors mix and touch—how, for example, green emerges from the mingling of blue and yellow, and so on. The child is taking a journey, moving from one color mood to another, experiencing new inner moods and new relationships with the outside world. This discovery of colors can and should elicit wonder and surprise in the child. The final result is not so important at this stage. More important is the process and experience of painting. In any case, when the watercolor paints dry, they lose much of the intensity and vibrancy they had during the painting process.

The colors speak to the young child, and the child in turn learns the language of color. The teacher supports this by having the child focus on color rather than form. The way the teacher talks about color is also part of this instruction. She avoids referring to the colors as attached to phenomena or objects, as in “yellow like the sun,” “blue as the sky.” Rather the teacher personifies the colors, describing them in terms of their characteristics and activities. Yellow is happy or excited or merry; red may be pushy or showing off; green can be shy, calm or dull, depending on whom he is with. Green acts differently with yellow than he does with red.

The conversations and interactions between one color and another can be related to a fairy tale or a fable the

children are learning. The child may be asked to paint the yellow princess surrounded by the dark green of the forest or the red rooster encountering the blue raven. The forms of the princess and the rooster



A wet-on-wet painting by a first grader, exploring the moods and movements of yellow, red, and blue



A beeswax block-crayon drawing by a kindergartner

probably will not emerge in the painting, but that is fine. Each is a metaphor, expressing the mood of the respective color.

How colors behave when their boundaries are far apart or close together is explored, as is the magic that occurs when their boundaries meet and a new color is



A colored tissue transparency in a chrysanthemum shape, formed by folding, filters the sun's light.

created. In one exercise, a color is placed in the middle of the paper with another surrounding it. The children may be asked to tell what feeling this evokes. In a subsequent lesson, the same colors—positions reversed—will be used. In this manner, the children slowly learn another language, a feeling

language related to the colors. During the later grades, this language will be enlarged through “vocabulary” lessons involving formal instruction in drawing, painting with form, and color perspective.

In the early grades, the children of course also draw. Often they are asked to copy a chalk blackboard drawing done by the teacher. The children use round or block crayons of beeswax that are not pointed. Here again, broad areas of color are desired, rather than detail work. Drawing by line and outline is an expression of the soul activity of thinking, and for the young child it is the feeling dimension of the color that should be emphasized. Many Waldorf students become very good at drawing . . . but this comes later on. Another advantage of remaining with these less detailed drawings is that children do not too early judge themselves as being unskilled at drawing, leave it to the naturally talented, and give up on the activity. In the Waldorf school, drawing is, as are all the arts, for everyone.

Later in the elementary school years, the children learn to externalize



A figure modeled out of colored beeswax (a portrait of a teacher)

emotional states by expressing their moods in scenes of nature. They paint images of storms, of sunrises and sunsets, and of moonlit landscapes. Later they explore the feelings that are aroused by the colors of various regions of the Earth—the white and blue of the arctic, the greens and “hot” colors of the tropics, and so on.

In the seventh grade, the students are introduced to the elements of linear perspective. They might also study the color perspective developed by Leonardo, in which blue connotes a receding, red a coming forward, and the softer colors express distant realms. The maturing children thus learn the techniques of using color. In their main lessons, they begin to write about their feelings, while in their painting, the children start to use color more consciously to depict not only the outer world but also their inner life of feeling.

Handwork and Other Lessons

Handwork classes, as well, provide strong experiences of color for the Waldorf student. When a child works over a period of time with

one color—as in the seemingly endless knitting of that first scarf—the color can “sink in,” and the child has a deep experience of the color and its particular qualities. As the child rhythmically knits away, breathing in the

color as the rows multiply, the color should be fostering a peaceful, harmonious feeling rather than a disquieting one. For this reason, yarn of softer, mellower colors, preferably from plant dyes, is provided for the very young children. When a second color is introduced, the teacher provides some guidance. Just as young children require guidance in moral development, they also need progressive training in their aesthetic judgment.

Some parents object to what they see as an infringement on the child’s “right” to free expression. But with the young child, the development of what the poet Goethe called “a visual moral sense” is more important at this stage than self-expression. The child needs to learn what is good and beautiful in the world of color. In both painting and handwork, the teacher helps the child recognize when a color combination is harmonious and when the contrast is perhaps too strong. In the elementary years, this experience of



Pincushions made by fourth graders using cross-stitch in a four-way mirrored design of their own creation

harmonious color can serve the emotional health of the child as well as be a pedagogical intervention.

The same experience is found in other lessons. The youngest children have their first encounter with modeling using colored beeswax. Form drawing usually is with colored crayons. Colored wax or tissue transparencies are made, filtering the sun's light through beautiful star shapes or layered cut-out figures. The world of black and white is saved for the introduction of shaded pencil drawing when the children are in the seventh or eighth grade.

Wall Painting

Another unique aspect of Waldorf Education is the conscious choice of color for the classrooms and hallways of the school environment. In the 1920s, Rudolf Steiner gave indications for coloring the rooms in some of the early schools. The general picture evoked is of the child moving through a rainbow, beginning with the reds/oranges/yellows in the early years, through the greens and blues in the middle grades, and entering the blue/violet colors in high school. Steiner felt that red—a stimulating color for adults—is actually a calming color for a child before the age of nine, and he recommended it for the overactive child's clothing as well. After age nine, this inverse effect of red gradually disappears as does the child's photographic or eidetic memory. For the older child, as for adults, the greens and blues tend to be calming. The bit of red that enters the blue—in violets and mauves—can be seen as a bit of fire to stimulate the thinking of the adolescent.

Steiner did not provide a strict formula for room colors but gave general recommendations to be adapted to the geographical location (north or south) of the school and the national character of the students. In the Hamburg school, the classrooms for grades one through three were painted red, while those for grades four through six were orange. Green appeared only in the grade eight classroom. In the London school, the kindergarten was painted red-yellow, the first-grade room was orange, and green was chosen already for grade two.

Dick Bruin and Attie Lichthart, authors of the book *Painting in Waldorf Education*, feel that, in contrast to the European child, "the naturally more sensitive, lively North American child needs bluish tints around him- or herself," since these allow for greater concentration

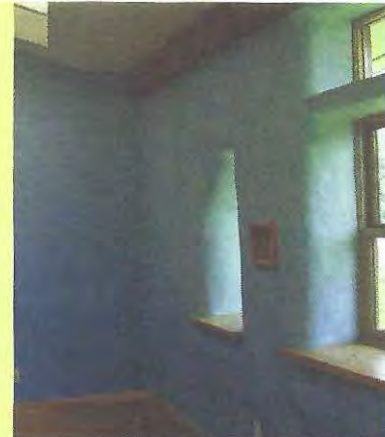
and promote the thinking process. Of course, in the different areas of the continent, adjustments would have to be made. What would work in New England is different from what would work in the deep South.

Waldorf classrooms usually are painted with a single color appearing at first glance to predominate. Actually, however, what is at work on the walls is a subtle but

lively blending and merging of associated hues. The painting method used is the lazure technique, in which thin, transparent veils of water-based color and glaze, usually in varying tints related to the hue that is meant to predominate, are applied with specific movements and special brushes over a white foundation coat. When done correctly, this gives depth, softness, varied nuance, and luminosity to the color. The wall surface has a cloudlike quality and "breathes," and the room seems more spacious. The color experience is enhanced by curtains in a slightly lighter tone of the wall

color, and, ideally, the students' desks are stained in that color as well.

Some researchers, stimulated by Steiner's recommendations, have studied the effect of classrooms painted with different colors. The German psychologist Henner Ertel (known for his studies on the deterioration of the human senses and sensitivity over the past few decades)



A classroom corner showing color movements produced by the lazure technique



A wall of a classroom at the Waldorf School on the Roaring Fork, painted in the lazure technique, with blue blending into violet.



Lazured walls of a eurythmy room at Rudolf Steiner College

looked at the effect of using warm, bright colors such as yellow and orange in the early elementary grades. In a study published in 1978, he found a significant increase in both measured IQ and school achievement in classrooms painted with these colors.

Intrigued by Ertel's findings, a Canadian researcher, H. Wohlfarth, repeated the study in 1981 at the Elves Memorial Child Development Center, a school for handicapped children in Edmonton. In the rooms that were painted with the warm yellows and oranges, the systolic blood pressure of the children fell on average 20 points, and behavior improved dramatically. There was also an especially notable decrease in aggressive behaviors. This effect, however, occurred only when full-spectrum lighting was used. When cool fluorescent tubes were used, the beneficial effect of the painted walls almost disappeared. Dr. Wohlfarth noted that, quite remarkably, the positive effect of the colored walls was evident even with those children in the school who were blind.

In Waldorf schools, the informed, conscientious use of color fosters the child's moral sense of beauty, promotes learning, positively influences behavior, and helps the healthy development of the child. It may even have specific health benefits. Jan Kees Saltet, painting teacher at the Hartsbrook School in Massachusetts, points to the relative infrequency of color blindness, nearsightedness, and farsightedness among children in Waldorf schools as evidence of the potency of the work with color.

In our time, many children have little daily experience of the wholesome, subtle colors of nature and instead are exposed, in the media and in the general environment, to artificial and garish colors. It is important perhaps for parents to protect them, as possible, from this "junk food" for the eyes and to provide a counterbalance at home. Interior décor—wall and furniture colors—especially in the child's bedroom, can

be chosen with a consciousness about color. A child's clothing also may be chosen with appropriate colors in mind. Overbright, shiny, jarring colors should be avoided, as well as the color black. It represents an absence of light rather than a color and, especially for young children, does not provide the kind of soul enrichment that they need. If used properly, color can be a positive and transformative force in the life of the child and of the family.

THOMAS POPLAWSKI, *Renewal's* staff writer, has two articles in this issue. Please see page 22 for his author's bio.

CREDITS: Images of student artwork on page 8 and the upper right of page 9 from Bea Birch; tissue transparency on page 10 from Frédérique Guéret, *Magical Window Stars* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2005); photo of pincushions from the Rudolf Steiner School of New York City taken by Ellen Silverman; photo of the beeswax figure from Hawthorne Valley School taken by Patrice Maynard; lazure photos from Chuck Andrade's Web site: www.lazure.com.

From the Editor, continued

6. Part of our individual and collective human task at this stage in history is to rediscover, as something intimately experienced and known, the spiritual dimension of reality. Every human being has the potential, through conscious striving and self-discipline, to directly perceive and experience the spiritual world.
7. Another part of our task is to become able to act in freedom and out of selfless love for other beings.
8. Human culture needs to be transformed according to a spiritual vision of the human being. Every domain of human thought and activity—education, medicine, agriculture, social, economic and political life, art, architecture, religious life, care for the elderly, and so on—must be renewed on the basis of a spiritual understanding of the human being. Only if we do this will the development of humanity and of the Earth continue in a positive way.
9. Among the myriad spiritual beings, there are certain powerful entities who oppose the divine plan. In other words, there are "bad guys" out there as well as "good guys," and the former are very skilled at drawing people away from the path of development intended by the higher spiritual beings, away from the realization of freedom and love. These adversarial powers are necessary, however, because without evil there would be no choice for human beings and hence no true freedom.
10. The incarnation of the Christ, a divine being intimately connected to the Father God, in the human being, Jesus of Nazareth, in Palestine 2000 years ago, was a unique and pivotal event in human history. At a point when the adversarial forces threatened to overwhelm humanity, the suffering, death on the cross, resurrection, and ascension of Christ Jesus made possible the continued spiritual development of the human being and of the Earth. Despite this important Christological element, however, Anthroposophy is not a church, a religious sect or denomination, and is not connected to any. The resurrection forces of the cosmic Christ have been and are still today available to all human beings, regardless of culture, religion, nationality, or ethnic group.

These ideas, taken as a whole, comprise a view of the origin, nature, and destiny of the human being and the world that is part of the foundation of Waldorf Education. One need not subscribe to this view, but understanding it will perhaps help one comprehend Waldorf Education within its larger context.

From Wet-on-Wet to Veiling

Watercolor Painting in the Waldorf Elementary Grades

BY BEA BIRCH



A wet-on-wet painting by a third grader



A veil painting by an eighth grader

In Waldorf schools, from kindergarten through the fifth grade, the children paint using the wet-on-wet method. This involves the application of watercolors to damp paper. Not until the sixth grade—and then only if the children are ready—do they, using the veil technique, start painting on dry paper. The question occasionally arises: Should a first grader paint on dry paper, and, if not, why not? This is an important question and should be answered on the basis of experience, research, and insight, rather than on the basis of dogma, i.e., unexamined, handed-down truths.

To answer this question, we must examine the two methods of painting and also consider the differences between a child of six or seven and a child of twelve or thirteen. In the wet-on-wet method, the paper is soaked in water and then sponged off. When the paint is applied to the damp—or wet—paper, it spreads, moving, it seems, of its own accord. In the kindergarten, the children paint wet-on-wet freely with no particular instruction on how to get a certain effect. In the first grade, they are ready and keen to learn technique: how to control the “flow” or movement of the paint, how to lift off paint, how to paint with water if the paper has become too dry, how to make the colors



Examples of wet-on-wet painting: left, by a seventh grader; upper right, by a first grader; lower right, by a fifth grader

work together so that, for example, yellow's character of selflessness, curiosity, and friendliness doesn't overwhelm a more timid, thoughtful, centered blue.

At this age, the children are still in the relatively dreamy stage of childhood. With the wet-on-wet method, the flow and life of the water, the luminosity of the colors on the damp paper, the magic of their interaction and combination, the application of color without initially the need to create forms or figures, the child's total immersion in the colors, and her dialogue with them all provide unique and wondrous soul experiences that nurture the child in the moment and will continue to nurture her in years to come.

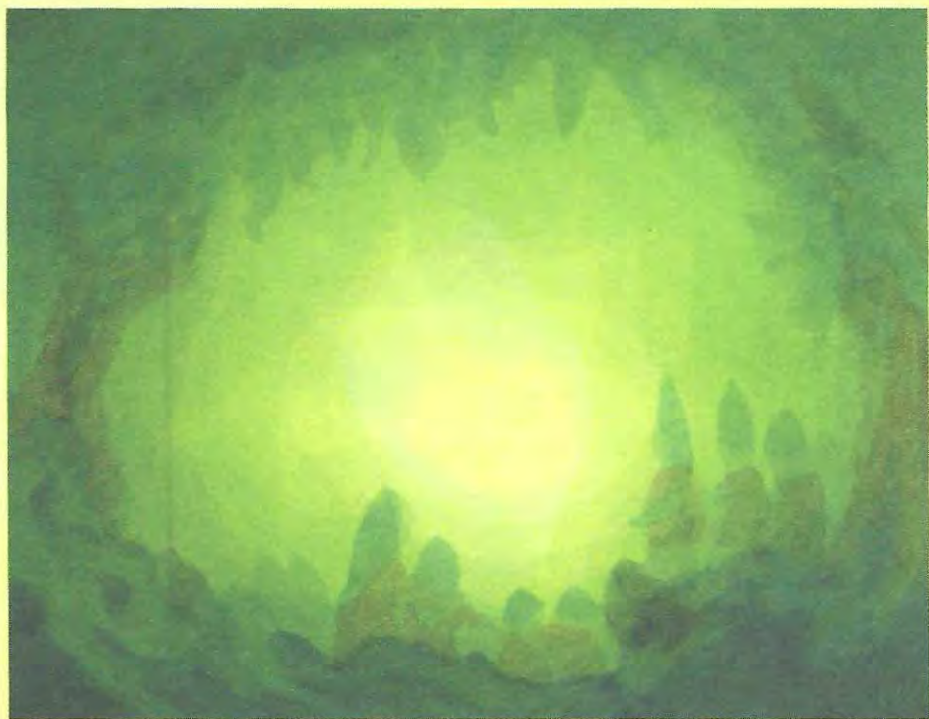
Also, wet-on-wet painting can reflect and help balance soul gestures/personality tendencies in a child. A child who has weak boundaries, who, for example, bumps into other children in line in an unconscious effort to feel his/her limits, who easily lives into another's life situation and feels very strongly the pain of others, may reflect this lack of centeredness by painting very wet. Eventually, though, he may feel frustrated by the lack of control in his paintings and seek to find a balance. Thus, wet-on-wet painting can lead to a healing of the soul.

At the other end of the spectrum is the child who unconsciously lets the paper dry out so she can remain in control. This child may have difficulty breathing out, with "letting go," and could be characterized as rigid and fearful. Thus, as a teacher, one can begin to imagine the endless opportunities and the range of rich soul experiences that are available when one allows for the interweaving and interaction of the colors without the head's engagement.

Painting on dry paper for the child under fourteen is a quite different experience. The movement and spontaneity, the dynamic experience of the being of the individual colors, and the deep breathing of the soul are lost. The dry paper simply absorbs and gives nothing back. Without the living quality of the water, the process becomes more physical. Rather than a dialogue between painter and living color, there is only the monologue of the painter. Therefore, this painting naturally leans toward drawing and conscious representation, and the end result becomes the focus. We thus lose the process and experience of the moment, which is what we value in our schools.

In Waldorf schools, usually from the sixth grade, painting on dry paper using the veiling technique is introduced. A thin, transparent watercolor wash is applied to the paper and is allowed to dry. Other layers of wash follow. This layering of washes creates a depth and luminosity; the soul can breathe deeply.

The veiling method offers the older child opportunities for growth. The paper is first soaked, then taped down on a painting board and allowed to dry. This process alone is an exercise in care and consciousness. The gradual building up of the color from barely visible washes demands attention, planning, and patience. The student must be able to disconnect and to draw back—to step out of the process. In wet-on-wet, one needs to lose oneself in the process and thus fully engage as an artist. In veil painting, one must alternate between being an artist and a scientist. One applies the paint, then withdraws, objectively considers what one has done, and then enters the process again as an artist. Also, in veiling, the use of the brush requires care and discipline.



Examples of veil painting: upper left, by a seventh grader; lower left, by a sixth grader; right, by an eighth grader

One has to control the brush so that just the right amount of paint goes onto the paper. And since a veil cannot be undone, if there has been misjudgment, one needs to work with and remedy it. This type of painting may, then, involve a schooling in creative problem solving.

Yes, we could teach children under the age of twelve, even those as young as seven, to paint on dry paper. They would perhaps then develop a superficial objectivity at the expense of joy and enthusiasm—superficial, because they do not possess true objectivity at this age. But, just as with teaching two- or three-year-olds to read, the essential issue is: What is gained and what is lost? Are we not depriving the young child of precious experiences and opportunities?

In a Waldorf school, each activity is brought to the children at the appropriate point in their development. There is a conscious, not random, sequence in the curriculum. Children learn the letters of the alphabet from their drawings before they learn to read. They do modeling with beeswax and then clay before they work with wood. Similarly, veil painting is introduced after the child has experienced the process of wet-on-wet, when the necessary soul forces have ripened.

Perhaps some Waldorf teachers feel that the painting on dry paper or doing veil painting with young children will serve to center and form a class and maybe help with discipline challenges. As a Hauschka artistic therapist, I use wet-on-wet painting, veil painting, dynamic stroke drawing, and clay modeling as therapeutic tools. If there is a discipline problem in a younger class, I strongly recommend that the children do clay modeling rather

than paint on dry paper. Painting on dry paper and the veiling technique foster a consciousness that before the sixth grade is premature and unhealthy. The clay, however, helps draw the etheric/vital forces together, creating an inner harmony, and engaging the whole individual in a wonderfully consolidating and health-giving way.

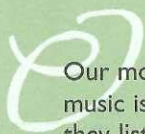
The experience of wet-on-wet painting is a great gift for young children, helping them to blossom and develop capacities appropriate to their age. In the same way that veil painting serves the wholesome, balanced development of the older child, the experience of working with charcoal, pastels, oil paints, and watercolor on dry paper benefits students in the Waldorf high school. We need to remember that our responsibility is not to a particular technique or school of art, but to the children and their soul development.



BEA BIRCH was born in Concord, Massachusetts. She studied to be a Waldorf teacher at Emerson College in England and was a handwork and class teacher in the Bristol Waldorf School, an inner city school founded out of the threefold social impulse. Drawn to the healing aspect of Waldorf Education, Bea “temporarily” left teaching, trained as a Hauschka artistic therapist, and then worked in anthroposophical medical and therapeutic centers. Asked to found the first Waldorf teacher training in Bristol, she did so and codirected the program for three years. Having lived twenty-five years in England, Bea now resides in upstate New York. She continues to do artistic therapy—in schools and privately—is involved in teacher training and teacher support, gives workshops, and is training to be a homeopath.

Music and Singing in the Waldorf School

BY SALLY MABELLE, MEd



Our modern world is awash in music. But, for most people, the experience of music is passive. Via radio, television, video and audio tapes, iPods, and the like, they listen to music and songs recorded by professional musicians and vocalists. The ranks of those who can play a musical instrument and/or sing anything beyond "Happy Birthday" are diminishing. In many school systems, music programs have been cut or eliminated, with the result that many young people do not get even the basic elements of making music and singing.

Singing and the making of music are an intrinsic part of life in a Waldorf school. In the kindergarten, the children sing daily and, through simple percussion instruments, are introduced to music making. First graders start to play the Choroï pentatonic flute, a simple straight-blown wooden instrument. In the third grade, they usually begin the soprano recorder and will continue working with that instrument—perhaps also in its alto and tenor forms—through all their Waldorf schooling. In the fourth grade, each student starts to study an orchestral instrument, usually the violin or cello, here again beginning an activity that will continue through their Waldorf years and, it is hoped, beyond. Whether or not a student is musically gifted, she is encouraged to join the school orchestra or to play in smaller ensembles.

Singing also continues throughout the grades and is part of the daily life of the class. In the early years, the children sing in unison. Later, they do songs with harmonizing parts. By the seventh or eighth grade, the students form choirs that are capable of performing complex harmonic works. Here, too, every child is encouraged to develop his or her natural abilities, great or small. There is an underlying conviction that virtually every child, if properly guided and encouraged, has the ability to sing.

Singing has profound physiological, emotional, and mental benefits for children and for adults. Anthroposophical voice teacher and composer, Mary Thienes-Schunemann, writes:

Singing is a gymnasium for a child's body and soul. Singing works deeply into our children's physiology, deepening breath and heart rate, altering brain wave patterns, and strengthening the immune system. It also releases endorphins, the body's pleasure hormones, into the brain and body. Singing exercises all the muscles in the head and neck, providing the pump action that empties the eustachian tubes, and helping to keep children free from middle ear infections. [In addition,] singing can build a child's confidence and self-esteem and can increase his capacity for self-expression. Research indicates that a wide range of early music experiences can have a powerful effect on the kindergarten-age child, influencing language development as well as increasing concentration, memory, visual and listening skills, spatial orientation, and physical coordination.

According to Dr. Michaela Glöckler, anthroposophical pediatrician and head of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum, singing is the best means of preventing illness, the most effective way to build bridges between human beings, and "the most wonderful gift adults can give to their children."

My thirteen years of teaching singing to children and to "non-singers"—adults who believe they can't sing but, in

fact, can—has taught me that at least ninety percent of skill in singing is connected to our ability to imagine. Only ten percent has to do with physical technique. In fact, the more we focus on physical technique, the more crude and hardened our singing becomes. The more we draw on the imagination or inner picturing capacity, the more subtle, refined, and expressive the singing. This is also true for our teaching, our parenting, and, I imagine, all areas in life. It is our thought-life and inner pictures that most deeply affect our experiences in life.

For example, if someone tells me, "I can't sing high," I give him an image to focus on that bypasses the belief that it is difficult to sing high. When I ask a student to inwardly create the image of a growing tree with the inner picture of "the higher the branches, the deeper the roots," this gives him an image that will affect the voice indirectly, without physical manipulation. In the song, "Amazing Grace," for example, when the singer is making the transition between singing the word *like* and the word *me*, he can imagine that he is a tree growing roots deep into the earth while his voice rides on the branches lifting toward heaven. I have found this simple exercise to be very

powerful in opening up a person's ability to reach high notes with ease.

Other inner pictures that help to free the singing voice are the images of:

- breathing in and then singing out through all the pores of the body and the soles of the feet
- the body being a chalice with the tone as nectar pouring in
- the breath as the ocean, ebbing and flowing over the shoreline of the lips

Singing is not just for a special few with trained voices. It is a God-given gift, available to all, that every human being should have the opportunity to develop and use, and that the imagination can help unfold.



SALLY MABELLE has been a Waldorf class teacher in Hawaii and in New Zealand. Also, she has taught individual and group singing classes for the past thirteen years—in Hawaii, England, Boulder, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Sally now teaches singing to Waldorf teacher education students at Auckland University of Technology and continues to give individual and group classes in New Zealand and the United States. Her Web site is <http://www.voicecoachnz.com>

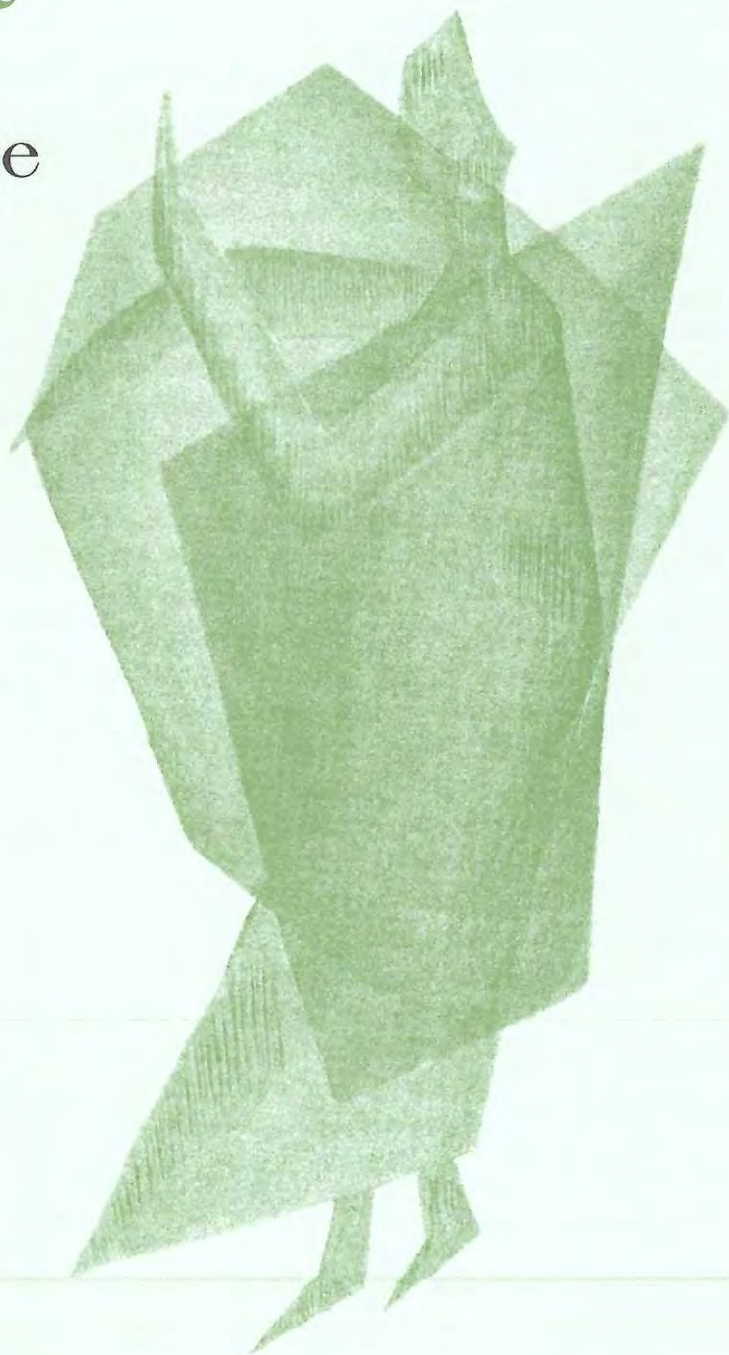
CREDIT: Photo by Larry Canner from the Waldorf School of Baltimore.

Therapeutic Eurythmy

Movement, Healing, and the Etheric Forces

BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI

*I*n Waldorf schools, children learn to do things—to use their hands, their feet, their whole bodies. In circle activities, in games, in handwork and crafts, in the playing of musical instruments, in eurythmy, in their drama work, the children are in movement. This emphasis is so strong that Waldorf Education, especially in the early grades, is sometimes criticized for being anti-intellectual. (“Why are those first graders playing a circle game when they should be learning to read?”) Current research, however, indicates that the development of movement skills may be the best foundation for successful learning and balanced emotional development.



As a child learns to use her body—through fine motor activities like knitting and sewing or through the larger body movements in the morning circle activities, difficulties in movement and coordination may appear. In this case, the activities will not only contribute to general healthy development but also serve, gently and over time, to correct problems. They will help her toward the realization of the classical ideal of *mens sana in corpore sano*, “a sound mind in a sound body.” Eurythmy, the art of movement unique to Waldorf schools, is particularly effective in helping the healthy development of the whole child.

Eurythmy is a dance-like activity—with an emphasis on movements of the arms and hands. In Waldorf schools, children start eurythmy in the preschool years and continue with it through their entire Waldorf schooling. It teaches them to move with intention and will, as games and competitive sports do also. But eurythmy also teaches the children to move lightly, consciously, with feeling, and with artistic expressiveness. One important result is that the child becomes able to bring a warmth of feeling into bodily movements and, by extension, into all daily actions.

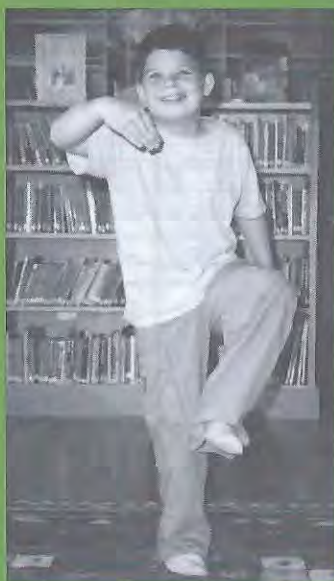
Rudolf Steiner said that eurythmy is one of the essential elements of the Waldorf curriculum. When eurythmy was introduced in the first Waldorf school, the class teachers soon noticed various positive results. The children’s coordination and sense of rhythm improved, as did their general health. There were also emotional benefits. Imbalances in temperament were corrected, and some nervous symptoms disappeared. The teachers were so impressed that they asked Rudolf Steiner if eurythmy could be developed as a therapeutic tool. In response, Steiner developed a new form of therapeutic movement commonly called Therapeutic Eurythmy, but also known as Curative Eurythmy or Eurythmy Therapy.

The classroom eurythmy that the children do throughout their Waldorf schooling is of overall, comprehensive benefit to them. It can play the same role as a well-balanced whole foods diet. Therapeutic Eurythmy as a mode of

movement therapy treats specific problems and dysfunctional conditions.

Most movement therapies treat either physical or emotional problems. Physical therapy works mainly with the musculature, stretching and relaxing groups of muscles, so that the body has more freedom of movement and the person can develop new movement habits. Occupational therapies stimulate the development of lagging or immature reflexes and develop specific movement skills for functional or occupational reasons. For example, lack of certain movement experiences in early childhood—such as crawling—may prevent the healthy development of certain brain structures. If the kind of movement is later done in an intensive fashion, some of this development may still occur.

Other movement therapies emphasize emotional or soul issues. Dance therapy—used more with adults than with children—while based in physical movement, seeks to release fixed emotional energy (often the result of trauma) and/or free psychological patterns that have become too rigid and set. In the course of therapy, a disowned part of the patient’s personal history can be integrated and a healthy harmony of personality can be achieved.



**Therapeutic
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Therapeutic Eurythmy addresses problems on both the physical and emotional levels. It does so by working with what Rudolf Steiner, using a term current in esoteric circles in his day, called the “etheric body” or the “body of life-formative forces.” The etheric body is the invisible shadow-body of energy that gives cohesion and form to the material components that make up the physical body and that also is the basis of growth and regeneration. All living things, plants and animals, as well as human beings, have an etheric body. The terms *prana* in Indian culture, *ch’i* in Chinese culture, and “odic force” in Western culture pertain to the same reality. In the human being, the etheric body is also connected to temperament and to the development of thinking.

According to Rudolf Steiner, the etheric body is also related to the activity of speech. In his now published lecture course, *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*, Steiner explained:

The etheric body contains within it the forces of growth, of nourishment, and of memory. All this is imparted to the airy formations when we speak. The inner being of man, insofar as this is expressed in the life body, is impressed into the air when we speak.*

The sounds of speech are a product of the etheric or life-formative forces of the person speaking. The patterns of vibration in the air created by these sounds reflect these forces. (One can make visible the patterns that the sounds of speech create by making the sounds into a transparent, smoke-filled container.) Eurythmic gestures replicate these movements of the air and thus make speech *visible*. They do so, however, not in an intellectual manner, as sign language does. The eurythmic replication actually generates etheric force. When a person makes a eurythmic gesture, the archetypal, pure, healing pattern of that sound is manifested in the air. That healing quality works back into the person's own etheric body.

Eurythmy as a Therapy

The life-formative forces circulate in the human body, maintaining and regulating the functioning of the various internal organs. If the flow of life-formative forces is out of balance or moving in the wrong direction, at first subtle problems and, in time, more obvious organ malfunctions and illnesses will result. Acupuncture and acupressure prevent or correct pathological conditions by working with the circulation of etheric forces in the body.

Therapeutic Eurythmy also works with the etheric currents, seeking to strengthen or moderate them as necessary and to bring the whole body into balance. The patient, though, in making the movements by himself, is in effect healing himself. He is not dependent on the externally applied ministrations of a therapist. Thus, Therapeutic Eurythmy is a patient-centered, natural approach to healing.

In Speech Eurythmy, the movements of the body, particularly the arms, express the sounds of the various consonants and vowels. (In addition,

there is Tone Eurythmy, in which musical tones and intervals are expressed by gesture, but Tone Eurythmy is not as often used therapeutically, so will not be elaborated here.) Each gesture, corresponding to a certain sound, has a specific quality and corresponding therapeutic effect. The gesture for the hard **K** sound—in which the hands and arms (or sometimes the legs and feet) are thrust out to the side and make a chopping gesture—can stimulate the circulation of the blood, which may later benefit the digestive system and the breathing. The movement for the **B** sound—in which arms make an embracing and enclosing gesture around the body—can serve to “pull together” an emotionally scattered child and also can help the control of problems, such as bedwetting, related to overactive secretions. An exercise utilizing the dynamic **R** gesture—in which arms and hands move with the sweep and force of a breaking wave—can bring movement when movement is lacking, in constipation, for example, or can relieve stiffness and cramping in the hands caused by many hours at a keyboard. With this basic approach, Therapeutic Eurythmy is an effective artistic therapy that uses the body's own healing forces to treat various ailments and disabling conditions.



Each gesture, corresponding to a certain sound, has a specific quality and corresponding therapeutic effect. Here, the child does the gesture for the letter T.

Therapeutic Eurythmy begins with a medical diagnosis. Ideally, this is made by a medical doctor who has studied and is practicing anthroposophically extended medicine and has some understanding of the curative potential of eurythmy. Typically, the physician will then discuss his diagnosis and aims with the eurythmist. Together they will devise a treatment plan in which the eurythmy will supplement and support other medical measures, such as remedies, massage, and so on. Some physicians practicing anthroposophically extended medicine have had special training in the curative use of eurythmy and may prescribe the specific sounds and gestures that the eurythmist will use with the patient. Otherwise, the eurythmist, on the basis of the medical diagnosis, works out a prescription of vowels, consonants, and other harmonizing forms. The physician or eurythmist may prescribe eurythmic movements to musical tones, but this is much less common.

A Therapy Session

Rachel Ross, an experienced therapeutic eurythmist and remedial teacher, lives in Massachusetts. A description of a typical Therapeutic Eurythmy session follows.

A preadolescent boy has been referred because of a moderate case of scoliosis or curvature of the spine, which has interfered with his ability to sit for long periods at his desk. The physician has prescribed twice-weekly sessions with the eurythmy therapist.

The therapist greets the child warmly, cheerfully, and with a bit of humor, helping him relax. She then asks the child to do some rope-jumping. (It should be noted that rope-jumping is not part of eurythmy and not a typical element in a Therapeutic Eurythmy session. The therapist is borrowing this from another approach to movement therapy and using it as an icebreaker and as a diagnostic tool.) The boy jumps the rope to the cadence of a verse recited by the eurythmist. She notes a lack of sequencing ability—i.e., difficulty doing things in the correct order—and a lack of coordination between the upper and lower parts of the body. Problems with spatial awareness and posture also are evident.

After this warm-up, the therapist introduces a simple verse, then demonstrates the accompanying gestures until the child can do them on his own. She begins with the three archetypal vowel sounds of **I** [ee] (one arm pointing up, the other down and slightly to the side), **A** [ah] (both arms extended out to the sides and slightly raised), and **O** [oh] (the two arms and hands, with fingertips touching, forming an enclosed circle at chest level). At the end of each line of the verse, the child jumps to the next place on the floor, in each position making the gesture for the appropriate vowel sound. Steiner gave this as a basic exercise for “snapping together” and harmonizing the physical with the non-physical “bodies” of the human organism, including the etheric. The exercise also aids the integration of the senses and the incarnation process—the taking hold of the physical body by the etheric body and the individuality (the higher self or Ego) of the child.

Next the child is led by the therapist’s example into an exercise with the consonant **L**. This sound helps shape the life forces in the body. Here it is used in order to bring flexibility to the spine and to the surrounding muscles. With this mild case of scoliosis, the exercise with the **L** provides sufficient loosening. In a more extreme scoliosis, the eurythmist might suggest that the physician also prescribe massage.

The **L** exercise begins with a gentle rocking back and forth on the balls of the feet. Then the arms come together in front of the body and rise vertically in the **L** gesture. In eurythmy, movements are usually explained in imaginative pictures so that the movement has an inner dynamic and is not merely mechanical or intellectually abstract. The therapist gives the imagination of something moving gently up and down in ocean waves. The child is able to grasp and enter into this picture. Meanwhile, the gentle and harmonious movement begins to loosen and relax the muscles supporting the spine.

Next, work begins with the vowel sound **I**. In this gesture, one arm is extended upward while, in a counterbalance, the other arm is extended downward.

The direction of the spine’s curvature determines which arm reaches up and which down. The gesture serves to straighten the spine, not so much through stretching or lengthening muscles but rather through gradually realigning the life-formative forces. These etheric forces contain our habits and accustomed patterns of muscle tension and use. In this case, the established pattern of the scoliosis must be freed up and unlearned so that a new pattern can be learned. In Therapeutic Eurythmy the life-formative forces are first brought into movement, and the physical body changes in response. Working first on this subtle level, Therapeutic Eurythmy avoids the intrusive quality associated with some forms of bodywork.

The child next does some simple exercises with a copper rod. Steiner gave a series of movements that he termed “hygienic exercises,” intended to stimulate a general feeling of balance and energy and especially—all-important for this child—to serve as an aid to good

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posture. These involve holding the rod with both hands and moving it through a sequence of positions in relation to the body.

The half-hour lesson ends with the therapist reciting a verse, as the child stands quietly listening. Usually, the child is asked to rest for a short period after the lessons, perhaps even lie down, so that what has been done can "settle in." Each lesson is different, with certain elements carried on to the next session, others dropped, and new ones added, as the therapy progresses. With this child, work with the gesture for the vowel sound **U**—in which both arms extended in front of the body move slowly upward—was added later.

The child continued the lessons, in blocks, for some months, alternating seven weeks of practice with seven-week breaks. In time, some of the exercises were taught to the child's mother, so that she could work at home for a few minutes every day with the boy. In this case, when the therapy ended, the child was found—in the physician's eyes, somewhat miraculously—to be free of the scoliosis.

Therapeutic Eurythmy stimulates and balances the life-formative forces that underlie all the physical, emotional, and mental processes in the human being. Hence it is useful for a wide variety of pathological conditions. It helps the entire body become more mobile and flexible and can aid in the treatment of many physical ailments, including neck and back pain, diabetes, epilepsy, eye disease, and various sclerotic symptoms. In children, it is especially effective in treating ADHD and other behavioral and emotional problems and even brain damage and mental retardation. It can be used in tandem with other therapeutic modalities and can help other therapies work more strongly. Therapeutic Eurythmy also teaches the patient that she has the capacity to overcome her own illness.

Therapeutic Eurythmy continues to grow in America and abroad as alternative therapies, physically and etherically based, are more accepted. There are training centers in the United States and Europe, and

increasing numbers of physicians and trained eurythmists are going to these centers for advanced training in Therapeutic Eurythmy. In some European countries, the efficacy of Therapeutic Eurythmy has been well enough demonstrated that it is covered in national health insurance plans. National professional organizations have formed in several countries to promote and represent the therapeutic art.

Specialized research in new areas continues, though the number of practitioners able to find time for research is limited. Some areas of promise include work with HIV/AIDS, cancer, and ailments of the eye.

There are hundreds of therapeutic eurythmists currently in practice, the largest concentration being in Central Europe. The number in North America is still rather small. Ideally, every Waldorf school would have one or two eurythmy therapists to work with the children having special physical or other challenges.

* Rudolf Steiner, *Eurythmy as Visible Speech* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1984), 27, lecture of June 24, 1924.



A child does the eurythmic gesture for the letter B, which has an embracing, enclosing effect.



THOMAS POPLAWSKI

is a trained eurythmist and is also a psychotherapist.

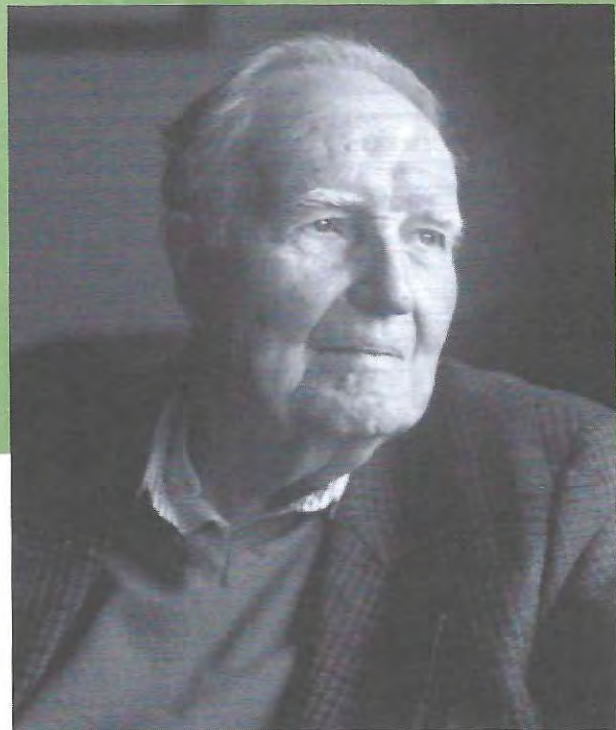
His wife, Valerie, also a trained eurythmist, is a kindergarten teacher at the Hartsbrook School in Hadley, Massachusetts. Thomas and Valerie have two young sons, both students at the Hartsbrook School. As staff writer for *Renewal*, Thomas in recent years has written twenty-three feature-length articles for the magazine, each of them very popular with our readers. Thomas's book *Eurythmy: Rhythm, Dance and Soul* was published in 1998 by The Anthroposophic Press in the United States and Floris Books in the United Kingdom.

CREDITS: *Eurythmy figure on page 18 is from the upcoming AWSNA book Eurythmy: A Creative Force in Humanity by Sylvia Bardt. Photos are from Seth Morrison, a therapeutic eurythmist in Copake, New York.*

Thinking with the *Heart*

A Conversation with Henry Barnes

BY GEOFFREY SWAEBE



*Henry Barnes, who was born in New York City in 1912, is the “grand old man” of Waldorf Education in America. The first American to receive a full formal training as a Waldorf teacher, a key teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City for almost forty years, and a pioneer and leader in the wider Waldorf movement, Henry has made an incalculable contribution to Waldorf Education. This year, Henry’s monumental history of the anthroposophical movement in North America, *Into the Heart’s Land*, was published. Henry began to research and write the book when he was eighty-eight years old, and the impressive 800-page volume was presented to the public on August 12, 2005, his ninety-third birthday.*

*Upon retirement in 1977, Henry and his wife, Christy—who, as a teacher of English and literature, also had a long and distinguished career at the Steiner School—moved to rural Hillsdale, New York. Throughout his “retirement,” Henry has remained an active and important figure in the Waldorf and anthroposophical movements. He was one of the founders of the Hawthorne Valley Educational Foundation in Harlemville, New York. Henry’s vision of a magazine about Waldorf Education in North America led to the founding of this journal some fifteen years ago, and he served on *Renewal’s* editorial advisory board for over ten years. In 1999, Henry’s book *A Life for the Spirit*, a biography of Rudolf Steiner, was published. Henry now lives in the Fellowship Community in Spring Valley, New York.*

To those privileged to know Henry, he is a testimony to the fact that, if a person is active in body, mind, and spirit, there is no such thing as old age, and also that a human being can indeed learn to “think with the heart.”

There is an inborn longing on the part of the child—not that the child would be able to formulate it—for trust in the human beings of the sphere that he or she is entering.

Last year, Geoffrey Swaebe, a parent at the Green Meadow Waldorf School in Spring Valley, visited and interviewed Henry. The following are excerpts from Henry and Geoff's conversation.

—R. E. K.

Children, Authority, and Trust

GS: You once wrote, "A Steiner school recognizes the basic need in children up to the age of fourteen for genuine authority—authority and respect of child for teacher and respect for the child's inherent self by the teacher—not authoritarianism." Could you say something more about the general relationship that children have with authority?

HB: Children have a fundamental need to trust an adult, especially somebody whom they discover to be a central figure in their young lives. It is a need that changes slightly from year to year as children go through the period between seven and fourteen years of age. And of course in Waldorf schools, if all goes well, the class teacher accompanies the group from year to year. But I think that this is a basic need of human souls at this age to have a real, true sense of trust and confidence in the human being—in the class teacher—who is playing a central role in their development. That's what I would mean by authority.

GS: How is a child's trust in the class teacher different from his love for and trust in his parents?

HB: As infants emerge into early childhood and gradually become conscious, they find themselves embedded in their family. And so that is something that, in a way, is a given. In contrast, when they go to school, especially when they move from kindergarten to elementary school—and especially in an education where the class teacher plays the role that he or she does in Waldorf Education—what exists between the child and the teacher is an entirely new relationship, different from those that exist within the family. The child is already beginning to look with quite different eyes at the teacher than at the parent whom she or he takes for granted. This is a very important point in the child's development, where she or he is stepping out of the family—although the kindergarten is still, in a certain

way, almost a family. And then the child is moving into a very different situation in the elementary school.

There is an inborn longing on the part of the child—not that the child would be able to formulate it—for trust in the human beings of the sphere that he or she is entering. And that, I think, is fundamental to their need for authority.

The Content of Waldorf Education

GS: Is there a particular content to Waldorf Education, or is it purely a method of teaching?

HB: The content of Waldorf Education is the understanding of the threefold human being, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, and how that being evolves over the first twenty-one years of life and on into later life. I would say that that is the content out of which the methods of Waldorf Education arise.

GS: When you use terms such as "body, soul, and spirit," the question arises as to whether there is a religious or Christian content to Waldorf Education?

HB: The answer to this is rooted in the whole understanding of who the human being is and how the human being develops. It's not so much in a cultic or religious aspect, but it has more to do with how the teacher as a human being experiences, comes to know, and also, I would say, comes to love the human being in the students with whom she or he is faced. And, in a sense, this is Christianity for me. I've been a student of Rudolf Steiner's now for seventy-two years; it was Waldorf Education that spoke to me initially, and this is the way it has developed in me over my many years.

GS: But if someone were to walk into a Waldorf School, it's unlikely that they would find a teacher presenting any information or material directly relating to Rudolf Steiner's threefold understanding of the human being.

HB: Yes, that is true. But, as significantly, you are also unlikely to find a serious consideration of Steiner's view of the threefold social order, which is the threefold human being writ large in society. Steiner saw that the threefold organization of the human being in body, soul, and spirit can and should be reflected in the organization of society into three related, but independent,

The threefold social order is really the social order toward which humanity is striving without knowing it.

realms—the economic, the political, and the cultural/spiritual.

It strikes me that one of the failures of American Waldorf Education is the failure of Waldorf schools to really build an understanding for Rudolf Steiner's concept of the threefold social order. I think that our teachers have been so preoccupied with their day-to-day work and with understanding the nature of the human being and how it evolves, that they have not really grasped the significance of the threefold social order. This is based on the principle of freedom in cultural and spiritual life; on an associative economic life; and on a limited role for the political state as being primarily to guarantee the rights of the individual citizen. The threefold social order is really the social order toward which humanity is striving without knowing it.

GS: What do you see as the relevance of the threefold social order for us, and why do you feel that Waldorf schools should address it?

HB: We live in an age of polarization, and I think that Rudolf Steiner's concept of the threefold commonwealth would rescue us from that polarization, because it is actually founded on the three principles that form the basis of our social life.

I would say that, in a certain sense, every Waldorf school that is genuinely working with the principles of Waldorf Education is educating in the individual student the threefold capacities. But I think that as students leave the school and go out into life, if they are able also to see how the threefold understanding of the human being applies in a practical way—such as in the threefold social order and, potentially, in social life today—this understanding would provide them with a focus that would be very helpful.

Public Funding and Waldorf Education

GS: Is there a place for public funding of Waldorf Education?

HB: That's really a crucial question. [Waldorf activist] Gary Lamb, for instance, takes a strong point of view that under no circumstances should

a Waldorf school ever receive public funding or be controlled by the state. And yet, the fact is that in order to reach the largest number of children today, one almost has to pursue the possibility of introducing at least some Waldorf elements into public education.

Now I think that it is very difficult for a public school to have the complete freedom to become in the fullest sense a Waldorf school. But, for instance, in 1923 Rudolf Steiner met with Swiss educators and spoke of the fact that, inasmuch as public education was so dominant in Switzerland, it would be most unrealistic to assume that Swiss Waldorf schools were going to be entirely independent of the state. Rudolf Steiner was, in fact, very definite concerning the point that Waldorf Education can be applied anywhere.

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Renewal

To be able to think with the heart means that one has to engage oneself in one's whole human being. And fundamental to Waldorf Education is the threefold human being consisting of body, soul, and spirit.

GS: And we have, in fact, been seeing something of a movement of the Waldorf curriculum into public schools and charter schools today.

HB: Yes, and that is being bitterly attacked by some who are insisting that Anthroposophy is a religion and that this violates the First Amendment's requirement for the separation of church and state.

GS: Do you see a problem for the Waldorf movement generally if other schools, either public or private, simply adopt parts of the Waldorf curriculum, or is that something to be expected?

HB: I wouldn't see that as a reason for not trying to widen the interest in Waldorf Education, including to the public sector, because I think it would help the children;

it would be for the sake of the children. But a great deal would then depend on whether a public school that wants to incorporate elements of Waldorf Education can secure for itself sufficient freedom to be able to do that. And even if the public insisted that testing be done, still something of the spirit of Waldorf Education could penetrate. It wouldn't be truly what we understand as Waldorf Education. Yet I can well imagine that a teacher in a public school—even under fairly tight administrative supervision—who really carries the impulse of Waldorf Education and of Anthroposophy in her heart, her whole being, could still make a real difference to the children.

But where I would agree wholeheartedly with Gary Lamb is that ideally we must strive for an education that is completely independent of political control. And yet one may have to accept situations where that ideal is not realizable and where it might still be well worth the effort to try to introduce something of the spirit of Waldorf Education into the classroom.

Thinking with the Heart

GS: You have sometimes spoken of the importance of "thinking with the heart" in Waldorf Education. Could you say something about that?

HB: It is not easy to put it into precise words or clear-cut concepts because, of course, the heart basically is an organ of feeling. To be able to think with the heart means that one has to engage oneself in one's whole human being. And fundamental to Waldorf Education is the threefold human being consisting of body, soul, and spirit. It is the soul that makes it possible to unite our bodily physical experience with our spiritual experience. The soul is primarily centered in the heart, and we could say that the heart is where the soul of the human being has its home. One tries to awaken the soul so that it becomes a truly human faculty that can partake of the spirit through thinking and, at the same time, can harmonize and humanize the will on the physical side. So the heart is the humanizing element in the human being. It is the middle element.

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The fruit of a Waldorf education or of any genuine education is that what has matured through imitation, through imagination, and through intellectual development is all at the disposal of the human individuality.

GS: When you use the phrase “thinking with the heart,” are you pointing toward the emotional or affective life of human beings or to something else?

HB: No, I would not say that “thinking with the heart” is directed to the emotional life, although the emotions, in a way, do participate because, certainly, to think with the heart is not an unfeeling experience. Feeling plays its role, but it is primarily a thought experience which has been warmed through and humanized, so to speak, by passing through the human heart.

GS: Is it reasonable to say that one of the primary tasks of Waldorf teachers is to learn to think with the heart?

HB: I would say so. Yes. But one shouldn’t mistake an emotional attitude for thinking with the heart. One of the fundamental aims of Waldorf teacher training is to help the teacher to develop the capacity to think with the heart, not just intellectually.

GS: How does one learn to think with the heart?

HB: One way is through the whole process of Waldorf Education. Think of the child’s development as it is encouraged and guided in the Waldorf school. The young child, through *imitation*, really absorbs everything in the environment and makes it her own. In the second stage of the elementary school years, there is an experience of the whole world again, but in a new way, which is primarily through the faculty of *imagination*. In the adolescent years, there is a third way of “digesting” life and the world, now through the *intellect*.

I think that this process prepares an individual for adulthood in such a way that at seventeen, or eighteen, or twenty-one, the young person really does engage spirit and soul, as well as intellect. And that is what, in a certain way, ripens by the age of forty-two when the individuality, the Ego [the higher spiritual Self possessed by each human being], that has been engaged in this process of education, really comes through. Of course the fruit of a Waldorf education or of any genuine education is that what has matured through imitation, through imagination, and through intellectual development is all at the disposal of the human individuality. And that individuality is, I would say, fundamentally a spiritual capacity.

Meditation

GS: Does meditation play a role in the work of Waldorf teachers?

HB: I’m sure that there are many successful Waldorf teachers who don’t meditate. But if you are a student of Steiner and are really trying to pursue a path along spiritual-scientific lines, then inevitably you encounter a need for meditation. Now, whether one is a successful meditator or not is an entirely different question. But I would say that in seeking a tool or instrument for self-knowledge and self-development, one almost certainly, sooner or later, faces this question: Can I undertake meditative work? And I would think that every serious Waldorf teacher sooner or later would also face that. And, of course, Rudolf Steiner gave two meditations to the faculty of the Stuttgart School, which I am sure are still being circulated amongst Waldorf school faculties.

GS: What is your own meditative practice like?

HB: Well, at the present time—after all, I’m well into my nineties—immediately after my breakfast here at the Fellowship Community where I live, I put on my boots and hike around the grounds. And when I come back from walking, I take time for my meditative work, which takes various forms.

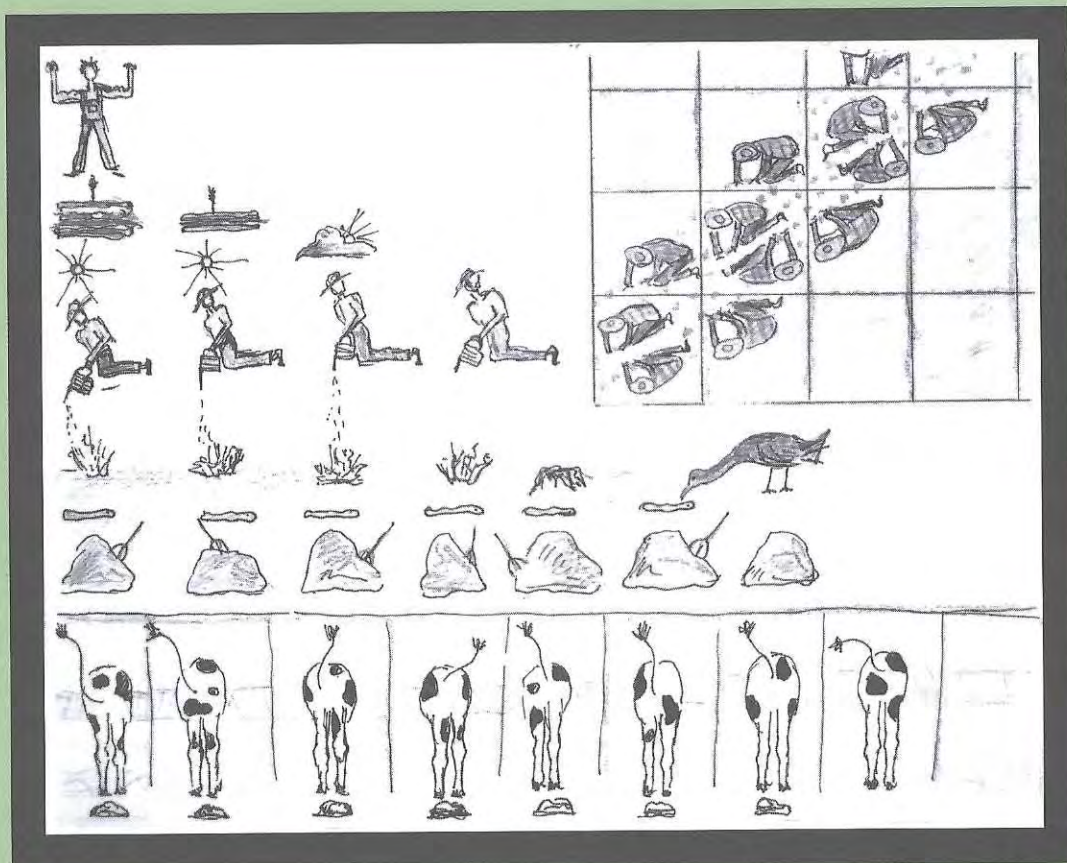
I always begin with Rudolf Steiner’s *Calendar of the Soul*. That’s the first step. You have there these extraordinary fifty-two verses that really enable one to enter into the experience of the relationship between the human being and nature, week by week, over the course of the year. From there I go on to the Foundation Stone Meditation, which is really a meditation that leads the individual to an understanding of her- or himself as a threefold being of body, soul, and spirit. Rudolf Steiner gave the Foundation Stone Meditation in 1923 as part of the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society. It is to me an increasingly wonderful source of understanding.

But meditation, as I now know, isn’t easy. July 2006 will mark my seventy-third year as a student of Rudolf Steiner, and I consider myself to be still in kindergarten, looking forward possibly, before I die, to entering first grade.

GS: Thank you.

CREDIT: Photo from SteinerBooks and Henry Barnes.

Drawing Bricks in Math Class



Memories of a Waldorf Math Teacher

BY SARAH BARTGES

The three illustrations in this article are student work from the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City from a twelfth-grade three-week main lesson entitled simply "Math Topics," taught by Daniel Marsch. The course intended to survey the twelve-year Waldorf school curriculum chronologically, through the lenses provided by an array of mathematical topics. These ranged from algebra to number theory, trigonometry to dynamics, combinatorics to logic. An example is that fifth-grade botany invited geometric considerations (five petals versus six) that focused first on the symmetry of regular polygons and then on symmetry operations as a group of permutations. The survey aimed for a network of ideas, with the math topics as methods more than as subject matter. The teacher says that he wanted to show both that mathematics is richly human and that the entire Waldorf curriculum is "ethically saturated." Illustrations on page 28 and the top of page 29 depict math topics as applied to the third-grade farming block. The lower illustration on page 29 depicts math topics as applied to a high school main lesson in history through art.

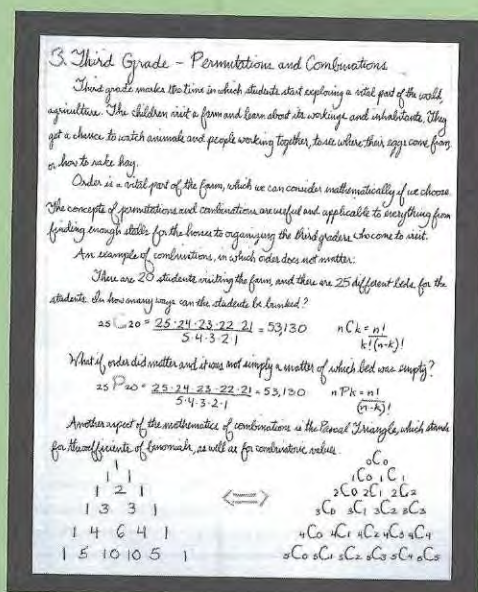
Sarah Bartges pays tribute here to her math teacher at the Rudolf Steiner High School in New York City. While Daniel Marsch's unorthodox, challenging, and obviously effective teaching methods are the product of his own imagination and insights into his subject, they reflect certain principles that inform and guide all Waldorf Education. These principles include: the careful observation of the natural and man-made worlds; the integration of artistic activity into the learning process; the emphasis on self-learning and self-discovery; the recognition of the interrelationships between disparate branches of learning; and the connecting of the abstract to the mundane and practical.

—R. E. K.

As I sat down to my first geometry class of sophomore year, I took out my notebook and pen, preparing to take notes on things to do with circles, hexagons, and geometric proofs. Five minutes later, our new math teacher, Daniel Marsch, walked into the room, his hands laden with bricks. We could only guess where he had gotten these from in the middle of the school day. Placing one brick on each desk, he told us, "Draw what you see." After we realized that sitting with mouths agape would not bring any further explanation from Mr. Marsch, we all commenced to draw the bricks.

For the next month of school, we continued to draw blocks, guided only by instructions such as to "do away with sketchy and 'artistic' styles" and to "draw rather with clear, clean, and continuous lines." The purpose of these drawing exercises? Mr. Marsch never told us, leaving every individual to struggle and find for him- or herself the mysterious rapport between math and art.

In the months that followed, Mr. Marsch continued to surprise, challenge, and dismay. Without telling us why, he had us sketch bird skeletons, the buildings outside our window, and the reflections of our classroom visible on the large, opaque spherical globes that covered the ceiling bulbs. He pushed us daily to form proofs of equations—proofs we had up till then taken as incontestably true. We started with understanding "what is π " and its vital importance concerning circles and spheres. No matter how difficult or complex a mathematical concept was, we were always



pushed to examine it as exhaustively as we had the simple π .

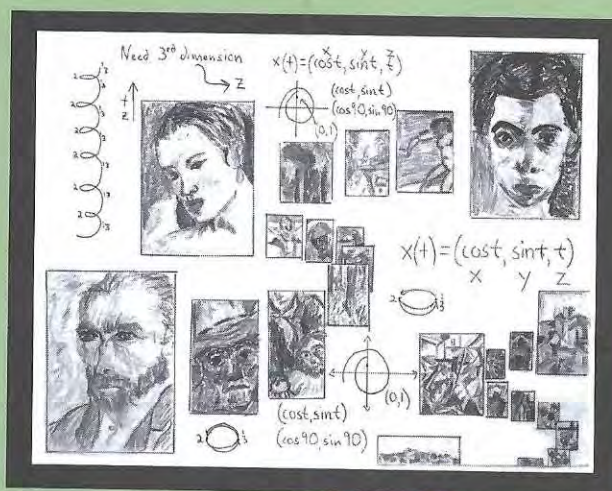
Throughout these mathematical journeys, Mr. Marsch insisted on our struggling with the work independently. When I raised my hand to ask for help, I was usually ignored, left alone to confront my confusion.

The first few months of that tenth-grade geometry class were trying ones for me. Since I have never had much facility with mathematical concepts, Mr. Marsch's classes routinely left me with profound conundrums. Understanding the difficult material was only one challenge. I had been placed in the advanced

math class because of my previous hard work. I realized I could no longer stay afloat through memorization and repetition of textbook material. It would have been very easy for me to give up and join the easier math group. However, there was something that intrigued me about the quiet and reserved Mr. Marsch and his unorthodox teaching style. I realized that his not offering help and explanations was a deliberate strategy. I wanted to see things as he saw them and to understand how this certainly unique perspective played out in the way he taught us math.

As the year progressed, I became accustomed to my tribulations in our daily forty-minute math periods and in the month-long main lesson blocks with Mr. Marsch. To my great surprise, I found myself looking forward to math and the next challenge that would be brought. While receiving an A for math in the past had been gratifying, the sense of accomplishment I now felt in working through entire proofs on my own was deeply fulfilling. There was something exhilarating in discovering a truth through the application of principles and skills that I could recall from a previous class, or had discovered the year before, or even learned in eighth grade. While I had previously deemed math to be a trivial endeavor, I was beginning to find that its laws applied to the relationships in the world around me.

In our work in the eleventh and twelfth grades, Mr. Marsch continued to stimulate and challenge. In the first class of the eleventh-grade Introduction to Calculus main lesson block, we were sent to Central Park and told to write about what we found in nature that was infinite and what was finite. Later in that block we spent hours discussing how philosophy and calculus are intricately related.



BOOKS

in Brief

Shepherd's Songbook for Waldorf Schools, Grades I, II, III

BY ELISABETH LEBRET

REVIEWED BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

Waldorf School Association of Ontario
Toronto, ON, 2004
74 pages • \$19.00

Elisabeth Lebret was born in The Netherlands on April 4, 1907, and taught music at the Free Waldorf School in Zeist for many years. Over the years she collected, from various folk traditions, many songs for young children. Also, she herself set to music simple poems, some of them by her fellow Waldorf teacher Alan Howard.

In 1975 Elisabeth Lebret published in English a collection of these songs as *Shepherd's Songbook*. In spite of its typewritten text and handwritten music, the book soon became, and has remained, a standard and much loved resource for Waldorf teachers all over the world.

This newly published edition of *Shepherd's Songbook* is beautiful, contemporary, and eminently legible. It includes music and text for more than eighty songs for children in the early grades. An explanatory note accompanies many of the songs.

But *Shepherd's Songbook* is more than a book of songs. It is a book about music education for the young child. Elisabeth Lebret draws on her serious study of Rudolf Steiner's view of child development and on her own long experience as a teacher. She explains why pentatonic music and music in "the mood of the fifth" are appropriate for first- and second-grade children, and why and how third graders can be introduced to chromatic music. In addition, she gives practical advice on introducing and teaching musical notation, rhythm, and pitch.

This new version of a Waldorf classic will be useful to Waldorf early childhood, kindergarten, and class teachers, as well as to parents homeschooling young children.

Elisabeth Lebret passed away on August 13, 2005, at the age of ninety-eight. She spent her last years—alert, full of life, and independent—at the Hesperus Fellowship Community, a community for senior citizens adjacent to the Toronto Waldorf School.

Shepherd's Songbook can be ordered from the Waldorf School Association of Toronto at www.waldorf.ca or at 905-889-2066.

In the eleventh-grade run-through math class, we sang medieval canons almost every morning. Mr. Marsch wrote the first songs, but, as the course progressed, we students also wrote canons following the rules of ratio used by the monks of the Middle Ages to create harmony. On the final exam for our eleventh-grade Projective Geometry main lesson block, we had the option to demonstrate examples of geometry in a cooking recipe. The references to everyday life involved in this approach to math enabled me to value as well as understand the concepts I was learning.

Throughout my almost three years of math with Mr. Marsch, I found that the purpose of a class was never to memorize a formula written on the board or replicate a theorem from the page of a textbook. Rather it was to perceive the essence of a problem by discovering its connection with the mathematical skills that we had acquired. The point was not to gain facts, but rather to gain understanding, through consciously looking at the problem in its entirety and through examining our own thinking in the process.

The German philosopher Goethe (1749–1832) wrote:

The experience of a relationship as such is only possible through a transformation from a piecemeal way of thought to a simultaneous perception of the whole. Such a transformation amounts to a reconstructing of consciousness itself.

During the years I studied mathematics with Mr. Marsch, he constantly challenged and encouraged me to expand the limits of my mind and reach for the infinite creativity of my perception. Goethe's words express the most important math fact I have learned in four years. As Goethe pointed out, in order to understand phenomena in our world, we must look at them not only with our intellectual mind but with our whole consciousness. This kind of perception, combined with an awareness of existing relationships, is what forms true understanding.

In the second term of my twelfth year, my schedule prevented me from taking the twelfth-grade calculus elective. I missed the accustomed dose of puzzle-solving in my day. However, I found that I am now able to apply the approach of patient discovery that I have learned from Mr. Marsch to all of my studies. I am still no mathematician, but, were it not for Mr. Marsch, I might never have discovered the relevance and importance of mathematics. I might never have seen the subject as a means through which one can understand the infinite, minute connections that exist throughout our world.



SARAH BARTGES grew up in New York City, attending the Rudolf Steiner School from preschool through senior year. During school, Sarah was a leader in the new sports program, as well as a dedicated member of the student government as a class president and the student council president. Sarah is now a freshman at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. She hopes to major in environmental science in the Walsh School of Foreign Service.



Movement and Consciousness

Helping Adolescents
through Movement
Education

BY JAIMEN McMILLAN

We live today in a world of mirrors.

Ubiquitous reflective mirrors, digital cameras, cell phone cameras, and video cameras present each of us, child and adult, with constant images of how we look and how we move. Children are being driven at a younger and younger age into self-consciousness and a concern with external appearance. And the turmoil in puberty, that ultimate age of self-consciousness, is perhaps being rendered more intense by this world of mirrors.

... lethargic, languid, impulsive, explosive, ill at ease, embarrassed, insecure, confident, cocky ...

Those who live or work with teenagers are no doubt familiar with this constellation of contradictory human qualities. The teenage years can be a bewildering and trying time for parents and teachers and for the adolescent himself. The young person is struggling with a new consciousness and with a physical body that is going through major changes. Poor posture, awkward patterns of movement, as well as problematic behaviors

and negative mental attitudes are very common. However, since movements are closely related to feelings and thoughts, movement education can play a vital role in the adolescent's regaining physical coordination and grace and in forming a positive self-image and social identity.

In the short story "The Marionette Theater," the German writer Heinrich von Kleist (1777–1811) identifies consciousness as a key factor in the mystery of human movement. The story contains three vignettes concerning, in turn, a marionette, an adolescent boy, and a bear.

In the first vignette, the author speaks with a world-famous dancer whom he has discovered several times in the local marketplace enjoying marionette shows with the general public. The performer says a marionette has much to teach about movement. It can have a grace, lightness, and levity that human beings seldom possess. He explains that in the hands of a skilled puppeteer—who unites his soul with the marionette—the puppet moves without intellectual awareness, self-consciousness, or affectation. It moves according to natural laws alone, with the soul's consciousness always at the center of

gravity of a given movement. Thus every movement is light, graceful, and beautiful,



The dancer says a marionette has much to teach about movement. It can have a grace, lightness, and levity that human beings seldom possess. It moves according to natural laws alone, with the soul's consciousness (of the puppeteer) always at the center of gravity of a given movement.

affects most human movement.

In the second vignette, recalled by the narrator, a sixteen-year-old boy is drying himself after swimming. While drying his foot, the boy catches a glimpse of himself in a mirror. He is struck by the grace and beauty of his own image, an image that reminds him of a statue he had recently seen of a youth pulling a splinter from his foot. Staring into the mirror, the boy tries over and over to replicate the pose. But, he cannot do so, and with each try the result is more stilted and laughable. He persists and, in time, completely loses the natural and charming bearing that had delighted those who knew him.

The dancer then tells of his experience of having fenced with a bear. The bear is standing on its hind legs, its

back leaning against the post to which it is chained. The bear's right paw is raised, ready for combat, its fixed gaze peering into the dancer's very soul. The dancer is unable to land a blow; the bear parries each with an uncanny calm and, besides, does not respond to any feint. When the dancer pretends to strike, the bear remains still.

The lesson of this triptych is clear. Spontaneity, innocence, and lack of self-awareness issue in graceful, harmonious, beautiful, and effective movements. Self-consciousness is a fall from grace that brings awkwardness and unnatural, pretentious movements. Kleist's short story points to the loss of innocence, of physical ease, and of coordination that often accompanies the onset of puberty.

Adolescence—A Necessary Fall

The young child is in a kind of dreamlike state in which the separation between self and world is not stark. With the nine-year change, the child begins to experience this separation. Puberty brings a yet more profound sense of self and of separation. It comes without warning, and adolescents often feel they have been waylaid. The transition is, however, a blessing, a necessary step toward becoming a free, self-determining adult.

The adolescent is experiencing his self being drawn from the surrounding space and jammed into one part of the body or another. The immediate result is often not so attractive—jutting jaws, knobby knees, a slovenly gait, awkward, disjointed patterns of movement. Combined with a new self-consciousness, this can make life very difficult.

Young people respond in various ways. Some withdraw inside themselves and become alienated from family and friends and from the normal activities of life. Some explode in bursts of frustration, anger, and destructive behavior. Others get involved in early or excessive sexual activity, in substance abuse, or develop eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. For most, there is an accompanying physical lethargy. Even the simplest household chore requires more energy and purposefulness than they can muster.

But we parents and teachers can help adolescents through this challenging period. Providing appropriate movement education, schooling them in conversation, and being good role models are all important.

Movement Education

The self—"the seat of the soul" or locus of consciousness—can be centered within the body, in various places, or it can be located outside oneself in the periphery. A consistently body-centered experience of self can lead to egocentric behavior, to physical cramping, and a paralysis of the will—getting "stuck in a rut." Living only in the peripheral self can lead to a sleeplike trance, a state of being "spaced out" or "way out" that also results in an inability to take action. A third possibility involves being, at the same time, within the body, outside the body, and in between these two. This third relationship to space is a prerequisite for the growth of the true self. It involves the communication and connection between the self in the body and in the periphery.

Activities that concentrate only on the body will lead in time to isolation, alienation, and being stuck in the mirage of one's own reflection, as well as to physical illnesses. This may happen to young people who become overly involved in some athletic activity. Activities that drive the self strongly into the confines of

gravity gives a buoyant levity, as demonstrated by the marionettes in von Kleist's story. To the extent that the seat of the soul is at the point of greatest mechanical advantage, the adolescent will experience a sense of ease, quietness, beauty, strength, and enhanced consciousness, or clarity of consciousness. This ability to consciously move the locus of the soul differentiates the human being from other creatures.

Movement education should also develop the ability, described above, to be within the body and at the periphery at the same time. The adolescent can learn to be within himself and also to be in contact with his spatial environment and with other persons around him.

A wholesome movement education based on Spacial Dynamics® comprises exercises, gymnastics, games, sports, eurythmy, and dance. Exercises range from partner-based activities—such as Greco-Roman wrestling and fencing with staves—to exercises in which space itself is the substance that students work with, activities such as "The Stage," "Marionette Strings," and "The Mirror." In the games Cometball and Spaceball, spatial considerations are woven into sport-like activities. In sports, gymnastics, athletics, and dance, one's relationship to one's self, to the surrounding

The boy catches a glimpse of himself in a mirror. He is struck by the grace and beauty of his own image, an image that reminds him of a statue he had recently seen of a youth pulling a splinter from his foot. Staring into the mirror, the boy tries over and over to replicate the pose. But, he cannot do so, and with each try the result is more stilted and laughable.



the body—such as rigorous competitive sports—can lead to conditions like anorexia and bulimia. Lack of physical exercise, certain types of random movements, as well as drugs, alcohol, and the concentrated visual stimulation such as experienced in computer games, can drive one's locus of consciousness out of the body and can weaken one's sense of individuality.

Thus, healthful movement education should seek to develop in the young person a new experience of space both within the body and in the surroundings. It should develop also the ability to move the self, "the seat of the soul" or locus of consciousness, to the appropriate place. The "seat of the soul" is the center of gravity in the particular movement. Adolescents need to find a new relationship to gravity. Drooping waistlines, hanging pants, and untied shoes seem to indicate a strong relationship to gravity, but in fact proper alignment to

space, and to the other persons involved is always emphasized.

Experiences that lead to a new appreciation of gravity and a positive relationship to levity are also important. Through the more advanced Spacial Dynamics exercises and through Bothmer Gymnastics,* the concept of infinity is introduced. (Waldorf high school students work with this concept also through their study of projective geometry.) Infinite space invites the traveler to enter the world of living ideas and imaginative thought. Thought itself has the quality of levity and can help the adolescent start to emerge from the grip of gravity. At the end of "The Marionette Theater," the dancer declares that grace in movement can be the result of no consciousness, or of an *infinite* consciousness. This infinite consciousness, however, requires that we eat anew from the tree of knowledge.

One reason that awkwardness, ennui, and paralysis of will afflict adolescents is that “the seat of the soul” has become fixed in locations that cause disharmony, most typically “the seat of the pants,” and the teenager has not learned how to move it to another, more propitious place. In the activities, games, and exercises that can teach the student how to change “the seat of the soul,” playful experimentation is key. Teachers should encourage students to experiment with their consciousness of space and to notice the changes—physical, emotional, psychological—that they experience. Levity, grace, energy, and enthusiasm can be regained, but doing so involves intentional and conscious activity. Adolescents can create new spatial connections to the world, to others, and to themselves. We as teachers and parents just have to help them.

Conversation

The art of conversation also involves movement—that of thoughts and feelings. In this often undervalued area, adults can school adolescents.

Adults must make *spaces* for conversation with young people. Spaces that are open, warm with

important work done in eurythmy and school plays, further training in reporting, recitation, discussion, and debating are called for. These verbal exchanges help young people make inner and outer bridges between their thoughts, expressions, gestures, and words.

Role Models

Virtually all of us parents and teachers have experienced the same fall from grace in movement, and most of us still live within it. We need to train our own sense of space and self, to make our own movements graceful and harmonious. What we hope for our young people, we must strive to achieve for ourselves. It is the striving, not the accomplishment, that is of greatest importance to our young people.

Steam, water, and ice are different expressions of the same element. Similarly, consciousness and movement are also the same element, manifesting in different states. Consciousness affects the ways a person moves. Patterns of movement affect consciousness. Herein, though, lies a possibility of change. We can change our consciousness by altering the way we move and we can alter our movement by changing our consciousness. The need for working with both aspects is particularly strong during adolescence, but it is relevant throughout our lives.



The dancer then tells of his experience of having fenced with a bear. The dancer is unable to land a blow; the bear parries each with an uncanny calm and, besides, does not respond to any feint. The lesson of this triptych is clear: Spontaneity, innocence, and lack of self-awareness issue in graceful, harmonious, beautiful, and effective movements.

interest, and devoid of judgment and impatience can free the adolescent from self-consciousness and invite participation in a common, conscious activity. Conversation creates a shared, enlivened space between two previously isolated individuals.

A true conversation, such as that in “The Marionette Theater,” is based on mutual respect, openness, genuine interest, and nonjudgmental inquiry. What is created is more than either of the participants could have created on his own. And the conversation allows each participant to enlarge and to change his viewpoint. With the fluid context of true conversation, the narrator is able to give up his old views and appreciate new points of view.

Adolescents need to be schooled in the art of conversation and personal communication. Along with the

*Bothmer Gymnastics® is the name given to a series of age-appropriate spatial exercises developed by Fritz, Graf von Bothmer, the first physical education teacher at the founding Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany. These movement exercises were designed to complement the Waldorf curriculum from the third through the twelfth grade. Bothmer intended these exercises, done in the gymnasium, to help students experience in movement the underlying principles of the subjects they were studying in the classroom.



JAIMEN McMILLAN, the creator of *Spacial Dynamics*,® was active in track and field, baseball, and football in high school and, in college, was on the national championship fencing team. In addition to training movement educators in North America and around the world, Jaimen is codirector of *OlymPeace*. This global organization brings together young people from communities that are in conflict with one another and, through the noncompetitive *Spacial Dynamics* pentathlon model and the arts, fosters cooperation and mutual respect.

Parzival

and the Journey of Adolescence

BY JOHN WULSIN

Parzival, Wolfram von Eschenbach's medieval epic, offers a portrait of the journey through adolescence. It is the story of a youth who leaves home and wanders the land as a bumbling fool, causing much mayhem and sorrow, but who as a striving knight learns compassion and wisdom and, in the end, becomes the King of the Holy Grail. Studied intensively in the eleventh grade of the Waldorf school, the epic offers insights into the development of the adolescent through the four years of high school.

This article summarizes the epic and then, grade by grade, relates it to the development of high schoolers.



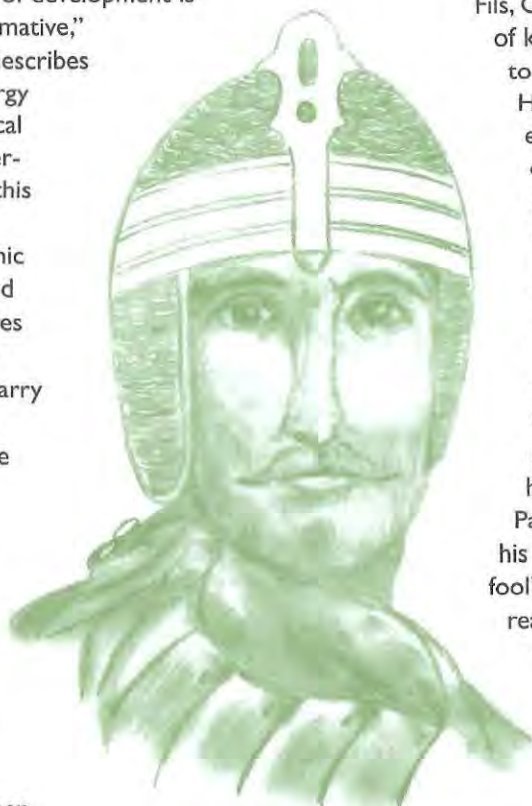
Adolescence: Preparing for the Higher Self

In the first seven years of life, most of the forces of the young child go into forming the totality of the physical body, the instrument with which she will live her life. The young child is a being primarily of action, of willful limb activity—reaching, playing, working, running in the world.

In the second seven years, between the change of teeth and puberty, the focus of development is the etheric, or “life-formative,” body. Rudolf Steiner describes this as an invisible energy “shadow” of the physical body that gives it coherence and life. During this time, development is centered in the rhythmic system of the heart and lungs. The child acquires habits and patterns of behavior that he will carry through life. Between seven and fourteen, the child learns primarily through the realm of feeling, which is the reason the Waldorf pedagogy during this period emphasizes the arts.

In adolescence, the period between fourteen and twenty-one, the astral body is the focus of development. This is the realm of instinct, desire, passion (during this period the young person sexually matures and becomes capable of reproduction), but also the realm of thought. Only after puberty does the capacity for rational thought emerge and develop.

The curriculum and pedagogy of the Waldorf high school are based on this view of human development. The aim of the Waldorf high school is twofold: to help this new ability for rational thinking develop harmoniously in relation to the physical body and the life-body; and to have the thinking ability serve the full emergence of the Ego, or higher self, that occurs around the age of twenty-one. The Ego, as described by Rudolf Steiner, is the unique, noncontingent spiritual essence of the individual human being, the spark of the Divine within each person.



Sir Gawain

Parzival (I)

The epic begins with the young Parzival living with his mother, Herzeleide, in the forest of Soltane. Herzeleide, a queen whose husband, King Gahmuret, had died in far-off lands, has raised Parzival in the forest to keep him from the world of knights, castles, and battles. Parzival is a sensitive soul who can be moved to tears by the songs of birds, and who is so protected that he does not know his real name, only his mother's nicknames for him, “Bon Fils, Cher Fils, Beau Fils.” The boy, though, sees a group of knights, is captivated by their splendor, and resolves to go off to find King Arthur and become a knight. His mother, hoping to make him a laughingstock, equips him with a nag of a horse and a sackcloth costume. Herzeleide tells Parzival that he is a prince who has been deprived of two kingdoms and offers some parting advice: greet all politely, listen to a gray (old) man, kiss a woman, and win her ring. As the young man rides off, Herzeleide collapses and dies of grief.

Parzival soon bumbles into an encounter with a beautiful lady named Jeschute, and, although he ravishes her larder rather than her body, he causes her to be disgraced in the eyes of her husband. Parzival next meets his cousin Sigune who tells him his true name—Parzival—which means both “pure fool” and “right through the middle.” At last he reaches King Arthur's court. At the court are a woman unable to laugh until she has seen the future greatest knight of the land and a jester who is unable to speak until he has seen the same. When Parzival enters, the one laughs and the other speaks. Parzival slays a Red Knight who has affronted Arthur, dons the knight's red armor, mounts his red horse, and rides off in search of adventure.

The Ninth Grader

The ninth grader entering the wide world of high school is like Parzival riding off into the forest. For every child, adolescence is a movement from the sphere of the mother into the sphere of the father, and there occurs, whether the child realizes it or not, a kind of sorrow-death in the mother. Like Parzival, the ninth grader is gawky, a bit foolish in his garb, armed with motherly advice and a willful heart, but still naïve. (Because of the young person's awkwardness of body and soul at this age and the resulting self-consciousness, Waldorf ninth graders sometimes are not required to put on a class play for the public.) Like Parzival with Jeschute, the ninth-grade boy understands little of the mystery of

woman. And the ninth-grade girl, though she typically is far ahead of the boys in the class in emotional development, also is struggling in her soul life with new feelings, impulses, and desires. Like

Parzival, the ninth grader has passed through and lost the two kingdoms of early childhood and of childhood, and may leave a nickname of endearment behind in favor of his actual birth name.

Just as Parzival has a high ideal—to become a knight—but acts thoughtlessly and recklessly in killing the Red Knight for his armor, the ninth grader may find his impulsiveness overcoming his idealism. Parzival giving his horse its reins and allowing it to take him where it will is a picture of the adolescent unconsciously allowing his destiny to unfold.

Waldorf high school teachers observe the ninth graders as the knights and ladies at the Round Table observed Parzival. They recognize the awkwardness and foolishness of their students, but at the same time they try to see the higher self and the future destiny behind the untidy façade of adolescence. The teacher can be moved to a joyfulness of soul and to an awakening of mind by a glimpse of the essential being in each of her students.

Parzival (II)

Parzival gallops off wildly, not knowing how to check the speed of his mount. He meets a gray-bearded man, Gurnemanz, and from him learns the knightly skills of horsemanship, swordsmanship, and jousting, as well as the chivalric code of courtesy. Gurnemanz counsels Parzival not to ask too many questions, to have mercy with opponents in battle, and to remember that husband and wife are one. Parzival does not accept the hand of Gurnemanz's daughter, Liaze, offered in marriage, and rides off to prove himself. He comes to a castle where the beautiful Condwiramurs, queen of Pelrapeire, is besieged along with her subjects. The Red Knight—as Parzival is now known—defeats, but does not kill, the two leaders of the enemy forces and, discovering the joys of love with Condwiramurs, joins with her as



husband with wife. Parzival soon leaves wife and kingdom, though, in search of his mother.

The Tenth Grader

The tenth grader, like Parzival during his time with Gurnemanz, wears a white inner robe reflecting the pure life-forces of childhood (without the foolishness) and a scarlet longcoat showing an emerging, rich soul life. The tenth grader learns to pace herself, to reign in the galloping horse, in schoolwork and in social life. She learns the ways of the world, the codes and the procedures of society, and attains a poise, a balance, that echoes the harmony of ancient Greece, an important theme in the tenth-grade curriculum. With this poise comes a growing awareness of others, the desire to treat others with consideration and kindness, and the concern to make amends for errors.

Like the Red Knight, Waldorf tenth graders prove themselves, sometimes in challenging situations—in a foreign country as exchange students, on sports teams, in model United Nations, and in community service projects. They become more skilled and courteous in relation to the opposite gender. They attain a level of fulfillment and confidence, believing “I can manage what high school asks of me.”

Parzival (III)

Gahmuret



Giving his horse its reins, Parzival finds himself at Monsalvasch, the castle of Queen Repanse de Schoie. There, King Anfortas, suffering from a wound that will not heal, is kept alive by the Holy Grail. The king gives Parzival, now famous as the Red Knight, a sword. However, the young man does not ask the question (“What ails thee?”) that would have saved the king. The next morning, Parzival finds himself alone in the castle. As he departs, a squire at the drawbridge reprimands him, “You goose! If only you had asked the question!”

Parzival then again encounters his cousin Sigune. When she learns

that he has asked no question of the tormented king, she calls him a "wolf," says he has lost his honor, and sends him off in disgrace.

Next Parzival again meets Jeschute and her unforgiving husband. When Jeschute calls Parzival the "source of all her suffering," the young man, repenting of his folly, vows to right the wrong he had done to her. Parzival defeats her husband, Orilus, in combat and then convinces him with a sacred oath that Jeschute is innocent. Parzival recalls sadly, "I was a fool then, not a man, and not yet grown to wisdom."

Although it is May, the time of Pentecost, snow has fallen, and a goose wounded by a hawk has left three drops of blood on the snow. Because the three drops of crimson remind Parzival of his wife, Condwiramurs, he stares entranced at them. King Arthur and his

entourage, who are nearby seeking Parzival, manage to release him from the spell of Lady Love and bring him back to the court of the Round Table. As Arthur is announcing that Parzival will become a knight of the Round Table, he is interrupted by the arrival of the ugly sorceress Kundrie. She asserts that Parzival is unworthy, that he



failed to pose the question that would have saved Anfortas, and that he is no better than "an adder's fang." Humiliated, Parzival vows to pursue the Grail single-mindedly, renouncing God for disgracing him.

The Eleventh Grader

The journey of the eleventh grader is usually the loneliest of all. She wrestles with the painful question, "Will I ever be whole, and if so, when?" Yet she may

glimpse that future experience of self-awareness and self-discovery in which she will be able to say, "Here I am, in my essential being." In the Grail Castle there is suffering but also the mysterious, ever-nourishing Grail itself, which will in time give the experience of one's essential identity, the "I am."



The eleventh grader learns that she must act as an individual and decide alone what she will speak and what she will do. If she blindly adheres to another's principles, as Parzival does in following Gurnemanz's advice, she will not be present enough to identify with the sufferings of another. The three activities of the human soul—thinking, feeling, and willing—will remain at an animal level, reflecting, respectively, the goose, the wolf, and the serpent.

Like Parzival, the eleventh grader has a growing consciousness of the importance of setting things right, of repairing the effects of one's mistakes. Also, at this time, the developing soul can become capable of mature love for another. With a now mature physical body and a developed thinking ability, the eleventh grader is capable of deeds that will receive recognition and honor. Yet, like Parzival, she will inevitably experience some form of attack from without or within. One way or another, she will feel she has lost her way, or even has been betrayed. But even in this case, the instinct to persist, to make oneself whole and the world also whole, as in Parzival's commitment to seek the Grail alone, will prevail in the healthy eleventh grader.

Parzival (IV)

Parzival wanders alone for four and a half years in search of the Holy Grail. Once more, he encounters Sigune, who, reconciled to Parzival because of his suffering, points him in the direction of the Grail Castle. Parzival's horse brings him to the cave of the hermit Trevrezent, and the young man says simply, "Sir, give me counsel. I am a man who has sinned."

The holy man tells Parzival of Lucifer's fall from the heavens, of Cain's murder of Abel, and of the community of the Holy Grail. Parzival also learns from the hermit that the Red Knight whom he killed was his own cousin, that Trevrezent is his mother's brother, and that she,

Herzeleide, had died when Parzival left her. Parzival confesses that it is he who failed to ask the critical question of King Anfortas—brother to Herzeleide and Trevrezent. Parzival does penance for fifteen days to make up for his sins.

Parzival inadvertently enters into combat with his beloved friend Gawain, but fortunately discovers the mistake before it is too late. Then, in a battle with a splendid stranger, Parzival is nearly overcome for the first time in his life. He discovers that he is fighting his own half-brother, Feirefiz, the most powerful knight in the Moorish East, a man both white and black. A redeemed Kundrie appears to proclaim that Parzival has been blessed: he has been summoned to become Lord of the Grail.

Accompanied by Feirefiz, Parzival enters the Grail Castle, sees the long-suffering Anfortas, and asks, in a most intimate way, "Ohm, was fällt dir?"—"Uncle, what ails thee?" Anfortas is immediately restored to health, and joy returns to all in the Grail Castle and to the whole kingdom of the Earth.

Feirefiz, wishing to be able to behold the Grail, is baptized and marries Repanse de Schoie, the Queen of the Grail. They return to the East, where their son, Prester John, founds a Christian kingdom. Sigune, Parzival's cousin, now is allowed to die, to join her beloved Schionatulander in heaven. Parzival becomes Lord of the Grail, and is reunited with his faithful love and wife, Condwiramurs.

The Twelfth Grader

The twelfth-grade Waldorf curriculum artfully quickens a maturing process that doesn't culminate until about age twenty-one. Thus Parzival's solitary wanderings in the wasteland for four and a half years form a picture of that arc of time from age seventeen (eleventh grade) to twenty-one. As Parzival is finally able to say, "I am a man who has sinned," so the senior is usually able to take full responsibility for his actions.

Parzival was instructed by Trevrezent in the great events and processes in human history. The Waldorf twelfth-grade curriculum explores the contemporary world but also looks back at all of history, at human evolution and cultural development. The teachers and other adult guides, much like the forgiving Sigune, grant to the twelfth grader a clean slate and new possibilities, regard-

less of the limitations or failings of earlier years. Parzival's battles with Gawain and Feirefiz can be seen as his appropriating the wisdom of the heart of the one and the powerful will of the other. It is the essence of twelfth grade for the senior to strive to act with intellect, feelings, and will in harmonious balance.

The twelfth grader with his developing soul capacities can become more open to the individuality of another person. Like Parzival, finally able to recognize and empathize with Anfortas' suffering, the twelfth grader may be able to see and to treat others in the school community—teachers, staff, parents, younger students—in a fresh, even healing way. Twelfth graders set the tone of the school, creating its social and moral atmosphere. They can do much to generate a healthy school community that will influence the wider world.

In the meeting of Parzival and Feirefiz, the reunion of Parzival and Condwiramurs, and in the marriage of Feirefiz and Repanse de Schoie are portrayed the reconciliation of East and West, of Muslim and Christian, of black and white, of male and female—ultimately the reconciliation of all opposites. If the twelfth graders can bear such impulses, then they not only heal the strains of their own trials of adolescence, but through their Waldorf education they become able to offer wholeness in the world.



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CREDITS: Artwork from the eleventh-grade class at Green Meadow Waldorf School.

Temples of Light



Waldorf Schools as Spiritual Beacons

BY COLIN PRICE

In a 1916 lecture, Rudolf Steiner spoke about the significance of the ancient Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It was a great spiritual center for the people of that time, but it was also a radiant beacon for the divine beings who guide human souls to the Earth for a new incarnation. The Temple contained many symbols of cosmic secrets and

... it was intended that those who entered the Temple, where the pictures all around them were reflected in their souls, should receive something through which alone they became truly Man. . . . What the Temple revealed was something that the Earth as such did not reveal, namely, all the cosmic secrets that ray into the Earth from the cosmic expanse. . . . [Also, the] Temple was like a star whose light enabled these Beings to guide the souls into bodies which would be capable of understanding its meaning. It was the central star of the Earth, shining out with special brightness into the spiritual heights.*

In other words, the Temple helped in the guiding of certain human souls—in whose destiny it lay—into human bodies that would be able to grasp the cosmic truths expressed within the Temple.

The Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies in 70 AD. Early in the twentieth century, this ancient Temple was reincarnated in a new structure. Designed by Rudolf Steiner, the first Goetheanum was built in Dornach, Switzerland, between 1912 and 1922. Volunteers from many countries came to help construct the double-domed, wooden, slate-roofed building. It was built like a cello, in that tones could resound within it. The building was truly a musical instrument, able to resonate to the spiritual truths given expression within. There the human soul could reconnect with the secrets of the spiritual cosmos. The first Goetheanum was destroyed by arson on New Year's Eve, 1922–1923. But the fire carried its spiritual substance into the etheric sphere that surrounds the Earth.

So today we must ask the question: Is there, in our age of rampant materialism, a beacon of light that can inspire living human beings with the reality of the spiritual world and also guide the souls of those approaching a new incarnation, just as the Temple of Solomon once did?

To answer this, we need an understanding of the spiritual realities of our times. According to Rudolf Steiner, the archangel Mich-a-el ("He-who-is-like-God") is the reigning spirit of our age. Michael is guiding humankind in the next necessary step in its evolution. His efforts are directed away from all nationalistic impulses—fostered under his predecessor, the archangel Gabriel—and toward that which embraces the universally human. Michael looks past all separating boundaries of a political, religious, and social nature to that which can unite the whole of humankind. He works as the emissary of the Christ Being, whose deed on Golgotha was accomplished for the sake of all human souls.

Thus we can say: Wherever the archangel Michael's work is succeeding in overcoming what divides humankind, there can arise a temple of light, a beacon that can guide human souls who are urgently needing to find their way rightly into the earthly sphere.

The Temple of Solomon and the first Goetheanum are today located in every human initiative that recognizes the full stature of the human being as a being of body, soul, and spirit, that sees every person as having infinite value, and that strives to overcome all the artificial boundaries that divide humanity. Wherever the Michaelic aspiration is embodied in human work, there can arise a temple of light.

The etheric realm of the Earth is a sphere of spiritual energy that surrounds our planet. The Christ Being entered this realm through His self-sacrifice on Golgotha—the Crucifixion. The spiritual substance of the Temple of Solomon and the first Goetheanum was lifted into this realm when the physical structures were destroyed. This etheric realm is then imbued both with cosmic wisdom and the spirit of self-sacrifice. Just as, in the morning, a dewdrop falls from a leaf to moisten and fructify the Earth, drops of spiritual substance from this realm fall into that sphere of humanity which bears within it the universal Michaelic activity. Since this encircling realm embraces the whole Earth, these drops of substance can fall anywhere upon the Earth—and they do.

Despite the spiritual darkness that sometimes seems to envelop the world, there are in every community, in every city, state, and nation, persons striving to see the universal quality of humanity and to overcome what divides the human race. People of every culture, race, and religion—many of whom have never heard of the archangel Michael—are engaged in this Michaelic work. They are each building a temple of light. Such a temple can edify those already living on the Earth. It can also guide those souls approaching a new incarnation, seeking

to find their way into the world in order to live out their destinies and to rightly carry out their karma.

A Waldorf school can be such a temple of light. Inasmuch as the adults in the school strive to live according to a spiritual view of the human being and of the world, and honor and encourage the children as beings of soul and spirit, the school can shine as one of many beacons shining brightly all over the Earth. As such, it can warm and nourish those already within its walls, and it can guide those not yet born. It can give those souls about to incarnate hope and heart by

Despite the spiritual darkness that sometimes seems to envelop the world, there are in every community, in every city, state, and nation, persons striving to see the universal quality of humanity and to overcome what divides the human race.

revealing that there are places on the Earth where they will be welcome and where their true nature will be revered and nurtured.

Adults who work within the school community—teachers, staff, parents—can perhaps take strength from this vision of the Waldorf school. Whenever we feel that the Earth is too much with us, whenever we feel that there are too many things happening, whenever we feel so tired that we wonder how we can possibly accomplish all that we have set ourselves to do, we can take the time to ponder on these things and can realize anew that we are creating beacons of light for a whole new generation of human souls. These are the ones who will take humanity into the future, and that we can be partakers in this process is not only a privilege but a source of real strength as well.

*Rudolf Steiner, *The Festivals and their Meaning—Christmas* (London: Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1955), 56–57, lecture 4, of December 21, 1916, in Basel, Switzerland, "Christmas at a Time of Grievous Destiny."



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Book Review

AWSNA Publications
Fair Oaks, CA, 2005
194 pages • \$12.00

Whittle Your Ears Poems, Songs, and Plays for Children

BY BARBARA DAWSON BETTERIDGE

REVIEWED BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

Barbara Dawson Betteridge discovered Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education as a young woman living in southern California in the 1930s. Limited by health problems, Barbara could not become a Waldorf teacher, but in time she became a Waldorf parent and an avid supporter of Highland Hall, a Waldorf school in Los Angeles.

Barbara was gifted with a keen intellect, a rich and playful imagination, and a way with words. She used these capacities to write poems and songs for the children at Highland Hall. Also, at the behest of class teachers at the school, she wrote plays on particular themes for particular classes.

Barbara passed away in 2002 at the age of eighty-nine. *Whittle Your Ears* is a collection of Barbara's writing, meant to bring her gifts to the wider circle of Waldorf students. The book's title comes from a poem, "Promise."

Whittle your ears
if you would hear
whir of a beetle
whuff of a deer,
butterfly ripping
a spider's web
or bubble of crab
at tide's low ebb.

Whittle your ears
and sharpen your eyes
if you would find
where the falcon flies
where under the ocean
the limpet lies—
and you'll never grow old,
you will only grow wise.

The collection contains about fifty similarly charming poems for children, as well as about twenty songs, for some of which Barbara wrote the music as well as the words.

Barbara had a very deep interest in drama and the role it can serve in the wholesome education of children. She saw the class play as a tool to awaken the soul life of the children and to deepen their understanding and

experience of what they have studied in the classroom. Barbara observed that a well-written play develops good taste and a balance of soul and also helps the children develop clear speech and quickness of wit and body.

Whittle Your Ears also contains nine class plays written by Barbara. These include:

"Our Favorite Star," a third-grade play, whose cast consists of Three Big Angels and Many Little Angels;

"Grammar's Garden," a fourth-grade play, in which a boy and girl meet and get to know the various parts of speech as real, living characters in the play;

"The Golden Fleece," a fifth-grade play, depicting a time in human development when human beings, though still aware of divine intervention, took an active role in forming their destinies; and

"The Castle of the Kingdom of the Stones," a sixth-grade play that combines fairy-tale imagery with the study of minerals.

Much of the dialogue in these plays is in rhymed verse and thus both challenges the children in a positive way and evokes very powerful dramatic effects.

Whittle Your Ears offers many literary treasures for the Waldorf class teacher and for Waldorf students as they move up through the grades.



Between Polarities Finding Our Humanity in a Time of Extremes

A Conference for Youth

June 20–25, 2006 • Summerfield Waldorf School, Santa Rosa, California

This conference is for young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty-eight. High school juniors and seniors are very welcome. Dennis Klocek will be the keynote speaker. Among his lecture themes will be "The Spiritual Warrior and Self-Purification" and "Action in the World and Spiritual Agendas." Afternoon workshop topics include "The Road to a Sustainable Economy," "Blacksmithing—Working with Polarities through the Will," and "Becoming Truly Human through Movement."

The conference fee is \$150. This includes access to all conference events, all meals, and camping facilities. For more information and for registration, see: www.beyondpolarities.org

Waldorf Education in China



BY HARRY WONG AND TAMMY HUGHES
WITH RONALD E. KOETZSCH

Recently, Renewal received two reports on Waldorf Education in China. One was from Tammy Hughes, an American Waldorf teacher who has taught in the United States and New Zealand and who currently is living and teaching in China. The other was from Harry Wong, one of the founders of the Chengdu Waldorf School, the first Waldorf school in China. The following article is a conflation of those two reports. Since today one human being out of five lives in China and that nation has become a major economic, political, and cultural force in the world, what is happening there in education is of immense importance. In this article, names of persons are given with first name first, Western style.

—R. E. K.



In 1994 Ben and Thanh Cherry, teachers at the Bowral Waldorf School in Australia, visited China. During their travels, they met and spoke with many people about Waldorf Education. On the veranda



of a teahouse in the city of Chengdu, in southwest China, they spoke with a young couple, Harry Wong and his wife, Li Zhang. That conversation was the seed of Waldorf Education planted in China. It inspired Harry and Li to go to England and then America to study Waldorf Education. Ten years later, they established the first Waldorf school in the Middle Kingdom.

The Chengdu Waldorf School opened its doors in September 2004 and is now completing its second year of operation. It is located in a former resort hotel about seven miles outside of Chengdu. The school has a kindergarten with about twenty children—and a waiting list—and two combined classes (first/second and fourth/fifth grades) with a total of eight children. A number of families have moved to Chengdu in order to enroll their children in the school. The school recently was awarded official status as a nonprofit organization. Harry Wong is the administrator of the school.



Li Zhang is the head kindergarten teacher, having done her training at Sunbridge College in Chestnut Ridge, New York. She has two full-time assistants who are teachers-in-training, and three helpers. One of the helpers, mother of a three-year-old girl, left her job as a college teacher to study Waldorf Education. The staff devotes much effort to finding and using suitable songs, games, arts, and crafts from traditional Chinese culture and in celebrating the traditional festivals. The kindergarten day is long, going from 8:30 AM until 5:00 PM.



Most of the children in the kindergarten come from relatively well-to-do and sophisticated families in Chengdu. Like urban children all over China, many have been affected by premature intellectual work, poor nutrition, overscheduling, too much exposure to television and the media, and a lack of rhythm in their home lives. Also, because of the "one child" policy in China, many children have two (doting) parents plus four (doting) grandparents. They have therefore an excess of attention and a lack of boundaries. Many children in China have serious problems in school, even in kindergarten, and the Chengdu school has already acquired a reputation for accepting and being able to deal with difficult children.

Educating the parents about Waldorf Education and creating a relationship of trust between parents and the school has been a slow process. The parents are very anxious about their children. Some call the kindergarten every day, wanting to know each detail of what is going on there. They ask questions such as: What was served at snack time? Did my child wash his hands before eating? Was he able to nap? Parents even designed a daily questionnaire for teachers to fill out. The school now is offering parenting workshops for parents and grandparents.



Most of the children in the grades classes are children of teachers and of teachers-in-training who live at the school. These parents are taking a big step out of mainstream Chinese culture. While China has adopted a free economic system, political and cultural life are still strictly controlled by the state. Almost all schools are government schools. The education system is based on a materialistic view of the human being and stresses early and intense academics, regimentation, competition, and standardized testing.

The teacher of the first/second grade class is Hon Yu Li, a teacher-in-training who has apprenticed at a school in California. Zewu Li, who trained at Emerson College in England, is the teacher of the fifth/sixth

grade class. Both work hard to adapt Waldorf Education to Chinese culture. All the children in the grades classes at Chengdu and their teachers can fit into the school minivan. This allows for frequent trips to enrich main lesson blocks on such themes as local history, local geography, botany, and zoology.

For example, the classes made several trips to Du Jiang Yuan, a flood control and irrigation dam near Chengdu, built in 300 BC and still in operation today. The children studied poems, stories, and legends about the dam and made clay models and paintings of it. They also studied legends about the beloved ancient King Wangdi, who gave up his crown to the person who was able to control the floods. After Wangdi's death, he returned as a cuckoo to remind the people when to sow and harvest their crops.

In addition to the school's two large rooms, thirty-five small guest rooms, and courtyard, there is a garden and some adjoining farmland. The garden and farmland are being cultivated using the biodynamic techniques developed by Rudolf Steiner. The land is being treated with biodynamic preparations and fertilized with biodynamically prepared compost and is beginning to produce vegetables for the school.

Chengdu Waldorf School is not only kindergarten and grade school; it is also a center for adult education. The school has hosted many workshops on Waldorf Education, Anthroposophy, and related topics, some featuring experts from abroad. In May 2005, it sponsored the first public course on biodynamic agriculture, taught by a BD farmer from India. Also, the school has sponsored courses in Waldorf Education, eurythmy, and biodynamic farming in other parts of the country. The courses, both in Chengdu and elsewhere, usually attract about sixty persons and typically include artistic work and singing. Participants often are deeply touched by their experiences and say that their lives have been changed.

About fifteen young people from all over China live at the school and take part in its life. These co-workers work on the property, beautifying it and making it more suitable for use by the school community, serve as assistants in the classroom, and help organize and participate in festivals and special events. They join in the various workshops and studies, and some are translating books on Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy into Chinese.

The co-workers have an opportunity to look back on their own schooling. They are experiencing an education based on a view of the human being as a being of soul and spirit as well as body. Many find this a healing and transforming experience that is inspiring them to bring others in China an education that develops the whole human being. This year, volunteer helpers from Germany and France have joined the school community.

Recently, seeds planted in other parts of China have begun to sprout. Tammy Hughes, who taught at the Chengdu school during its first year, is now teaching at High Gate House School, a Waldorf kindergarten in Hong Kong. In the city of Zhuhai, a large day care center is adopting Waldorf methods and has a Waldorf kindergarten with sixteen children. There are Waldorf playgroups in Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou. In Beijing, Wu Bei, a former university teacher of physics and a graduate of the foundation year at Emerson College, working with a group of parents, has set up a Waldorf kindergarten. Because of space restrictions in the capital, the kindergarten is located in a flat in an apartment building but, nevertheless, seems to function very well. Teachers from Chengdu have given workshops in these areas, and





the Chengdu school, with help from the West, is creating an in-service training program.

Like most Waldorf schools around the world, the Chengdu school faces financial challenges. Only a modest tuition can be charged. Thus teachers' salaries are low, even by Chinese standards. The renovation and improvement of the school building has gone slowly. In the first year, a leaking roof, a sporadic supply of hot water, and other challenges were part of daily life. Fortunately, the school has received much help from friends and supporters abroad. This made the founding of the school possible and also allowed foreign mentors to visit and teachers to continue their training abroad. Now the school needs a substantial

deposit in order to officially register with the government as a grade school. Also, the school hopes to purchase a permanent home.



In the summer of 2005, the Chengdu school in conjunction with the Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners ("Friends of Waldorf Education")—an organization based in Germany dedicated to helping Waldorf initiatives around the world—hosted a weeklong workshop on Waldorf Education. The focus was on the three soul activities of thinking, feeling, and willing. Ben Cherry gave the morning lectures and clearly presented the spiritual view of the world and of the human being that is the foundation of Waldorf Education. There were, in addition, workshops in handwork, clay modeling, painting, and eurythmy. The seventy participants—parents, teachers, and directors of schools—were eager to learn and to deal with the pressing questions that confront

them: How can education in China be improved? What exactly is Waldorf Education? How can Waldorf Education fit in with Chinese culture? Can it work alongside Montessori education? Will Waldorf Education prepare children for exams?

On the last day, as the participants began to leave and return to their homes, it was palpable that new ideas were finding their way from Chengdu to many parts of China. There is a proverb in the Orient: "From one seed come ten thousand seeds."



Those wishing to learn more about the Chengdu Waldorf School and Waldorf Education in China can visit the Web site: www.waldorfchina.org

The school is very interested in creating exchange relationships with students, teachers, and schools around the world. Please contact Harry Wong at waldorfd@126.com

Tammy Hughes can be contacted at tammyhughes@fastmail.fm

Those wishing to contribute to the Chengdu school can contact:

Rudolf Steiner Foundation
PO Box 29915, San Francisco, CA 94129
415-561-3900 • www.rsfoundation.org
Checks should be earmarked "Freunde/Chengdu."



CREDITS: Photos in this article are of children at the Chengdu Waldorf School, Chengdu, China.



Meeting the Transcendentalists and their Spiritual Colleagues

BY MARY ECHLIN

For the past ten years, my colleague Lisl Hofer, an outdoor education specialist, and I, an English teacher, have provided the high school seniors at the Kimberton Waldorf School with a special experience to complete their Waldorf schooling. The

seniors' final main lesson block is called "Meeting the Transcendentalists." Rather than taking place in a school classroom, the block includes a camping trip, visits to two houses designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, a wilderness solo experience, and whitewater rafting.

In the two weeks of school prior to the block, the students prepare for it. One week, they read Emerson's essays "Nature," "Self-Reliance," and "The American Scholar," Thoreau's essay "Civil Disobedience," and selections from *Walden*. The following week, instead of regular classes, the students hear talks about Anthroposophy—the worldview expressed by Rudolf Steiner—and about its practical applications in agriculture, medicine, and other fields. During this "Waldorf Week," for homework the students read about contemporary issues that illustrate the relevance of the nineteenth-century Transcendentalist writers.

*"In some ways, I feel as if I've gone through the past two years in a fog of sorts. I felt like I was living a numb life—not deliberate and not 'near the bone.' Subsequently, I'd been thinking a lot about what it is to live deliberately. . . . I felt bogged down by my own expectations and obligations as well as those put on me by others (or so I thought). Reading these ideas seemed to clear, or begin to clear, these from me. I think often about the sentence in *Walden*: 'But alert and healthy natures remember that the sun rose clear.' Upon reading this, it was as if a shroud had been lifted. What applied to them applies to me now—which was also amazing to me."*

—A Kimberton Waldorf High School senior, after the experience of "Meeting the Transcendentalists"

Photos above, clockwise from left: Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862); Walt Whitman (1819–1892); Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882); Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925); and Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959)

The block itself then begins with a five-hour drive to the Ohiopyle State Park in western Pennsylvania. On the first evening, around a campfire, the group discusses Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" and its application in modern times, as well as ideals expressed in *Walden* in view of current realities. Through the week, the

"I had no idea how truly important the last main lesson would be for our class. Its significance had a depth that I know will help to carry each one of us out into the world. . . . Even though it was only a week, by being in nature, a place that not all of us are used to experiencing, many of us found a sense of awe. The wild is unknown and with that realization comes an awareness . . . [that] will help us all as we step into the unknown of the world, a life we form for ourselves."

—A Kimberton Waldorf High School senior reviewing her experience with the outdoor course

students read poems from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* that relate to ideas expressed in the essays they have read and are discussing.

The next day, the students visit Fallingwater, a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright, inspired by Emerson's ideas, meant the house to be an example of organic, democratic architecture, created for self-reliant individuals living in community and in close relationship with nature. The students sketch the house from various viewpoints and discuss the views of Emerson and Thoreau on architecture in relation to the human being. That evening, around the campfire, the discussion of the essays "Nature" and "Self-Reliance" continues.

After a morning visit to another Lloyd Wright house, the students pack up for an experience of self-reliance: a twenty-four-hour wilderness solo. Each is required to take a sleeping bag, water, and a whistle and may also wish to take, in addition, a small tarp and a single

snack. Writing or drawing (but no reading) materials are allowed. The students each then experience a twenty-four-hour span of solitude and—it is hoped—self-reflection.

The next day includes a trip to a waterfall, a discussion of the Gaia hypothesis, and the intensely communal, interdependent experience of whitewater rafting on the Youghiogheny River. That evening, gathering in a circle as day fades, the seniors begin their final main lesson of high school. They stand around the blazing campfire, arms crossed over their chests as in lower school, and recite morning verse for the last time; tears fall.

After a brisk discussion of the day's experience, they share their dreams for themselves, their future, for America and for the world. Soon, they will be off into the world to try to realize those dreams.

From June 23–30, 2006, Mary Echlin and Lisl Hofer will lead an eight-day course in western Pennsylvania modeled after the trip described in this article. Adults interested in "Meeting the Transcendentalists" can contact Lisl Hofer at 610-917-9025 or e-mail: lhofer@kimberton.org

Network M

Creating a network of Waldorf alumni, graduates of anthroposophical institutions, anthroposophists, and others with a similar worldview and aspirations.

Around North America there are thousands of people who have attended Waldorf schools or anthroposophical institutions of learning such as Rudolf Steiner College and Sunbridge College. There are also many people working with Anthroposophy and its practical applications in agriculture, medicine, education, curative education, the arts, eurythmy, and other fields. And there are people who work with anthroposophical ideas without having heard of Rudolf Steiner.

The potential for mutual support, help, and encouragement among these people is great. At present, however, there is no effective way of establishing and maintaining contact among the members of this widely scattered, invisible community of like-minded persons.

Network M—named for the Archangel of this period of history, Micha'el—is being developed in order:

- to create a community of spiritually striving young people and adults and to provide a support system and context that will help members of this community do their work in the world
- to reach out beyond the Waldorf/anthroposophical world to persons striving toward similar goals
- to develop an alumni network for Waldorf schools and for resident and non-resident anthroposophical colleges and training programs

Individuals interested in joining Network M can do so at its Web site: www.thenetworkm.net

Waldorf schools looking for creative ways to maintain contact with alumni and to support communication among alumni can write to Matthew Cortez Temple at contact@thenetworkm.net or call him at 802-380-2971.

Book Review

AWSNA Publications
Fair Oaks, CA, 2005
128 pages • \$16.00

Music from Around the World for Recorders For Upper Grades in Waldorf Schools: Descant, Alto, Tenor Recorder Ensemble Music

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY MICHAEL PRESTON

REVIEWED BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

The recorder, a simple, end-blown whistle or fipple flute, has played an important role in Western music. It was developed in the fourteenth century and for four hundred years was popular throughout Western Europe. In Elizabethan England, one mark of a gentleman of culture was that he always had his recorder with him and was able on request to play the latest hit tune. Two of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerti* were written for the recorder, and there is a vast corpus of solo and ensemble recorder music from the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Called the *Blockflöte* in German (for the block inserted in the head), the *flûte à bec* ("flute with a beak") in French and *flauta dolce* ("sweet flute") in Italian, the recorder has a sweet, slightly reedy tone, not dissimilar to the singing of songbirds. One hobby of the gentry in England during the Baroque period in England was to teach complex melodies to pet larks and finches by playing the tunes on a sopranino recorder.

In the mid-eighteenth century, significant improvements were made in the transverse or cross-blown flute. Soon that instrument, with its bright, penetrating sound and its capacity for dynamics—it can play loud and soft, which the recorder cannot—supplanted the "sweet flute." For the next hundred and fifty years, the recorder was a dead instrument. In the early twentieth century, however, it was resurrected, at first primarily as an instrument for schoolchildren and then as an instrument for concert and recorded music. Today, there are recorder societies all over North America and Europe, the instrument is taught in the music departments of colleges and universities, and there are well-known and respected professional recorder players.

The founding of Waldorf Education in Germany in 1919 coincided with the renaissance of the recorder, and the instrument soon found a welcoming home in Waldorf

schools. Today, the instrument and its music play an important role in the daily life of every Waldorf school. Typically, children begin to play the soprano recorder in the second or third grade. Later, some children will learn the larger alto and tenor instruments so that ensemble music can be played. The daily use of the recorder usually continues through the eight grades and the high school years.

Waldorf class teacher Michael Preston has created a wonderful resource for anyone interested in making music with children and young people, in the classroom or in the home. *Music from Around the World for Recorders* contains over fifty engaging pieces from thirteen different cultures and countries, including Ireland, Africa, Hawaii, and Russia. Some of the selections are familiar tunes—"Ashokan Farewell," "Siyahamba," "Londonderry Air"—while others are lesser known delights. Each piece is arranged for three parts—descant (soprano), alto, and tenor—and each is suitable for musicians eleven years and older. The music is very legible, and the spiral binding allows for easy use on a music stand.

This book is a treasure. Every Waldorf class teacher and every Waldorf student, fifth grade and beyond, should own a copy. The book will provide many hours of musical enjoyment and will obviate having to deal with the physical and moral/legal messiness of using photocopied music.

Waldorf parents might also be interested. The recorder is easy to learn, even for an adult with little or no musical experience. Playing music at home as a family is a tradition that has almost disappeared in our culture but should be revived. Parents might also be able to join in playing at their child's school. In some Waldorf schools, parents and students form recorder ensembles, practice together regularly, and perform at school events and festivals. At home and in the school, *Music from Around the World for Recorders* will be an invaluable resource.

