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On the Making of Trump: The Blind Spot That Created Him

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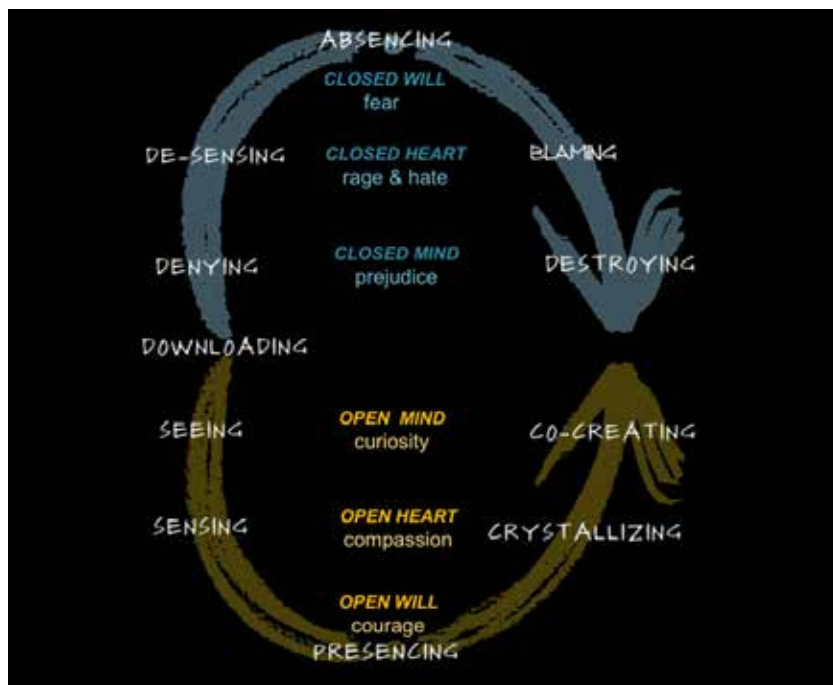


Figure 1: *The Social Fields of Presencing and Absencing*

We have entered a watershed moment not only here in America, but also globally. It's a moment that could help us wake up to a deeper level of collective awareness and renewal—or a moment when we could spiral down into chaos, violence, and fascism-like conditions. Whether it's one or the other depends on our capacity to become aware of our collective blind spot.

Donald Trump's election as the 45th president of the United States has sent shock waves across the planet. In a replay of Brexit, a coalition of white, working- (and middle-)

class men (and women) from mostly rural areas swept an anti-establishment candidate into office. But the election of Trump is hardly an outlier: just look at the global rise of strongmen such as Vladimir Putin, Recep Erdogan, Viktor Orban, and Rodrigo Duterte and the surge of other right-wing populists.

Why has the richest and most prosperous country in the world now elected a climate denier who used racist, sexist, misogynistic, and xenophobic language throughout his campaign? What makes *us* put someone like him in the White House? Why did we create a presidential election between two of the most disliked candidates of all time, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton? Why did Trump, who lied and attacked minorities, journalists, women, and the disabled, only become stronger and stronger throughout his campaign? What is the *blind spot* that has kept *us* from seeing and shifting the deeper forces at play? Why, again and again, do *we collectively create results that most people don't want*?

The Blind Spot

Trump and Clinton, from the viewpoint of the millennial generation, represent everything that's wrong with America. Trump embodies everything that is wrong with our culture. Clinton embodies everything that's wrong with our politics. And both of them embody everything that's wrong with our economy.

Our collective blind spot reflects paradigms of thought that legitimize all three major divides: the economic divide, the political divide, and the cultural-spiritual divide. I've talked about these divides before, but now they seem more stark than ever.

The Economic Divide

There is a logical line from the Trump and Brexit votes back to the economic crisis of 2008, and from there to the deregulation of the Clinton and the Reagan years in the 1990s and 1980s. U.S. workers' share of national income has been shrinking since the late 1990s, with the gains going to the top 1 percent. The average annual income growth in the United

States for the bottom 90 percent has been [negative](#) for the past two decades.

Millennials have good sensors for this kind of disconnect. In the 2016 campaign, Bernie Sanders won significantly more votes among those under age 30 than Clinton and Trump combined. In a recent Harvard University survey that polled young adults between ages 18 and 29, 51 percent of respondents said they do not support capitalism. Just 42 percent said they do support it. Equally interesting is that only 33 percent said they support socialism.

What these responses suggest is that most young people may be looking for a different way to run our economy. They don't want the failed system of Soviet socialism. Or the failed system of casino capitalism. Many young people wish to refocus the economy on justice, fairness, equality, and the deeper sources of meaning in life – what I call generating well-being for all.

This skepticism of young people towards the current economic system is not that surprising if you consider the bigger economic picture today: The United States is the most unequal of all high-income OECD countries, has the highest poverty rate of any advanced economy (17%), the highest obesity rate (36%), the highest incarceration rate, and student debt of \$1.2 trillion.

Social mobility—the capacity to work your way up and realize your dreams—is weaker in America today than it is in Europe. As they say: if you want to realize the American dream, go to Denmark. These structural economic factors and forces of exclusion are the real drivers that elevated Trump to the presidency. Yet, instead of addressing these structural issues, the Clinton campaign chose to focus the conversation almost entirely on Trump's personal flaws.

Why do so many people take these structural issues for granted? It's the neoliberal economic ideology that Ronald Reagan and his team brought into the White House, that remained during the Clinton years, that continued to flourish during the Bush years, and that, in spite of 2008, continued to shape White House politics even after Barack Obama took office. The neoliberal economic paradigm continues to shape the Washington economic consensus. Our inability to replace that failed paradigm of “ego-system” economics with a more holistic and inclusive framework of “eco-system” economics has created an intellectual and moral void that allowed Donald Trump to connect with the “forgotten common man.” Which brings us to divide number two.

The Political Divide

The political system is rigged. Donald Trump is also right on this one, but for different reasons than he thinks. Hillary Clinton is the face of the current system. Yes, she has more experience and was better prepared for the job than any other candidate. But as Donald Trump reminded her, she had the “wrong experience” (translation: she embodies the status quo). As many polls over the past year indicated, Bernie Sanders would have won easily against Trump, even though his solutions were a work-in-progress at best. Elizabeth Warren prob-

ably would have won by a landslide if the party leadership could have persuaded her to run. But what did the Democratic Party leadership do instead? Manipulate the primary process so that Bernie lost and Hillary won. If the Democratic Party were democratic in its processes, the name of our new president-elect would be Bernie Sanders.

Yet the real political divide of our time is not between Democrats and Republicans. It's between the insiders of the Washington system that is driven by lobbying and special interest-driven decision-making on the one hand and the forgotten communities without a voice on the other. Elected officials in Washington, regardless of their party affiliation, spend roughly 50% of their time fundraising and have almost no time left to talk to the less powerful real stakeholders that are affected by policymaking. That is the structural problem we face: too many groups are excluded and have no voice in the process of governance and decision-making. So, the second force that put Donald Trump in the White House is the enormous disconnect between voiceless communities and the Washington system of special interest group driven decision-making.

The Spiritual Divide

The biggest divide, however, is neither economic nor political. It's a cultural-spiritual divide that is ripping our communities, our country, our culture, and our world apart.

The economic and political divides result from massive institutional failures. As the rate of institutional and systemic failure increases, we see citizens and leaders respond in one of the following three ways:

1. Muddling through: same old, same old.
2. Moving back: let's build a wall between us and them.
3. Moving forward: lean in to what wants to emerge—empathize and build architectures of collaboration rather than architectures of separation.

What was the problem in this election? Hillary was the muddler; Donald was the wall builder. But there was no one in the third category.

It was interesting to watch the entire American media establishment try to take down Donald Trump (after creating him)—only to realize that all their attacks only made him stronger. The only effective voice against him was Michelle Obama's. She was the one who could take the air out of him. And she did, even to the degree that the Trump camp decided to stop attacking her. What made the First Lady, who has high approval ratings among Democrats as well as Republicans, so much more effective in dealing with the Trump phenomenon?

When you watch her speeches in [New Hampshire](#) and [Phoenix](#) you see the answer: she responded to him not with hate and fear. Instead, she spoke with empathy, authentic reflection, and compassion. She courageously exposed her own vulnerability showing up as a human being. Michelle Obama also does not primarily focus on the “opponent,” but rather on her own experience, her own opening process, and on the positive future that she feels is wanting to emerge. That's what it takes to be a warrior of the third category, a warrior of the open heart: *as you engage the current moment, your eye is on the*

future that is seeking to emerge—not on the past that you try to fight against.

Someone who fits that third category would blend the compassion and presence of a Michelle Obama with the systems change focus of an Elizabeth Warren. Such a person (or combined 2020 ticket) would need to connect with a powerful global movement of changemakers who collaborate around new forms of economic, political, and cultural renewal.

Systemic disruption

Figure 1 shows how the three responses to systemic disruption give rise to three conflicting cultures:

1. Downloading: same old, same old.
2. The cycle of absencing: denying, de-sensing, blaming, and destroying (closing the mind, heart, will).
3. The cycle of presencing: seeing, sensing, crystallizing, and co-creating (opening the mind, heart, will).

So what is it that is ripping our communities apart? It's that the social field of *absencing*, that is, the closing of the mind, heart, and will, keeps amplifying *prejudice*, *hate*, and *fear* because it's supercharged by business (its a billion dollar media industry) and technology (with Facebook and Google keeping us well inside our echo chambers or filter bubbles). Moreover, nearly one-fifth of election-related tweets came from bots, from robots, according to a [new study](#) by University of Southern California researchers. Our social media is designed to systemically spread and amplify negativity, its not designed around an intention to build community and generative cross-boundary dialogue.

What We Are Called to Do Now

Will President Trump act like candidate Trump? Or will he evolve and grow with the demands of the job (like others did before him)? We don't know. Most likely his biggest contribution will be that he helps us recognize the other (downside) part of our culture that needs loving attention, compassion and transformation. As the German poet Goethe put it so eloquently when making Mephistopheles—representing the role of the “evil”—say: “I am part of that force which eternally wills evil and eternally works good.”

What is the “good” that President Trump could work for us? Here is a short list:

Letting go of any illusion that the necessary changes of our time will originate from the White House or any other top-down structure. It will come instead from a new global movement of local and multi-local change makers that apply the mindset of Michelle Obama (open mind, heart, will) onto the transformation of the collective.

As we begin responding to the disruption of this week, we have an opportunity to organize in new ways that go beyond the usual responses to disruption:

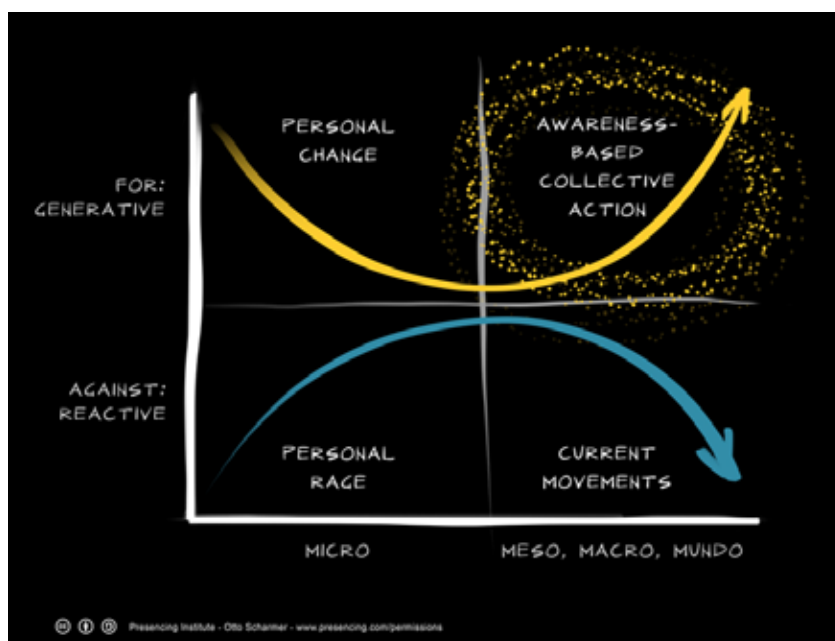


Figure 2: Four types of response to disruptive change. (figures by Kelvy Bird)

1. *Personal rage*: taking it out on something outside ourselves,
2. *Personal change*: using that energy to transform oneself, or
3. *Movements* that react against the symptoms of the social and ecological divides.

What is called for today is a massive response that reaches into the upper right quadrant (figure 2): focusing on *evolving* and *transforming the collective*. What's missing most is an enabling infrastructure that supports initiatives to move into the top right quadrant of co-creating change.

The good news is, that the future is already here – many initiatives already *exist* in which cross-sector groups work from seeing the whole (*eco-system awareness*) rather than from a silo-view (*ego-system awareness*).

Summing up, the blind spot at issue here concerns the dominant paradigms of thought that have legitimized the economic, political, and spiritual divides which—in conjunction with the mindless use of social media and technology—gave rise to the Trump movement and presidency. To overcome or bridge these divides calls for nothing less than regenerating the foundations of our civilization by updating the key operating codes on which our societies operate:

Economy 4.0: evolving our economy from ego-system economics to eco-system economics by refocusing the economic activity (and the use intentional use of money) toward generating well-being for all

Democracy 4.0: evolving our democracies toward engaging people in ways that are more direct, distributed, democratic, and dialogic and that ban the toxic and corrupting influence through (unrestricted) money

Education 4.0: evolving our educational systems toward freely accessible infrastructures that help individuals, communities and multi-stakeholder groups to activate the deep human capacity to co-sense, co-shape and co-create the emerging

future in their own context any place and any time.

To advance such an agenda of profound societal renewal will require

- New collaborative platforms, online-to-offline, that allow pioneering change makers from across sectors to directly engage with each other

- A constitution for the global digital space that makes the Facebooks and Googles accountable to citizens, communities and civil rights worldwide.

- Massive free capacity building mechanisms that build the deeper innovation capacities at scale (curiosity, compassion, courage)

- And new concepts like basic income grants for all that would replace our current system of organized irresponsibility through an ecology of entrepreneurship that is driven by passion and purpose rather than profit – in other words, enabling people to activate their greatest gifts, and pursue the work they are truly passionate about.

MITx u.lab is a small prototype and platform that we started last year with the intention to help change makers who want to move their work into the fourth quadrant. What started as a MOOC is now a platform for 75,000 change makers from 180 countries that collaborate across 600 hubs. In 2017 we intend to move this platform to its next stage of catalyzing change at the scale of the whole system.

It's one of several initiatives that helps us remember what matters most: that as warriors of the third category, we need to fully engage the present moment whilst keeping our eye on the future that is seeking to emerge. Our old civilizational forms are much more fragile than anyone might have thought. But our capacity to regenerate them from the deepest source of our humanity is also more present and available than ever—now.

Claus-Otto Scharmer Receives the Leonardo Award

Leonardo Award, October 7, 2016



Claus-Otto Scharmer

For the past seven years, the Leonardo Award has stood for the “future of learning.” The European education prize awards provocative realists, courageous pioneers and energetic pragmatists who have explored new paths in the field of education.

The award in the category of Thought Leadership will go to Dr. C. Otto Scharmer. The MIT professor and founder of the Presencing Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, will be awarded for his “Theory U.” With this “social technology of freedom” he describes how, with the help of presence and sensing, you can lead from the future as it emerges. It is thus that he already brought together key players in the leadership program at the World Economic Forum in Davos and the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Scharmer is a Waldorf School alumnus.

Cultural Identity and Individuation in Educational Practice

The 7th Asian Waldorf Teachers' Conference

Zewu Li, Chengdu Waldorf School, China

There are three layers to Waldorf Education: Awakening of the Individual, Awareness of Cultural Identity, and Association of Spiritual Wholeness.

Awakening of the Individual is when we completely understand that we exist as a human being with two sides: the outward and inward. Outwardly each individual is distinguished from one's natural surroundings or other human beings yet still connected. Inwardness can be described as the knowing of the individual with power of imagination, courage for truth and responsibility of soul; or with kindness, wisdom and fearlessness as Confucius teaches.

Human beings are also social and cultural beings with specific cultural identities. Awareness of Cultural Identity is fundamental to how cultures meet. It is important to keep characteristics of one's own culture, to have confidence in one's own culture, yet to also find something in common with and to appreciate in other cultures.

These are all based on Association of Spiritual Wholeness. According to an Eastern viewpoint, spirits are the same as water in drops of rain, in rivers, in oceans. We can see this in reverse as whole spiritual beings penetrating into different cultural bodies and growing independently within a higher connection. Then the spirit works into the single person.

Dr. Rudolf Steiner talked about the *consciousness soul* age and its specialties. If we look at our situation in society, we can see that we still have the problems as cultures and in our educational systems that Steiner referred to a hundred years ago. We can do something about this through our education because this avenue offers possibilities for real change. The younger generation is changing, no matter what, and we should embrace this change. The only thing that does not change is *change* itself; as the spirit of the Chinese *I-Ching* indicates.



Mount Emei, China, site of the seventh AWTC.

The new word *globalization* is defined as “the practice of conducting business according to both local and global considerations.” Both the global and local are needed in our culture today. The world is getting smaller due to technology and we are now able to have far more connectedness between East and West and their different cultures. But at the same time, we have to respect our differences in individuals and in communities. We should not ignore what is happening in other countries with regard to teaching methods that may be helpful. As we struggle to find our own identity within our own culture, we should dive into the own spiritual culture but also gain inner inspiration from other cultures as well.

Asia is the largest continent in the world and has so much cultural diversities, rich historical background and heavy burdens of the past and present. We as Waldorf teachers really need to come together in this upcoming AWTC gathering to share our chosen teaching resources, materials and our cultural consciousness. Waldorf education provides a common basis for us to do this. We should put ourselves into the same situation when we want to find our own individualization in teaching and learning. We could also talk about how an individual can keep his or her freedom while working with colleagues and when they can sacrifice their opinions to follow the ideas of their colleagues.

Samantabhadra (Sanskrit), *Puxian* in Chinese, means “universal worthy,” and is the name of a bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism. He is associated with reason, action and meditation. He is the patron of Sakyamuni Buddha and in the Lotus Sutra and the Avatamsaka Sutra he made the ten great vows for the basis of a bodhisattva, one who strives toward enlightenment. These ideas are known throughout China, in Japan and also in Tibetan Buddhism. Puxian’s ‘place’ in China is called Mount Emei, which is just 2 hours drive from the Chengdu Waldorf School. We find it very special that we have chosen this place as the venue for our 7th AWTC. There must be

a good reason for this correspondence of place with the Asian Waldorf teacher’s biannual conference now holding its seventh gathering. Yes, we all need reason, action, meditation and the wisdom for wholeness.

This gathering also coincides with the Waldorf schools centennial pre-celebration. We are grateful that Rudolf Steiner initiated this education. Confucius said of himself that people would benefit from him only after 100 years, that people would learn his teachings 100 years after he passed on. I think this is true also of Dr. Rudolf Steiner and his work. We are already seeing the expansion of Waldorf education in Asia and we will witness this movement bringing much more about as we meet this 100th anniversary. The Spirit of the Time is calling for reason, action and meditation; calling for awakening, awareness and association; calling for wisdom, courage, and love!

See you in Chengdu!



Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference

2017 in Chengdu, China

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND INDIVIDUALIZATION IN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference 2017 will be the seventh conference of this nature and will also close the cycle of this first set of deepening studies. As in the past conferences the deepening of our understanding of the human nature of the child and its development – especially nowadays and under current challenges – will be in the center of our attention. Added to this, we will offer a wide range of courses for kindergartens teachers, teachers in the class-teaching elementary years and subject courses for upper school teachers. We try to engage many of our colleagues from the Asian countries in order to make exchange for the specific needs in Asia possible.

The conference will happen in the Chengdu area, Emei, and start with arrival on the evening of the 28th of April. The actual work starts on the 29th of April morning and lasts until the evening of the 5th of May.

It is our pleasure to announce the webpage of the Asian Waldorf Teacher's Conference "Cultural Identity and Individualization in Educational Practice" in Chengdu from April 28 until May 5, 2017, which is online now. The webpage is included in the official Webpage of Chengdu Waldorf School.

For further information about the conference follow these links:

The official website of Chengdu Waldorf School:

<http://www.waldorfchina.org.cn>

AWTC Link in Chinese:

<http://www.waldorfchina.org.cn/node/7>

AWTC link in English:

<http://www.waldorfchina.org.cn/conference-asia/english>

Platform of Conference schedule announcement in English: awtc.mymova.com

The registration has already started and you are most welcome to register now.

Registration via WeChat (in Chinese)

Registration via Official website of Chengdu Waldorf School (in Chinese)

Platform for registration in English:

Please copy awtc.mymova.com

to browser and press the 'register' button on the right side of the page.

We are looking forward to seeing you in April 2017,

Li Zhang

Chinese preparatory group

Nana Goebel

Freunde der Erziehungskunst



Waldorf Early Childhood Education in the China

Li Zhang, Chengdu, China



History

In 2004, the first Waldorf school and kindergarten was founded in Chengdu, China. The first kindergarten class started with five children and was led by local teacher Li Zhang. In 2010, Thanh Cherry of Australia founded The Waldorf Early Childhood Training and Mentoring Program in China (WECC) with the support of International Association of Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), the Friends of Rudolf Steiner Education (Freunde), and the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland. WECC provides a three-year part time kindergarten teacher's training and mentorship in China. Thanh Cherry and Li Zhang then founded China Waldorf Early childhood Education Forum (CECEF) in 2011 to support Waldorf early childhood education in China. The CECEF working group is comprised of representatives from the six *Waldorf* regions of China. Li Zhang serves as the chairperson. In 2014, CECEF became a member of IASWECE, and in 2015, Thanh Cherry stepped down from the position of WECC coordinator but continued on as WECC /CECEF consultant until the end of 2016. Kathy MacFarlane from New Zealand will take over this position with its enormous tasks.

In 2016, there were more than 400 early childhood Wal-



Free Play: Building a rainbow house.



dorf education initiatives that include kindergartens, children's homes, parent-toddler classes, childcare programs in homes and centers. In addition, there are more than 50 grade school education initiatives. Over the past 12 years, the Waldorf educational movement has been rapidly growing throughout China.

More and more parents are seeking Waldorf education as an alternative option to the Chinese state education. Chinese state education focuses on intellectual learning with a heavy emphasis on memorization and testing, but does not foster creativity. There is also a growing interest in studying Waldorf education for self-development and teacher training. Many Parents and teachers show great enthusiasm in being involved in founding and running the school or kindergarten. Teachers and parents see similarities in Waldorf education and traditional Chinese culture, particularly, Taoism and Chinese medicine. Waldorf education has allowed them to come to appreciate their own culture and traditions. They integrate aspects of traditional culture into the Waldorf kindergartens and communities.

Every Chinese New Year, students from grade six come to the kindergarten to write Spring festival couplets for all the door's of classrooms.

Training Courses and Conference

Currently, there are six WECC, three-year part-time Kindergarten teacher training courses, offered in six different cities: Chengdu, Beijing, Xi'an, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong. Each year, there are more than 800 students enrolled in WECC training programs. In addition to the teacher training courses, CECEF organizes a variety of specialized courses and workshops, such as "Birth to Three" trainings, Waldorf

kindergarten management courses, regional seminars, and introductory courses.

Since 2011, Chengdu Waldorf School and Sichuan Normal University co-offer a Waldorf early childhood education introduction course for third year students. CECEF & WECC together have organized two China Waldorf early childhood education conferences, the first one in 2013 with the theme "Meeting Children Where They Are," and a second one in October 2016 with the theme "E-Generation Children and Waldorf Early Childhood Education," each having a 500 person attendance.

About Waldorf kindergartens and Waldorf children's home

In China, Waldorf kindergartens and children's homes all have mixed-age groups with children from three to seven years old. The program is from 8AM or 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM or 5PM every day. Most kindergartens and children's homes also have "parent-toddler classes" for children from one-and-half-years old to three-and-half-years old. This program is two or three half days every week.

Challenges

Waldorf initiatives all face a common challenge of not





Outdoor Free play: horsing around.

being able to meet the growing demands from parents and children. Many initiatives do not having enough qualified teachers and new teachers do not have enough opportunities to complete their practicums at well established kindergartens. Overall, there is a lack of mentorship and guidance from more experienced teachers.

Another challenge is that childcare homes and kindergartens cannot apply for official licenses because their facilities fail to meet the strict safety regulations required by the state education department. The result is that childcare homes and kindergartens are at risk of being closed down by the local government.

The general public and many people in Waldorf circles wonder whether Waldorf education has a religious background and whether Waldorf education can sufficiently prepare children to adapt to the public education system.

Li Zhang completed her kindergarten teacher training at Sunbridge College in Spring Valley, New York, and was one of the founders of Chengdu Waldorf School. Currently, she serves as the chairperson of the Board of Chengdu Waldorf School, and works at the Chengdu Waldorf School teacher-training center. She is also the chairperson of the China Waldorf Early Childhood Education Forum (CECEF).



Eurythmy Day

Waldorf Education in China:

A letter from the China Waldorf Forum for mainland Chinese schools and training centers by Ben Cherry—November 2016



Teacher-thinkers, East and West.

As you no doubt know, there are now more than sixty schools practicing Waldorf education in Mainland China, though some are still more like home schools at this stage. The quality of teaching and administration varies considerably from one school to another. In some there are excellent teachers and in others a continuing struggle to bring to the children what they need for their development. Though some are well-organized, in others there are conflicts and splits which bring tiredness and disillusionment.

More and more schools are now making connections with the government and slowly the number of registered schools increases. This brings more strength and security, but also the challenge of how to accommodate to the government's educational requirements. At the same time, new training courses keep springing up in different places without prior discussion and there are more and more conferences involving public school principals and teachers, as well as people from universities and government departments.

On top of all of this, more than 25 schools have reached grade 6 and most are receiving pressure from parents to continue on into high school, which is a huge and very different undertaking.

All these factors are intensifying public discussion about Waldorf education and highlighting the question of academic standards. Many people are looking at the Waldorf schools and asking how well they have been performing since this education began in Mainland China 12 years ago. We are entering a new phase of development, which clearly requires more consciousness, responsibility, accountability and co-working.

All of this we discussed during a 3-day retreat of the CWF Working Group in Xiamen in mid-October. We looked in detail at what has been achieved so far and what the pressing issues are right now. We then turned our attention to the future and agreed on what our next steps need to be to bring more cohesion and order into the movement, while still allowing space for creative initiative-taking. We have been working

with this picture of Diversity within Unity for several years and now it needs to be put into application more consciously and effectively.

In response to the outer situation and the growing maturation of our movement we have agreed upon the following clear steps:

1) Leadership Conference

We have already sent invitations to leaders from the more mature schools to a Leadership Seminar, guided by Torin Finser, a highly experienced educator, writer and leader of the American Anthroposophical Society, that will take place in Tianyun School in Guangzhou from the morning of January 3 until the evening of the 6th. During it we will not only explore the nature of leadership today, but also look at school administration and the challenge of high school.

For an interactive event of this nature to be effective, we have to restrict numbers, but the process we go through and the results we achieve will be clearly communicated to all schools and centers.

2) Regional Coordination Groups

We are in the process of establishing clusters of experienced people, as an extension of the CWF Working Group, to bring more coordination in the different regions. As part of this process, we invite you all to recommend to us people in your region who you think have the necessary skills and experience, so that we can form small groups which can help us meet the needs and aspirations of different parts of China.

The criteria for participation in such a group are: (i) experience as a leader in a Waldorf school that is at least in its fifth year of operation; (ii) willingness and ability to co-work with others and participate in at least two meetings of the regional coordination group each year; (iii) active relationship with Anthroposophy and willingness to participate in the leadership conference and other CWF gatherings, whenever possible; (iv) willingness and ability to make good connections with schools in the region; and (v) willingness to represent Waldorf education in the region on behalf of and in coordination with CWF.

We envisage that the Regional Coordination Groups, working in conjunction with the CWF Working Group and

secretaries, will give attention to seven areas of activity. These are: (i) organizing and participating in curriculum research; (ii) helping teacher preparation processes; (iii) helping to organize and monitor mentoring; (iv) giving support for school administration; (v) helping in the preparation for high school; (vi) keeping in touch with schools and centers in the region; and (vii) supporting and guiding new schools.

We recognize that this is a formidable list of responsibilities, but we will support it in every way we can. Our practice has been to hold our WG meetings and CWF activities in different parts of China each year and we will from now on connect these with the new groups in each region. Transition to this way of working will take time.



Carved lung (dragon) bannister at Dazu, Sichuan, China

3) School and Training Center Evaluation

We will begin the huge process of evaluating all schools and centers working with Waldorf education in the course of next year, working from the more mature ones gradually towards the newer ones. In case you have not read it and circulated it among your staff, we are attaching our policy for evaluation with this letter, which is in tune with international standards.

The process will involve experienced Waldorf educators from overseas, but will be organized and guided by Ben Cherry on behalf of the CWF Working Group. It will take a couple of years to complete the first round of visits and we will keep you informed of the process. If you have questions or suggestions, please let us know.

4) Human Resources

We are looking for a Chinese person who can be employed by CWF on a half-yearly basis to begin with, and eventually a full-time basis, to manage the large program that lies ahead and help make our existing programs, which at present depend almost entirely on volunteers, sustainable for the future. Criteria for this position include: (i) managerial & financial experience, preferably (but not



necessarily) in a culturally-based organization; (ii) active relationship with Anthroposophy and Waldorf education for at least three years; (iii) social and communication skills, and an interest in working with others; (iv) adaptability and willingness to grow with the work; (v) ability to communicate well in English; (vi) willingness and ability to support all aspects of CWF's workthrough its sub-groups and the new regional coordination groups; and (vii) willingness to commit for at least one year, with the hope of continuing further.

If you know of someone who could fit these criteria, please let us know at: cwforum@126.com

5) Finance

To make all of this possible, we will need to establish a secure source of income, both from the courses and conferences we establish and from regular donations by at least the more established schools and centers.

In the meantime, we wish to acknowledge and express our deep gratitude to the Chengdu Waldorf School and Training Centre, the South China Natural Childhood Training Centre, and all the other schools, centers and individuals from whom we have received donations from time to time and especially the Shan Hai Yuan Foundation, which has been continuously supporting CWF and the whole Waldorf education movement in Mainland China for five years now.

The generosity of all these individuals and organizations has been a strong factor in enabling us, to the best of our ability, to support, protect and enhance the quality of this education. Now we have reached a stage where we can no longer administer this network of Waldorf initiatives only on a voluntary basis. All members of the Working Group, except the coordinator and secretaries, are already extremely busy with their own schools.

All these things will be shared and taken further at the January Leadership Conference.

We send our good wishes to you and all your colleagues, and ask that you make sure that this letter is circulated among your staff and discussed together. We will gratefully receive any comments and suggestions you may have.

Contact: cwforum@126.com

Support the Waldorf Movement in Rural China

Harry Huang, Chengdu, China



If thirteen years ago, you had heard that Li Zhang and Harry Huang (Wong) returned to China from Spring Valley, New York, and founded the first Waldorf school and kindergarten in Chengdu, you might not have believed your ears because you could imagine how hard it would be. You might not have thought it was possible because of the

Chinese authority. Well, together with others, they did it with five children in kindergarten and three children in grade school. Today, there are more than 400 children from kindergarten to grade 11 in the Chengdu Waldorf School.

And there are more than 400 Waldorf kindergartens and 60 Waldorf schools all over China now. There are seven Waldorf teacher-training centers with over 100 to 240 students in each training course. The rapidly growing Waldorf movement has been praised by the middle and upper classes in the cities across China for providing an alternative education.

In the mean time, many questions have been asked as to why Waldorf education only serves the rich.

While it is difficult to set up a Waldorf kindergarten and school in the cities, once the parents really get involved, they will find a way to help make it happen. Now, we are building a kindergarten for those children who are left behind in the villages while their young parents are looking for jobs and new lives in the cities. Many of those parents are less skilled workers who cannot afford to support a family in the city. So, they leave their young children in the village with grand-

parents and try to send a little money back to the village when they are able.

Who are the

Left-behind Children?

Since government discriminatory policy prevents migrant workers from settling their families in the cities, there are about 61 million Chinese children who live with their aging grandparents in the countryside while their parents are working in the cities. Those children are known as the "left-behind children." It is common for both parents to leave home together, because parents are striving to raise their family's standard of living. The parents only return to the villages for a couple weeks a year, if they make enough for the long and





stressful journey during the Chinese New Year break. The grandparents who live with left-behind children often work long hours tending fields, and leave the younger children untended. There are many tragic events that affect those left-behind children, such as being stolen, drowned, killed by animals, or physically/sexually abused. Many children become very difficult in school later on account of the lack of parenting. Some children do not go to kindergarten or school at all. This is a huge problem now for the education of the left-behind in China.

How it happened

In the summer of 2013, Li and Harry went to their village in South China, where Harry was born, to be with Harry's mother, who was on the way to cross the threshold. Harry's sister Ai Zhen ("Guma"), who worked nine years in the Chengdu Waldorf kindergarten, also went.

There they saw a group of left-behind children and realized the desperate need of Waldorf kindergartens for those left-behind children in the village. After their mother's funeral in

the summer, the three teachers set up a kindergarten at her home using two spare rooms and the yard. Ai Zhen quit her job in Chengdu Waldorf School and became the lead teacher. She works with one assistant teacher taking a group of 19 children to start the first Waldorf Kindergarten for disadvantage children in rural China.

Children only pay for snacks and lunch with about 50 US dollars per month, but there are still a few children whose families cannot afford to pay anything. Li Zhang and Harry Huang are raising funds to cover the operating costs and a minimum salary for the teachers. There are many more children who want to attend the kindergarten, but the room is too small to host them and the building does not meet the code to register legally.

We have been thinking how to expand the kindergarten in order to take more children in. Most important is how we can operate it legally. We really want to build up a model for those who have the good will to bring Waldorf education to the rural areas to benefit those disadvantaged children. We believe that it is something worthwhile to do. We thought that our children could have been like them if we had not managed to make our living in the cities. We wish Waldorf education could serve those left-behind children's needs because:

- They desperately need love and warmth because their parents are not with them.
- They get a family-like environment in the Waldorf kindergarten to feel safe.
- We provide them with good protection from a harmful environment.
- We can keep them away from TV, other media and junk food.
- We protect their childhood and innocence.

The great thing is that we are working with Shanghai Yuan foundation that designates their mission as helping rural children gain access to minimum education. The foundation has been the sponsor of funds and helps with fundraising for this small rural kindergarten as a pilot project.

In the Spring of 2014, we made a proposal to build a new kindergarten structure to host 60 children so we can move from Harry's village home. We went through a very complicated process with permits and paper work. Due to the many restrictions, we needed to break the whole budget of building into three parts and we raised a small



portion of the funds in one campaign.

After having launched a second campaign, we have only raised enough to cover two-thirds of the budget. The kindergarten building should be finished in three months, but it took more than two years to complete because of the lack of funds. It stood as an unfinished project for while.

In the end, we obtained \$45,000 from a private lender to pay off the contractor so that the building could be completed by February 2016. After many months of hard work (and two of our children, Shiyu and Shiming, also worked helping to clean the building and construct the sewer), now we have a new kindergarten building. It may be one of the best kindergartens in rural China.

We quickly expanded to two groups of twenty-two children in each group. New problems come as more children arrive and we grow larger. More funds are need to secure new teachers and staff. In fact, it is very difficult to find people who are willing to work in rural areas and accept less pay than they would get in the cities. We must trust in the good will of the people who come to help us make this kindergarten the most extraordinary, first-time educational experiment in China.

We now need help to pay off the loan since there is no

other income through the school. There were many problems and obstacles we needed to overcome to obtain the land and the building permits, and to deal with the builders, and villagers. Those stories could fill a series of books and I will try to share some in the future.

If you are able to help, please contact me at:

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Harry Wong.



Parents and children in group activity at the China Mignon Program (see page 13).

The Mignon Program, China 2016

Brigida Balaszun, Spring Valley, New York, USA

The Mignon Program took place in a small town west of Beijing and offered an experience for families with a special needs child.

The first Mignon program in China was held in 2012. This June 11-19 the program was held in a small town west of Beijing. It offered families with a child of special needs to spend time together with other families in a similar situation, to share experiences, to engage in artistic activities, to learn new skills, to help each other and to learn new approaches to life. Each child was assigned to a caregiver from among the students in the training for Curative Education. The children engaged in daily artistic activities, morning and evening circle, outdoor games, story time and supervised quiet time. The entire group was composed of 13 families, 13 caregivers, 2 helpers, 2 volunteers, 3 translators and 3 teachers.

My experience of the week can be summarized as: "Despite our individual flaws and limitations a wholeness arose that was a gift and a gift of grace." How was that possible? Several social and spiritual qualities became available because we chose to live in a rural environment and chose to turn the TV and the cell phone off. We wanted to be totally available for each other. The innocence of the children was there, the understanding, patience, compassion and empathy of the caregivers was there and the help of the teacher, Barbara Baldwin was there. The parents were grateful to see other approaches to life and to gain new perspectives for their own situation. Everybody learned new skills: the children, the caregivers, the parents and the teachers. There was a social vessel composed of sacrifice and open for friendship, buoyancy, creativity, imagination, inspiration and intuition.

The parents had worked in their eurythmy sessions with the poem "The Washing of the Feet" by Christian Morgenstern—in Chinese! It closes with the words: "*In thanks all beings do entwine.*"

The Washing of the feet

I thank you, silent stone on earth,
and gently lean to you below.
My life as plant I owe to you.

I thank you, grounds and meadows green
and bend down close to you below.
My life as animal depends on you.

I thank you animal, and plant and stone,
and bow down thankfully to you below.
You helped me to become all three.

And we thank you, you child of man,
And kneel in reverence before you:
only because you are, we are.

From all of God's creation, simple
or so manifold, rise thanks.
In thanks all beings entwine.



My First Experience in the Mignon Program, China

Lin Zhang, Translator and Helper in Mignon Program

Thirteen families attended the program, together with 13 caregivers, 2 volunteers, 3 translators and 3 teachers. Most of the children were around 9-10 years old.

I actually had been working and living in Camphill Community for 3 years. First year I was in England and the latter two years in Beaver Run Children Village in America. But this has been my first time working with children with special needs in my own country. It was a lovely, impressive but also intense program.

This Mignon Program was located in a small village in Guangdong Province, far away from urban civilization. The nearby bamboo forests and a winding river made this hotel more like a retreat resort. 13 families attended the program, together with 13 caregivers, 2 volunteers, 3 translators and 3 teachers. Most of the children were around 9-10 years old.

We started the day with a short morning meeting among the caregivers and teachers, talking about the attitude of curative education. Afterwards we would have a morning circle with all the families doing some movements and singing and greeting. Then parents had to say goodbye to their kids for the day time because of their different schedules. This is something special about Mignon that it separates the families so that children and parents could have a break from each other and totally focus on what they do without being distracted. Children spent most of their time with caregivers on walking, eurythmy, clay, reading and playing games. This was also the very practical time for caregivers, who had already studied curative education before, to get a sense of how to work with children with special needs. They might have numerous questions during working and would be too impatient to wait for the answers from teachers at the end of the day. Parents had their own workshops with different teachers and they had begun to know each other and built up good relationship. At supper time, children would go back to their own parents to finish the day.

I was one of the translators and also in charge of the game session every afternoon. Since I had experiences of working with special needs people, Barbara Baldwin, the organizer, as well as one of the teachers asked me to be prepared to jump in whenever the caregivers needed help. So I had an overview of the whole process during which children and parents moved. For instance, the morning and evening circles were chaotic on the first days, as expected. Children were shouting and running because they didn't know what would happen. But every day we saw a delightful progress as more of them could actually keep themselves in the circle and follow the singing or movements. I was very moved to hear several kids could sing the morning songs loud and clear.

Parents really had a great time here in this program, not only because their children were taken good care of, but also they had met many other families and made connections with them. They had fun during the clay and painting classes too. They were always the most active participants during the game session. Every time when I saw them squeezing themselves around one round table and eating snacks, I felt a strong sense of harmony and community. Barbara had said parents need to support each other in many ways and Mignon provided them with time and space and gave them possibilities for the future.



In the last day of the program, I took part in the review session for the parents. Many of them mentioned that through this program, they had rediscovered their own children and found many of their new potentials that they had never seen before. Some said they would change the way they look at their children and be more empathetic. Some pointed out that their children had become more independent during the program.

It wasn't an easy task to gather 13 families together from all over China. But Mignon's aim is to have more programs in different areas and to attract more locals so that they may form a community to communicate and support each other. It already had very successful beginnings and planted the promising seeds in many places. We have to be patient to let them grow.

For more information on the Mignon program contact: Lingfang at szjulie@qq.com

Artistic Mysteries of Ancient China

Van James, Honolulu, Hawai'i

[Abridged from the book *Spirit and Art*, by Van James.]

Mold clay into a vessel; from its not-being [that is, the vessel's hollow] arises the utility of the vessel. Cut out doors and windows in the [walls of the] house, from their not-being [their empty space] arises the utility of the house. Therefore by the existence of things we profit. And by the non-existence of things we are served.

--Lao-Tzu

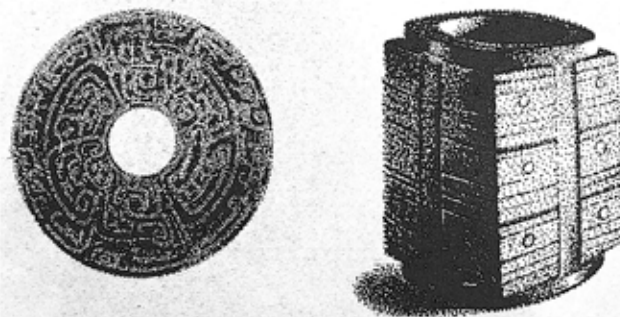


Fig. 1a. The pi (bi) disc is a prehistoric Chinese sun emblem, also symbolic of heaven. Buried with the dead to insure spiritual life after death, it may have been used in connection with sunrise sacrifices. Fig. 1b. The ts'ung or cong column with its square or rectangular shape is an earth symbol used in Shang and Zhou (Chou) dynasty burial practices.

The legendary Huang-ti or "Yellow Emperor," whose reign, according to the old Chinese lunar calendar, began in 2698 B.C.,¹ controlled most of the Asian central plain and areas to the west and north. After forcing most of his enemies to flee, Huang-ti was confronted by his foremost adversary, the horned Ch'ih-yu, inventor of weapons. Using magic powers, Ch'ih-yu enveloped the Yellow Emperor's army in a dense fog, blinding and confounding them. However, a chariot bearing a figure that unswervingly pointed south led the Yellow Emperor out of the fog to safety. Eventually, Ch'ih-yu was defeated and Huang-ti gained dominance over the entire Yellow River Valley. Huang-ti is credited with inventing the compass and the carriage, developing writing, weaving, and the raising of silk worms, as well as designing innovative clothing, boats, and dwellings.

According to Rudolf Steiner, an exalted spiritual leader

who appeared at about this time in China and became a great teacher of humanity, initiated a cultural stream that would last for thousands of years as it spread westward. This exceptional being, who was secluded and grew up in the precincts of an East Asian mystery center, became the first to “grasp through the faculty of human intellect, what had formerly come into the mysteries through revelation.”² It was through this remarkable figure that Eastern mystery wisdom flowed to the West on the wings of newly born human intelligence and inspired cultures such as that of ancient Greece, with its high art and philosophy. It was this particular influence which, as Gnostic spirituality, lasted up into the fourth century C.E. as a living stream of wisdom before fading from human comprehension. It was in fact, says Steiner, this pagan wisdom that made it possible for early Christians to grasp the deeper spiritual significance of the Christ event. The auspicious Chinese figure behind this spiritual stream ironically became known in later esoteric tradition as Lucifer, “the Light Bringer.” One may wonder if these two histories are describing the same being.

Some of the significant images from this period of prehistoric China are the *pi* (*bi*) disc and the *ts’ung* (*cong*) column, the archetypal circle and the rectangle. The *pi* is a symbol of the sun, also of heaven, and was often carved in jade, with a hole about a third of the total size of the disc, representing the path of transcendence or the Absolute (*t’ai-chi*) and the eternally fixed Pole Star (fig. 1a). Some discs were placed in the mouth of the dead emperor to insure vitality and prevent the body’s decay. Zhou (Chou) period records also mention the disc as being placed under the corpse, but in both cases it was seen as a vehicle for guiding heavenward the spirit of the deceased. It was the highest emblem of noble status and the most important funerary object for assisting communication with the ancestors and the gods. However, it is likely that in earlier periods it was used in connection with daily sunrise sacrifices offered to the Supreme Being of Heaven, Shang Ti.

The word “ritual” in Chinese originally meant “to serve the gods with jade.” And the written character for shaman depicts two tools used to draw circles overlapping one another, demonstrating who had the technology and the exclusive power to produce the *pi* disc and to present sacrifices with it.

The *ts’ung* or *cong* is a rectangular container, also carved of jade, with a cylindrical hollow and is often found among Shang and Zhou period grave offerings (fig. 1b). By the Zhou period, the *ts’ung* was placed on the abdomen of the deceased and signified the earth as the *pi* represented heaven. However, as Hugo Munsterberg points out “...this explanation is very late and may no longer express the meaning that these motifs had in Shang times.”³ Nevertheless, the designation of *pi* as sun and later as heaven, and *ts’ung* or *cong* as earth, are approximations of meaning that point us in the direction of the spiritual significance of these images.

The whorl motif is closely related to the *pi* as a solar emblem (fig. 2). Often found on Shang period bronzes, it consists of a circle with four curving linear leg, reminiscent of a pinwheel.

The whorls are likely pictorializations of the Chinese glyph for brightness and fire, and are also connected with the sun. The whorl is also found in very early astronomical writings, some of the earliest texts in China, as a sun symbol. It pictures the four solar winds that will later be seen throughout the world as the swastika (Sanskrit for “good luck”).



Fig. 2. The whorl motif is a solar emblem, a *pi* symbol set in motion, a swastika.

In contrast to Western symbols abstracted into letters, Chinese writing developed first as pictures that evolved later into glyphs. It is of interest that in Chinese it is said that

one “writes” a picture. Both painting and writing are done with brush and ink; painting is usually monochrome and often includes writing. Thus it is easy to understand the old proverb that “a picture tells a thousand stories.” The Chinese sensitivity for brush work and its spiritual significance is matter-of-factly expressed by the fifth century master, Wang Wei: “People who discuss painting merely concentrate on the outward aspects and structural effects...Alas!...painting cannot be achieved by the physical movements of the fingers and the hand, but only by the spirit entering into them. This is the nature of painting.”⁴

Chiang Yee, in *The Chinese Eye: An Interpretation of Chinese Painting*, points out that “...no definite religious system has ever been evolved in China...”⁵ for Daoism and Confucianism are philosophical rather than religious. Dao, or Tao (the Way), has to do with the eternal, natural order and the harmonious sense of wholeness for humanity’s relationship with nature and cosmos. Dao underlies the *I Ching*, a twelfth-century B.C.E. practice of divination that uses a sign system for determining changes in the universe resulting from the polar opposite forces of *yin* and *yang*. According to Dao, the dynamics of the cosmos are made up of two complementary forces that express themselves through polarities such as father and mother, light and dark, sky and earth, dry and wet, mountain and valley, straight and curved. Yang is the male principle and yin is the female in this sense, and they are graphically brought together in the *t’ai-chi t’u* image that was used by Daoists and Confucianists alike as a symbol of the Supreme Power of the Universe (fig. 3). The symbol is later incorporated into Buddhism. “It could decorate everyday objects, gates, ritual objects for exorcism, the robes

of a Daoist priest and even the wrap for babies in the belief that the design would be a protective charm against demons.”⁶

Fig. 3. The Daoist yin-yang symbol, called *t’ai-chi t’u*, is later utilized in Buddhist iconography. It represents the great dynamic polarities at work in the universe.



The constant creative interplay of these yin and yang forces is expressed in the two drop-like forms moving together in a reciprocal curving gesture, forming a rounded two-fold swastika with a dot of the opposite's nature, like an eye, in the head of each form. Eight trigrams surround the central form with groups of three solid (yang), broken (yin), or solid and broken lines. Set in the eight directions, these trigrams are associated with heaven and earth, wind and thunder, fire and water, mountain and lake. They were used for consultation of oracles as well as for philosophical interpretation and are still used to this day.

Dao serves as a basis for Feng Shui which deals with the reading and harmonizing of *ch'i* (*qi*) within natural and built environments. Literally meaning "wind" and "water," the two elements that are intermediaries between heaven (light) and earth (solid), Feng Shui, acknowledges the lines of force that manifest as gently flowing life force. *Ch'i* is often depicted as undulating, curvilinear designs on vessels and as freely meandering forms between naturalistic images in Chinese art works of various media (fig. 4). *Ch'i* is considered the cosmic breath and manifests through the changing seasons, weather phenomena, movements of the heavens, seas, human emotions, and thoughts. It has three phases: *sheng*, which is a moving upward or waxing and has to do with a bright, fresh environment; *si*, which means dying or waning, and is characterized by a depleted and depressed situation; and *sha*, which is harmful, dangerous, negative energy, appearing as malevolent jabbing forces or "secret arrows."



Fig. 4. *Ch'i* is often depicted as undulating, curvilinear patterns and designs in Chinese works of art—the mark of the unseen world behind the seen.

Ch'i has five moods or elements: water, wood, fire, earth, and metal. Water, which is wavelike and flows, curves, carries, cleans, and has to do with wisdom and intelligence, but also fear, is the element of the cold north and its colors are black and dark blue, its season is winter, and its part of the body is the kidney. Wood is an element that is characteristically strong yet flexible. Considered a kind and friendly element, its negative side is anger. It is upright, narrow, and rectangular, its colors are green and light blue, its position easterly, and its weather condition is rainy, its season spring, and its part of the body is the liver. Fire shines, is hot and dry, courageous and joyful. It is also hyperactive and rash. Its shape is jagged, its colors purple and red, its position is southerly, its season summer, its organ is the heart. Earth supports because it is solid and displays equanimity and patience, but also worry. Its shape is square and flat. Its color is orange and yellow, its position is in the middle. Earth weather is cloudy and windy, summery as well as autumn-like. The stomach is an earth organ. Metal reinforces, and is the perfection of earth. It represents morality and justice, but also inflexibility. Its form is round, its color white, grey or silver, its direction is west, its weather is clear, pleasant, and autumnal. The lungs are seen as related to the element of metal. According to Feng Shui, an applied geomancy, the shape of a building classifies it as belonging to one or more of these five elements. A low, flat roof connects a building with the earth element; an irregular roof with the water element; a tall, narrow construction fits the wood element; domes are associated with the metal element; and sharp, pointed roofs belong to the fire element (fig. 5). Thus, according to Feng Shui practitioners, a fire form would not be appropriately placed within the surroundings of water forms for it would not flourish.

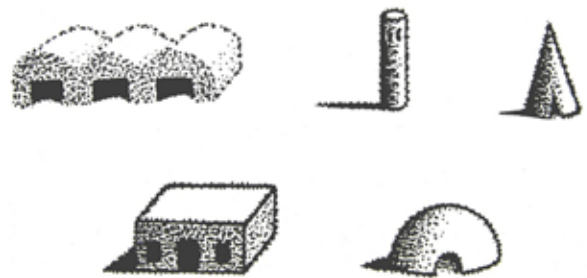


Fig. 5. According to Feng Shui principles, each of the five elements is characterized by a particular shape. Architectural forms thus convey a certain elemental signature.

The five elements must be considered in relation to four directions and their geographic animal characteristics, such as the summer Red Phoenix, who rules over the south and brings invigorating forces and good fortune. The White Tiger dominates the West, is unpredictable and disruptive as an autumn power. In the East, bringing protection and wisdom is the Green Dragon of spring. And to the North is the sleepy and mysterious Black Tortoise, who brings nurturing in the winter season. These four earthly animal powers stand in striking contrast to the twelve cosmic animal powers as inticated in the Chinese calendar.

The position of a dwelling in relation to the four directions, to mountains, rivers and the prevailing wind is of major concern in Feng Shui. The positioning of doors and windows, mirrors, art work, furniture, vegetation, and pathways are all crucial in the directing of *ch'i* and displacement of *sha* in the environment. Royal palaces were always carefully aligned and before many office buildings and homes are built in China today, a Feng Shui master is consulted.

Art works and images are important to Feng Shui planning, as the form and character of a particular object is just as important as its placement. A rounded or squared form, a human or animal image, create completely different spiritual environments for the patron. Although Feng Shui principles were only written down in the centuries C.E., it can be assumed that such doctrines were based on earlier undocumented traditions of a similar nature. What we know of Feng Shui practices today is, like today's astrology, only a shadow of its earlier form.

Feng Shui, concerned as it is with forces at work upon the earth, finds its complement in the sophisticated science of Chinese astronomy and astrology. The Chinese were very intent on following the movement of the stars and the emperor, as Sun-King, had to live every day and every hour of his life in accordance with the celestial choreography. He was the earthly representative of Shang Ti and the great family of ancestors and was therefore obliged to demonstrate the actions of the entire heavenly system. Sudden, unforeseen stellar events such as comets and supernovas were the cause of great anxiety as they foreshadowed change and upheaval. Emperors had to demonstrate great wisdom and control at such times in order to maintain their position and power.

The Chinese, unlike the Indians south of the Himalayas, did not develop clairvoyance based on a perception of their own organism. Instead, by instinctively projecting themselves into their environment they gained exceptional understanding of the outer world. What they knew of the human being arose from their adept penetration of the sense world, whereas the Indians knew the world by means of perceiving their own organism. In other words, the Chinese cultivated *intuition* and the Indians fostered *imagination*, according to Rudolf Steiner.⁷ This capacity in the Chinese accounts not only for the sciences of Feng Shui, astronomy, acupuncture, and martial arts but also for the inventiveness and the capacity for making so many practical discoveries such as silk production, gunpowder, the compass, paper maps and writing. It also explains, in part, the general lack of very early anthropomorphic deities and human images (unlike the art of ancient India).

One of the rare exceptions to this absence of deities is a prehistoric image found in northwestern China, of a possible horned shaman featured on the lid of a clay pot (fig. 6). Painted with zig-zags and straight lines, the bearded shaman has a slithering snake form modelled on the back of his head, reminding us of the sacred serpent on the headress of Egyptian pharaohs as the symbol for inner vision and seership. On the front of the star-shaped lid twelve serpent-like lines are painted between straight, bold lines. The two hollow horns may have

been used to dispense seed from this cultic vessel at planting times. The shaman was a spiritual advisor in most early communities and China was no exception. *Discourses of the States*, a fourth-century B.C.E. narrative history, describes the importance of these spiritual leaders in early Chinese civilization: "The possessors of such power were, if men, called *xi* [shamans], and if women, *wu* [shamanesses]. It is they who supervised the positions of the spirits at the ceremonies, sacrificed to them, and otherwise handled religious matters."⁸ This would also include the healing arts and agriculture. Shamanism was the earliest form of Chinese religio-political-spirituality and as A.C. Graham describes it, "...the meditation practiced privately and recommended to rulers as an arcanum of government descends directly from the trance of the professional shaman."⁹ The shamanic theme is one that pervades all of Asia and persists to this day in isolated areas.



Fig. 6. One of the earliest intact prehistoric human images is this clay vessel top found in northwestern China. It probably represents a bearded shaman wearing two horns, with a snake slithering up the back of his head. It was possibly used in connection with ritual agricultural practices.

Another naturalistic image from the time of the *Discourses* is that of a cast-bronze Mongolian youth (or maiden) with two ceremonial wands in hand (fig. 7). A carved jade bird sits atop each of the ritual staves in hand—a picture of the spirit-messenger upon the sacred tree. This shamanic bird-imagery, indicative of spirit flight, is apparent in images throughout the world and over the course of time. The staff and bird are a meaningful mystery image seen throughout prehistory. Eliade describes its

use in various parts of the world: “In the mythologies of Central Asia, Siberia, and Indonesia, the birds perched on the branches of the World Tree represent men’s souls. Because Shamans can change themselves into ‘birds,’ that is, because they enjoy the ‘spirit’ condition, they are able to fly to the World Tree to bring back soul-birds.”¹⁰ And in Siberia, “The Goldi, the Dolgan, and the Tungus [tribes] say that before birth, the souls of children perch like little birds on the branches of the Cosmic Tree and the shamans go there to find them.”¹¹ Among the Siberian Buryat the eagle is the ancestral shaman. Shaman is a Tungus word meaning a medicine man or woman, but is now commonly used in English to describe these uniquely gifted people.



Fig. 7. This fourth-century B.C. bronze figure of a shaman youth/maiden holding two sticks with sixteenth-century B.C. jade birds perched atop, was misidentified as a falconer, for the birds have hooked beaks which make them unequipped for hunting. The bird symbolizes the shaman’s spirit flight, the stick represents the World Tree.

The *lung* is the most important zoomorphic image in China, even to this day. This dragon-like creature, visible only to the gods, has the jaws of a tiger, the brow of a bear, the antlers of a deer, and the body of a lizard or snake (fig. 8). It dwells in air and water, making it a mediator between the regions above and the regions below. It provides rain and is therefore, like the serpent, a symbol of the chthonic powers associated with fertility. Although they are minor deities in India, serpents are powerful beings, regarded as guardians of the earth’s treasures and possessors of all the sciences. Called *nagas*, they can appear as serpents with the head of a man. When they came to China they were known as Dragon Kings, and Buddhists may pray to them to this day for rain.



Fig. 8. The lung is not simply a dragon, but a zoomorphic composite creature, which, as the guardian of elemental forces, can bring good or ill fortune.

There are numerous accounts of dragons fathering great rulers or appearing in the sky at the time of royal births, and by the first dynastic period the dragon was already a symbol of sovereign power and an emblem of royalty. The emperor’s throne was called the dragon throne and his face was the dragon’s countenance. Unlike the snake, which is bound to the earth, the dragon has wings and feet. A royal dragon has five claws instead of four. “In contrast to the Western dragon which is thought of as a negative force, representing evil and the devil [or Lucifer], and which is slain by heroes...the Chinese dragon is considered beneficial and auspicious, bringing good fortune and abundance.”¹² In this context, the Chinese dragon (*lung*) is more a being of the living, etheric formative forces, while the European dragon is a creature of the untransformed astral or soul realm.

The Ch’an sect of Buddhism reveres the dragon image as a mystical vision of the Buddha-nature. Legend speaks of a dragon rising out of the Yellow River and making known the circular *t’ai-chi t’u* diagram of the yin-yang symbol. Dragon images from the third millennium B.C.E. have been found in China, although the earliest examples known, also associated with water and fertility, are from Mesopotamia.





Fig. 9. *T'ao tieh* means "glutton mask" in modern Chinese but clearly holds an esoteric significance related to the head as a sacred vessel and ritual offerings of food and wine for the ancestors. The stylized *t'ao tieh* countenance is sometimes human, sometimes animal, but most frequently seen as a dragon or tiger face.

The *t'ao tieh*, meaning "glutton mask" in modern Chinese, is another zoomorphic mystery image, most often seen on vessels as a stylized mask-like face with two prominent eyes (fig. 9). The face is always symmetrical, bifurcated, and is usually accentuated by a flange or ridge that runs vertically down the forehead and nose. Different animals are recognizable in the *t'ao tieh*, such as the bull (fig. 10), deer, and dragon, but most often the face is that of a tiger.



Fig. 10. The *t'ao tieh*, besides appearing as the traditional lung mask, also appears as other animals such as the bull.

The function of the *t'ao tieh* is believed to be that of a guardian spirit that protects the living during ritual ceremonies, guards access to the threshold, and drives away evil spirits from the tombs of the dead. The ritual bronze vessels of the Shang

and Chou dynasties upon which the *t'ao tieh* images most often appear are containers for ceremonial use, holding wine or grain. The ritual vessel, as a container filled with nourishment for the ancestors, provides an imagination of the head as a vessel of *chi*-permeated thought substance likewise offered up to the gods. The elaborate curvilinear patterns on such vessels may resemble convolutions of the brain and may represent the dynamic weaving forces of the thinking head similar to the way in which the shaman's horns and pharaoh's serpent headress express the visionary capacities of the initiate. In any case, the patterns are not definite or naturalistic and thus indicate the forces of the unseen world of the gods and ancestors. "In the early Shang period, the eyes within the undefined face on bronze vessels suggest not only seers that transcend the boundary of this world and that of the dead, but an unknown power that sees but cannot be seen, thus producing a sense of fear or unease in the viewers. The lack of definition and separation between image and ground serves to increase this sense of the unknowable. 13 The eyes suggest the power of an unseen presence while the tiger face suggests a devourer and passage to the other world.

The Tang dynasty emperor, Tai Zong, became very ill after his invasion of Korea. None of the court physicians could relieve his agony for he was tormented by evil spirits. Every night ghosts visited the emperor and robbed him of his sleep, severely weakening him. Two of his generals volunteered to stand guard at the emperor's door and from then on no spirits dared to appear. The emperor soon recovered his health and strength. He released the generals from their watch and hung painted portraits of them to continue the work of keeping the evil spirits away.¹⁴ This Chinese story is associated with the practice of placing images of martial door-gods or heros on either side of a gate or entrance way. Pairs of tomb attendants also appear as funerary figures and were buried with the dead, in place of living attendants, as threshold guardians. Lokapala and Mahakala are the Buddhist guardian deities who stare angrily, weapons at the ready to protect the *dharma*. They are usually positioned at temple entrances and suggest that the power of images is equal to that of living beings. Lions or other animals served the same purpose. This is why throughout prehistory painted images and wood, stone, and clay figures appear as substitutes or stand-ins for actual objects or beings (fig. 11). The artistic image embodies spirit and has been used because of this throughout history, not only in China, but throughout the world.





Fig. 11. Human and animal guardian figures are common in both painting and sculpture, not only in China but throughout the world. They often protect entrances to shrines, temples, palaces and homes.

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3. Munsterberg, H. *Symbolism in Ancient Chinese Art*, p. 220.
4. Wang Wei, Chinese painter, 420-478 A.D.
5. Yee, C. *The Chinese Eye: An Interpretation of Chinese Painting*, p. 16.
6. Munsterberg, p. 239.
7. "The activity of perceiving the spiritual in the outer world, can...be called intuition, whereas the activity of making inner vision outwardly visible is imagination." Steiner, *Art As Spiritual Activity*, p. 211.
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Transformation is the Human Path

David Anderson, Harlemville, New York, USA

"Transformation – that is what the actor's nature, consciously or unconsciously, longs for." — Michael Chekhov

Of course, this is true for every human being, as we are all actors who have chosen a role for this earthly experience. Sometimes our roles evolve and change a little, we adopt different archetypal characters along the way – sister, mother, teacher, wife, elder, matriarch – all to empower the fullest possible learning on this human path of transformation. The more consciousness we find along the path, the more aware we become about the fact that we have chosen the roles and personalities we play.

Working with the art of acting, which unites the thinking, feeling, and willing aspects of the human being, with the Michael Chekhov approach to acting, which strengthens our creative individuality and our faculties of imagination, inspiration, and intuition, with Rudolf Steiner's impulses in the arts, the twelve senses as portals into the artistic senses, and with the inner development work, we can support some steps towards freedom in this unfolding process – a freedom to move and create within the context we find ourselves; to transform the narrowness or limitations we might experience within it.

2016 has been a year of researching this possibility toward freedom. We have worked with over 1000 people on questions related to this path of the actor human being. We have ten 3-year part-time Drama and Inner Development courses running in China and Taiwan. They meet for 5-10 day modules. We are also active in schools, supporting teacher development, working with classes, and giving workshops.

Below is a description of the Drama and Inner Development course. For people interested in this path of transformation, courses will begin this year in Malaysia and possibly also Hong Kong.

Drama as a Path of Inner Development

A 3-year part-time course with David Anderson and Liao Yuan Rong





As human beings we play and act our daily lives using the elements of drama. These elements - gesture, speech, atmosphere, space, image, language - shape our environment, our relationships, and the process of our becoming. They are the tools of our transformation. How we use these elements determines the forces and energies that attend our lives and our work. In this course we will look at how we can become more aware and creative with these elements and forces, and how they might lead us toward a deeper experience of being alive.

These elements have both outer and inner aspects. The drama work can help us to open up to these aspects, to understand the unique relationship between them, and to unite the inner and outer in our experience of life. The course is open to adults at any level of dramatic experience. It is an opportunity to clarify our perceptions and to deepen our understanding of how we express life and how life expresses itself through us.

Ideal for actors and creators of all kinds but also for anyone interested in developing a deeper experience of his or her human potential. This work has supported teachers in the art of teaching, business leaders in improving the impact and quality of their communication and their leadership, and those seeking practical tools for enriching their inner work and meditation.

The course will explore the Michael Chekov Acting Technique and draw inspiration from Rudolf Steiner's picture of the evolving human being.

Michael Chekhov investigated the interplay between psychology and body, between the 'intangible and tangible'. He developed simple and clear tools for the actor, based on the powers of Concentration and Imagination, Psychological Gesture, Imaginary Center, and Atmosphere. Going beyond personal experience and intellect, Chekhov's exercises open doors to our own creative individuality.

Rudolf Steiner's artistic impulses have led to a renewal in many arts. The course will focus particularly on his contributions to speech, drama, and movement.



Year I

Freeing the body and opening the soul / Preparing the actor

In working with the body and voice, and the qualities that can be discovered with them, the first year will focus on awakening your own artistic path, not only as a means of self-expression but as a means for understanding the unique context of your life. Movement, gesture, and speech will become means for revealing these qualities and strengthening your awareness for how life moves in you. They will bring consciousness to our soul and body habits. The work will include storytelling, image, and poetry.

Strengthen the inner life and the outer expression of it

Basic exercises will: develop a sensitivity to qualities and to the streams of life, and an ability to radiate and receive; deepen a sense of form; enhance sensations of freedom, ease, calm, and beauty; and awaken awareness for the movements, expressions, and processes of the inner life. This work makes the body finer and more sensitive, the inner experiences clearer, and deepens the actor's understanding for the potential and limitations of his or her instrument.

Year II

Becoming a vessel / Calling upon imagination and inspiration

In the second year, the work will turn towards exploring how the awakened body and soul can become a vehicle for encountering "otherness", archetypes, or something big-



ger than us. We will look at ways to free the power of our imagination, an essential element in any creative process. The work will include elements of character building, clowning, and improvisation.

Our work will turn toward tools for building character: imaginary centers, imaginary body, qualities of movement, and the four temperaments. We will distinguish the differences between actor and character, and develop the ability to step in and out of a full and alive character. We will explore gesture – the invisible soul movement that colors everything a person does or says. Work with archetypal gesture and psychological gesture show us how form and qualities of movement conjure the life of feeling and will. Participants will continue their work on poetry and also begin work on dramatic monologues.

The artist's highest aim is free and complete self-expression. Clowning and improvisation work will open up the well of spontaneous imagination and creativity. Clowning is a state of playfulness that allows us a connection to what makes us vulnerable and receptive. Improvisation develops a flexibility and openness for the soul to meet and encounter situations with creativity and the ability to surprise ourselves; to dare the unrehearsed and the unexpected; to awaken a new sense of freedom and inner richness.

Year III

Serving the world / Performance

The third year will put these new and developing capacities into practice, into action. These capacities will become tools for further transformation of ourselves, our relationships, and our lives. They can also serve as a "path to the spirit," whether to the spirit of a play, a character, or to the deeper intentions that shape our lives. Participants will develop and share personal performance projects and a group project before an audience.

The final year will draw together all the work, with a new focus on ensemble work (selfless co-creating or oneness with others) and atmospheres. Although ensemble work and atmosphere will have been part of previous weeks, the final weeks will put all the elements into practice through work on scenes or a group project. Poetry and monologue work will also continue. We will share all the work in a performance at the end of the year.

The ultimate design of this course will be shaped by the needs and the process of the group involved.

"Drama is a creation of the spirit... When the whole human being places himself in word and gesture at the service of this creation, then this becomes a path to the spirit."

—Rudolf Steiner

Winter and Spring Schedule in Asia

Jan 3-7 Beijing, module 4 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Jan 8-13 Guangzhou, module 4 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Jan 15-19 Guangzhou, module 5 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Jan 20-24 Taichung, module 6 of the Drama and Inner Development course, rehearsing *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare

Feb 1-5 Taipei, module 3 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Feb 14-18 Kuala Lumpur, module 1 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Feb 20-26 Cixin Waldorf School, working with class 12 and with teachers on a production of *King Lear* by William Shakespeare

Feb 27-Mar 3 Beijing Film Academy, working with university students

Mar 5-11 Xian, module 2 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Apr 11-18 Shanghai, module 4 of the Drama and Inner Development course

Apr 19-28 Chengdu, rehearsing and performing *Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

Apr 29-May 6 Asia Waldorf Teacher Conference

The Best Way of Making Feeling Visible:

21 Years of San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe

Katharina Woodman, Sunnyvale, California, USA

[First published in *Anthroposophy Worldwide*, No. 10/16]



The Youth Eurythmy Troupe was formed 21 years ago at the request of former students at the San Francisco Waldorf School. Since then the group has widened its scope under the direction of Astrid Thiersch and is traveling the world. With eurythmy as a shared element, teenagers also find out what life is like in other countries.

Alyssa and Merlin are on the edge of their chairs, leaning forward, mouths open, eyes glued to the action on stage and the swirling of colored silks; they delve into the dramatic music and the fascinating tale that is being presented. We are witnessing the San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe's first performance in February 1996.

As parents we had our doubts at the time whether our children – who were in kindergarten then – would be able to follow such a performance. All we hoped for was that they would sit quietly through it. We never expected them to be so fascinated! And who would have thought then that Merlin would one day take part in it!

An alumni project

Since then I may have missed one performance, two at most. Every February I travel from southern Silicon Valley to San Francisco (driving at least one hour) in order to plunge into this world of stories, music and colored silks, presented by the eurythmist Astrid Thiersch and her ensemble. The San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe is a pioneer of a movement that has attracted more and more young people over the years.

The group began in 1995 with former students of the San Francisco Waldorf School who, because there was no high school, had each gone their own way after class 8. Some of them missed eurythmy – aside from other Waldorf elements they had grown fond of – and they asked Astrid Thiersch if she would work with them outside school. The idea for a performance was born!

For two years the group consisted of alumni, but when a high school was started in 1997, present students also joined. Seven years later the program was presented exclusively by students of the San Francisco Waldorf High School.

From San Francisco into the world

The ensemble first performed their pieces in San Francisco (up until 2010 in Fort Mason, after that at the Jewish Community Center) and at the annual Waldorf teachers' conferences in Sacramento. Then they spread their wings, going off to show their work in other Waldorf schools, such as Fair Oaks, or Santa Rosa in the Bay Area (California), New York and Austin (Texas). These tours proved so successful that the group ventured even further afield, visiting Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Egypt, China, New Zealand, Thailand, Holland, Belgium, Taiwan and India.

The students are from grades 10, 11 and 12 and their practice times are timetabled optional lessons, offered in addition to the regular eurythmy tuition. When the group started in 1995, it had eight members, now there are 26. Astrid Thiersch has to select her troupe every year from more than 30 applicants because the stage is not big enough for a larger group. Most of the students stay with the ensemble for several years.

Over the years, parents, former parents and friends have been sewing for the group so that there is now a store of over 150 costumes. Five yards of silk are needed for each dress, plus another four and a half yards for each veil! Every ensemble member also has white and black eurythmy shoes as well as matching knee socks and underdresses.

The costs for hiring stages and for equipment are covered by the ticket sales; foreign journeys are – as far as possible – paid for by the students' families and by donations from organizations and friends of eurythmy.

Relief, pride, joy

When the students "float" through the theatre for the grand finale, throwing roses into the audience I see relief, pride and joy in their faces. During the three years he spent with this group my rather intellectual teenage son with his angular movements acquired grace and flowing gestures. He learned about group dynamics and responsibility. Karin, another member, says, "Eurythmy is not just something one 'does'. Eurythmy 'is', and we are privileged to be able to present it to other people. It reflects the beauty and goodness that live in things. It may well be the best way of making pure feeling visible. Just as with light, you cannot see it, but you can see what is being lit. ... There is nothing more human."

When they travel abroad new worlds are opening up for the students: eurythmy is the linking element that bridges the boundaries of foreign languages and the difficulties of verbal communication. The young people see how people live in other countries. They often stay with school families and make new contacts. These international encounters have a lasting effect and make them think about their own lives.

Architecture Steiner

Sarri Tapales, London, England

[First printed in the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain *Newsletter*, Dec 2016, 93/4]



Sarri Tapales.

Preparations are well underway for *Artkitektura* Festival of Architecture and the Arts, hosted by Architecture Steiner in the Philippines in August 2017. Architecture Steiner is a group of the Art Section active in the AS in GB. This is our first overseas outreach program, which aims to share our group's expertise with places in the world where this is needed. The festival concept was inspired by the International Exhibition on Living Architecture, which launches its tour of the English-speaking world in the Philippines in August 2017. The Philippines is the main English-speaking nation in Southeast Asia – an ideal center for hosting international conferences in the region.

Curated by Pieter van der Ree and commissioned by Iona Stichting of the Netherlands, this rare and extensive exhibition features 50 worldwide projects. It traces the history of living architecture from the pioneers of organic architecture to the enlivening of modernism and contemporary worldwide expressions. Rudolf Steiner is featured among the pioneers, alongside Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and Antoni Gaudi. Provoking questions about the current and future significance of living architecture in this age of digitally driven design, this highly visual exhibition will be of great interest to students, professionals and the general public.

Artkitektura is conceived as a three-part learning program, to be delivered over three to five years. Wholeness Through Architecture and the Arts is the theme of Part One. Talks, workshops and study trips will be given by Filipino and international contributors. We have an international group of speakers including Nicanor Perlas from the Philippines and Richard Coleman and Nicolas Pople from the UK, and a wide range of themes. All are leading experts in their field

and most of them are working actively out of anthroposophy. Engaging young people, forming a festival team. In partnership with the London-based practice Citydesigner, we have formed a local festival team in Manila which includes a youth volunteer team of young professionals and students from various schools, including the Manila Waldorf School. They will be working together, developing events management skills through several pre-festival activities. Our first pre-festival event took place on the 4th November with a talk given by Richard Coleman (Architecture Steiner founding member) at Ayala Museum. Public interest was very high with an audience of over 180, including the British Ambassador.

Seeking financing, recent success. In seeking funding from embassies and corporate donors in the Philippines and the UK, we have met the most positive response from the Dutch Embassy, with the deputy ambassador requesting first option for a major sponsorship. We were delighted to receive our first donor pledge from MasterCard Philippines, for php 300,000, which is much needed to cover running costs. However, this ambitious project needs more substantial funding soon. The challenge is huge, but the unparalleled breadth and value of the exhibition and festival program are so attractive to potential patrons that this continues to open doors for us.

Questions in Europe. In the meantime in Europe, Architecture Steiner members have been collaborating with the exhibition's Dutch curator, Pieter van der Ree, on plans to create an updated version of the exhibition worthy of a tour to the English-speaking world. Since March, we have met in Amsterdam, Brighton, London and Dornach, often joined by the director of Iona Stichting. I am grateful to the Hermes Trust for their support in enabling me to attend these important meetings. At the Goetheanum World Conference last September, Pieter and I had an impromptu and rare opportunity to meet with an international group of architects and a museum director. They expressed enthusiasm and a strong interest for the exhibition to visit Taiwan, Japan, China and Canada. In Europe, it was recently suggested that a film or digital version could be so much cheaper and as effective as the exhibition. But it seems to me there can be no comparison. The exhibition is like a vessel, bearing a richness of ideas warmed by anthroposophical thinking, that physically travels from port to port. Its arrival creates possibilities for human encounters and shared experience at a given moment in time. The ephemeral nature of an exhibition that comes and goes, matched by the physicality of the objects to be seen and revisited supports a very special and meaningful learning process. The Michaelic gesture of an exhibition like this is irrefutable.

For us working out of the Philippines, where the vivid memory of galleon ships and multicultural legacies live strongly, the honor of receiving such a vessel of inspired thinking will be a hard-earned and much awaited moment in August 2017.



The Opening of Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten in Nepal

Shradha Kedia, Kathmandu, Nepal

There is a new kindergarten in Kathmandu Valley!

The Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten took its first baby steps on November 14, 2016 when a blessing ceremony took place at the school's brand new site. The blessing was attended by close friends, families and representatives from the four existing Waldorf schools in Nepal. Over 14 interested families attended and participated in the event. The opening ceremony was followed by an orientation and tour that met with an encouraging response.

The following day was the start of the parent-child program (age 12 to 27 months) with 6 children enrolled into the first session. Additionally, a number of teas and play sessions were conducted where families were invited to visit the school and learn more about the Waldorf early childhood approach to learning. This was to inspire families to be a part of our Waldorf community and culture in Kathmandu.

The kindergarten was founded with a vision to support the growth of Nepalese children toward a lifelong love for learning. The mission of KWK is to provide a nurturing experience for every child, a cherishing of each individual.

The founding trio of Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten; Sarita Sanghai, Kavita Agarwal and Shradha Kedia.

The founders were born and raised in Kathmandu. They are Ms. Sarita Sanghai, a Waldorf teacher of many years in India and graduate of the Early Childhood program at Sunbridge Institute, New York, joined by Kavita Agarwal and Shradha Kedia.

Recently, Ms. Lisa Miccio, a longtime Kindergarten teacher at Green Meadows Waldorf School in New York and kindergarten teacher trainer at Sunbridge Institute, joined the team to mentor and provide Introductory Sessions for Early Childhood. Other mentors will be visiting the newly established kindergarten in the upcoming months.

Starting in March 2017, early childhood programs will be offered which will include nursery for ages 2 and 3 years and mixed-age kindergarten for 4 and 5 year olds.

Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten joins the community of Waldorf schools and initiatives that are represented by Waldorf Education in Nepal (WEN). For more information go to their website: www.wen-nepal.wixsite.com

For more information about Kathmandu Waldorf Kindergarten contact: contact@kwschool.org



Sarita Sanghai, Kavita Agarwal and Shradha Kedia

Waldorf: An Education of its Time?

Three Audits of Place, Time and Community (Part 2)

Neil Boland, Auckland, New Zealand



[Abridged from lecture notes and references of three keynote lectures to the Pacific Rim Waldorf Education Conference, Honolulu Waldorf School, February 13-15, 2016]

Last time, I spoke about how Waldorf education relates to place.

Now I would like to address a second audit – one of time, of being of one's time. It needs to look at how time is handled, where in the flow of time the Waldorf movement places itself. Waldorf education's relationship to place is important. I have come to think that the importance of realizing our relationship to time and to the needs of the time we live in is nothing short of critical.

I think many of us at some time have heard Waldorf education called 'an education for the future.' Maybe even 'THE education for the future.' As a concept I don't have difficulty with this, though I would argue that we need to be an education for today, rather than for tomorrow. Waldorf education contains revolutionary elements which have not begun to be unpacked. It could indeed be an education for the present, but are we resting on our laurels or practicing what we preach?

In lecture one of *The Foundations of Human Experience*, Steiner says:

*We must have a living interest in everything happening today, otherwise we will be bad teachers for this school. **We dare not have enthusiasm only for our special tasks.** We can only be good teachers when we have a living interest in everything happening in the world. (1919, p. 31)*

Waldorf education has had a documented

tendency to self-ghettoize itself (Hougham, 2012), to live in a bubble, to isolate itself from wider education debates and from other education professionals. It can be self-referential and inward looking; having a "*living interest in everything happening today*" is not always practiced, in my experience. When I began teaching, I was certainly guilty of the limitation expressed in the sentence, "*We dare not have enthusiasm only for our special tasks.*" All I thought about were what I was doing with my class, for the school and so on. All I read was anthroposophy. I have heard countless teachers talk about how they are totally bound up in their teaching lot and have no time for outside interests. I have spoken to Anthroposophists who talk about contemporary society as if they are part of the elect who follow the only true path. I believe nothing could be further from the truth of what Steiner intended. For teachers, the older the student, the more important is it for them to know that their teachers are keenly interested in everything happening in the world, up with every trend and topic, ahead of the game in their area of expertise and are actively 'people to today.' As active, engaged members of society, I believe we also have a responsibility to be conversant with major trends and events which are shaping the world which we live in. This is the world our children and grandchildren are going to be active in.

It is a cliché to say that we live in a rapidly moving world. We cannot imagine how the world will be in five years let alone fifty. Six years ago, people were talking about the impossibility of driverless cars, now they are a reality, have hundreds of thousands of safe driving hours behind them and are a legal form of transport in some states.

Futures Studies comprises a host of different areas which combine to look at how the world, the environment, society may be, could be, will be in the future. Put more bluntly, to look at what we can do to be sure that we will have a future. It includes every discipline and is constantly being refined and taken in new directions. It is dynamic, empowering, complex



Pastel drawing by a conference participant on the theme of "Our Time."

and challenging. Educational Futures looks at how education might be in the future and, especially, addresses the vital question: what we should be doing now, to educate our students to meet these (unknown) futures? Is that not a Waldorf question? Here in Honolulu you happen to have one of the world centers of Futures Studies – The Hawai'i Research Center for Futures Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, led by Jim Dator. I've heard that some people who work at the Center send their children to the Waldorf school. Would it not be good if the Waldorf movement was able to make use of this to help develop something outstanding in the field of education?

Over the last few years, I have been reading around this subject which has interested me like nothing else for decades and which has challenged most of my previously held understandings or ideas. The outcome has been that I am more certain than ever of the importance and value of Waldorf education, but that there are some hard questions which need asking.

To contextualize this, we live in an ever-changing world. It demands that we adapt to change quickly. This happens so often that it is difficult to keep abreast of things. Our lives speed up and we are trapped in a seemingly vicious circle of changes which are meant to make our lives better but which seem to degrade the quality of life more than they enhance it. What should our response be to this?

There is one book which I am going to refer to quite a lot. It is called *The meaning of the 21st century: The make-or-break century* by James Martin (2007). Of the many books on Futures, I have found this one to be one of the most provocative and interesting. It is already ten years old, but I would recommend to anyone. It is tremendously relevant.

Martin founded a research institute in Futures Studies at the University of Oxford in England (Oxford Martin School, 2016). In this book, he lists what he sees as the large-scale problems of the 21st century. These are problems which we as individuals are facing, which we as teachers are facing, and which we as nations are facing. Since the 1970s, they have been attractively called 'wicked problems.' There are 16 of them; they form the backbone of most serious news reports.

1. Global warming
2. Excessive population growth
3. Water shortages
4. Destruction of life in the oceans
5. The spread of deserts
6. Mass famine in ill-organized countries
7. Extreme poverty
8. Growth of shanty cities
9. Unstoppable global migrations
10. Pandemics
11. Financial collapse
12. Non-state actors with extreme weapons
13. Violent religious extremism
14. Runaway computer intelligence
15. War that could end civilization
16. Risks to homo sapiens' existence

The increased influence of autocrats around the world could perhaps be appended to this list. Regardless, adding it up, we are faced with challenges which threaten the existence of civilization, if not life as we know it. A global cocktail of intolerable poverty and outrageous wealth, an unsustainable number of people, starvation, lack of water, mass terrorism with nuclear/biological weapons, world war, deliberate pandemics and religious insanity, might plunge humanity into a self-perpetuating cycle of hatred and violence.

Though we may not like to go here, there can be few among you who can read this list and say 'why did no one tell me!' We know it; we just prefer to look elsewhere, keep our heads down and tread familiar paths. I am as prone to doing this as anyone else. However, keeping our heads down on this one does not do our children, our students, or ourselves justice. These wicked problems have been created largely in our lifetimes; we are having to deal with them, but even more they will be confronted by our children and grandchildren.

We can think, 'how terrible it is to be born into such a world. I would rather live in the fill-in-the-blank century.' No matter which one you choose, there were more than enough terrible sides to it to make you realize now is not so bad. And something which I think we as Steiner teachers have to take seriously, we chose to be alive now. Children being born now are choosing to be born now. Among them must be the leaders who are going to tackle these humanity-threatening challenges. Those currently babies will just be going into high school in 2030. Who can begin to think how life will be for them? To me, this is something which we as teachers, as parents, potential parents, as grandparents, have to think about deeply.

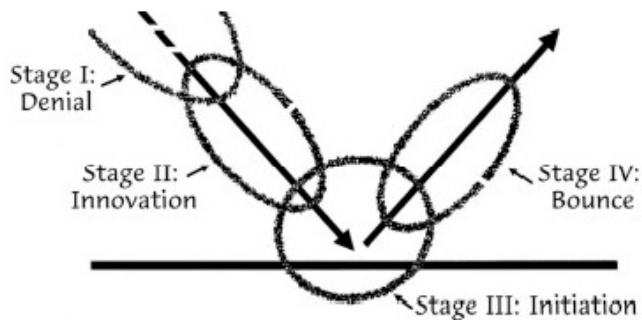
Going back to Martin, he describes the current age as one of transition, from a non-sustainable approach to a sustainable one. Sustainability is a word we often hear. But achieving a sustainable world is not only a worthy aim, it is a necessity. If we continue with our unsustainable lifestyles, the earth will not sustain us with all that that means. Certainly not eight billion of us. We have to go through the eye of the needle to get beyond present-day, unsustainable practices.

All of these wicked problems are **multinational**. None can be solved by one country alone. All countries participate, to different degrees, in causing most of the problems, and they must participate in the solutions. These wicked problems are **interconnected** and, because of this, the solutions are interconnected to a large extent. More than anything, they resemble a tangled mass of wool. Pulling at one end, tightens some others. Most of the problems are the consequences of **bad management** and **absence of foresight**. There is no silver bullet or magical solution.

Martin likens the twenty-first century to a journey through a canyon. We are, as a human race, in that canyon, traveling down the river, steep walls on either side; we cannot choose but to continue the way we are going. The water is beginning to pick up speed; the journey is becoming more turbulent; we fear - rightly - that there are worse rapids ahead. It becomes

harder and harder to navigate the rafts we are on. Not every raft will survive the trip. But the relentless journey down the canyon can only go one way and, as the wicked problems intensify, the canyon walls come closer together, speeding up the journey.

This is familiar ground for Anthroposophists. Martin's canyon can become Steiner's initiation moment. It is by no means limited to anthroposophical thinkers; academics talk about it too. Duane Elgin was talking of a 'man-induced initiation' moment back in 1998. He talks about the evolutionary 'bounce' which needs to come about at this period in history. He does not give a name to what happens if the bounce does not come about.



(Elgin, 1998)

When the first Waldorf school was set up after the First World War, society was in crisis, at least in that part of the world. Now the whole world is in crisis, at many more levels. The big question is, why have you then chosen to be here at this time? These children we teach, our own children, our grandchildren, why have they chosen to incarnate now, at this time, to face these things? The only answer can be that they want to, they need to; this age is going to give them the opportunities they are looking for to develop.

This, to me, is a statement of the present in which we find ourselves.

If I can repeat Steiner's phrase here:

We must have a living interest in everything happening today, otherwise we will be bad teachers for this school. We dare not have enthusiasm only for our special tasks. We can only be good teachers when we have a living interest in everything happening in the world. (1919, p. 31)

This includes for me, this litany of disaster. Does it fill you with enthusiasm? And if this does not fill you with burning enthusiasm to become active, why not? Why else are you here?

All crises are, at the same time, moments of opportunity. Einstein said, "A new type of thinking is essential if mankind [sic] is to survive and move toward higher levels" (1946). These problems are challenges to discover the "new type of thinking ... [to] move toward higher levels" which Einstein spoke of. In perennial philosophy, such a moment is called an opportunity for initiation, a chance to undergo a

process which may result in a higher level of knowledge. As Elgin put it:

Our time in history is unique in one critical respect: the circle has closed – there is nowhere to escape. For the first time in our history, the entire human population is confronted with a predicament whose solution will require us to work together in a common enterprise that respects our rich diversity. (1998, p. 2)

For Martin it is the twenty-first canyon and the journey we are all on is through this canyon and the rapids our past behaviors have placed in our path. It will be a test of our collective knowledge, intelligence, humanity and maturity to see if we survive this and learn from it. Will we learn and bounce, or not learn and suffer the consequences?

The children choosing to incarnate now are *choosing* this time because they need the conditions here to develop what they need. What do they need, these people of tomorrow, leaders of tomorrow whom we are educating?

It seems to me, and from reading the futures education literature, that the people we need to meet these challenges will have these qualities:

- Courage
- Strong impulse to act, strong will
- Possess insight, imagination and flexibility
- Innovative, able to think outside the box
- Non-egotistical or selfish, socially adept
- Take responsibility for their own actions and for others
- Will be able to see issues as part of a 'big picture'

Go through this list again and see if you can think of a group of people who meet these criteria pretty much: yes, the graduates of Waldorf schools. Is this not a terrific thing? Through the education we are already providing, we are helping work in the direction we want.

This echoes an interesting study which Jennifer Gidley several years ago; it's called *Holistic education and visions of rehumanized futures* (2002). She investigated how young people



Pastel drawing by a conference participant on the theme of "Our Time."

see the future – are they daunted by what they see coming down the line, how do they feel about it? She interviewed hundreds of high school students from state schools in Australia. She then went and did the same to students who had attended or were attending Steiner schools. Though her findings are not recent, they are the only data we have and I do not imagine things will have changed. They make interesting reading.

SOCIAL FUTURES

- All students voiced similar concerns about current trends regarding the environment, social justice and conflict
- Steiner students voiced more feelings of empowerment regarding the future
- Steiner students demonstrate a “strong sense of activism to create more positive futures” (p. 251)
- Steiner students saw “humanness” as a major factor in the challenges we face
- The futures they imagine are where human development, responsibility and action are in the foreground
- Steiner students do not, on the whole, see technology as providing the necessary answers; their views more indicated that the answers lie in us

Gidley breaks their responses down into several categories:

- Activism, changes in values
- Spirituality (being aware, awake, conscious)
- Reconnection of humanity and nature (‘re-sacralization’)
- Conscious development
- Personal empowerment
- Community empowerment
- Interconnectedness
- Education for future care

So, we are already achieving results, which is undoubtedly heartening. But are we as good as we can be? Is the manifestation of Steiner education we offer in the world all that it might be? As good as it needs to be? Is it firmly focused on the future or over-reliant on traditions of the past?

In the lecture cycle *The fall of the spirits of darkness* (1917), Steiner said, “We ... must seek ever new ways, look for new forms over and over again” and, “however good the right may be that you want to bring to realization – it will turn into a wrong in the course of time” (p. 66). When we are facing the unique challenges of the early twenty-first century, we need to look for new forms again and again in education. I do not believe there should be limits placed on what these might be, so long as their aim is to allow students to realize to the highest degree the qualities identified by Gidley:

Courage

Strong impulse to act, strong will

Insight, imagination and flexibility

Innovative, able to think outside the box

Non-egotistical, socially adept

Able to take responsibility for their own actions and for others

See issues as part of a ‘big picture’

New ideas may take the form of a revised curriculum/ new main lesson subjects, project work, alliances with other movements and organizations, increased working with and in local communities or a host of others. I do not think that what these times are calling for, is a repetition of what has been done (often successfully) for decades.

As a last idea regarding time, Steiner said this rather remarkable sentence in an address to young people in 1924:

Most people today are visibly out of place in the twentieth century. One has the impression that they were alive at least one hundred years ago. It is not that they have simply remained the same age; they seem to have become stuck in a time long before their own births (1920-24, p. 132)

This is worth thinking about. To what extent does it apply now? In which century or part of a century do you see yourself as most naturally fitting in? Your colleagues? Other people you know? Your politicians? It is much more than just a question of younger people coming through and taking the place of the older generation. That is always happening. Steiner is talking about people being 100 years or more out of their time.

Further, he asked the young people attending, “how they imagined the human world would look in 1935 if it incorporated their youthful desires” (ibid., p. 136). This is worth considering as a teacher as well. What are the impulses in the souls of young people now? How should the world look in 10 years if the impulses they have in their souls are to be able to find a place in that future world? In Steiner’s case, this took the young people to 1935 which you can be certain was not a manifestation of their souls’ wishes. But it is a question we can all ask of young people whom we meet. They have a sense of place, they have a sense of time, and they certainly have a sense of community. Are we doing all we can to foster these?

We talk much within Steiner-inspired institutions of the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time, the archangel Michael. What qualities do we associate Michael with? Strength, courage, ac-



Pastel drawing by a conference participant on the theme of “Our Time.”

tion, strong will forces, some of you will have heard of him as the guardian of cosmic wisdom. Strength, courage, wisdom: these are also the qualities we need for the future are they not?

As the archangel of the time, he also appears in the teachers' imagination (Steiner, 1919, printed after lecture one). Without going into details here, the teachers' imagination talks of a chalice of courage receiving a drop of light given by the 'good spirit of the time'; it is given by Michael, who stands behind the founding of the schools.

For me, this moment is the Michaelic impulse in Steiner education, the giving of the drop of light from the spirit of the time, a time which is always the present. Everything we do remains empty unless we call up in ourselves, we ignite in ourselves enthusiasm filled with strength, courage and wisdom from this moment which must be constantly recreated in the present.

In this education movement which is nearly 100 years old, we have to recreate, to rekindle the flames of enthusiasm for all we do. Steiner, in the same address, says that "enthusiasm carries the spirit within itself" (p. 140). Your enthusiasm to question, to discuss, to challenge, to engage, to seek new forms again and again, and to take your understanding ever deeper – your enthusiasm to work together with others, "not only for your special tasks," will make Waldorf education an innovative movement of the present which is what your students need. Then they will gain the strength, the courage and the wisdom to tackle the immense world challenges they have chosen to take on.

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A Manifesto for Social Art - Intended as a Culture Shock

Rainer Schnurre, Hildesheim, Germany

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Word has got about that art – yes, art – might be useful! But what for? It has even come up in relation with social matters: social art! But how? It is generally believed that art has to be provocative. I agree. But what provokes? Nowadays? Maybe reality? The reality of life is a growing provocation. What does it provoke? Money is ubiquitous: money, money, money – much too much or much too little. Where the one is the other is too. The more some have, the less others have. The few on the one side and the many on the other. And everywhere pressure – exerted by some on others. That is provocative: figures, figures, figures, money, money, money – too much for some, too little for others. The one can't be without the other. Is there an honest answer to this growing provocation?

Provocation of the provocation

It is the provocation of the provocation! What is the artistic answer to this enormously inhumane provocation? Certainly not counter-pressure. That is the reactionary answer of those who call themselves the "political elite" today: pressure, pressure, pressure... what provokes the money-hoarders and the sleepwalking consumers in equal measure today? Renunciation. The renunciation of consumerism. But to renounce one needs to be free. True renunciation is a proof of freedom. Leaving behind the lie of growth at any cost and turning to the simple truth of renunciation. Renunciation sets you free. Renunciation strengthens the will.

Renunciation

Renunciation calms the soul. Renunciation clears the mind. The free spirit cannot be controlled. It controls itself. Yes! This is true anarchy. The self-controlled cannot be controlled by others. They are in charge of themselves. No state, no boss can control them. They control themselves. The free renounce power, above all the power over others, and they renounce the futility of consumption. Freedom is anarchism. Social art means being able to share in a brotherly way. The free do not

envy the rich their riches. They know that these riches have been accumulated at the expense of the many. Their wealth is bitterest poverty of the soul and it denotes the sad absence of a free spirit. The free are self-controlled spirits, anarchists; they are uncontrollable because they control themselves fearlessly. Their powerlessness is expression of their free spirit, of their soul's true richness. Let us become artists who refuse futile consumption: the gentle anarchism of the self-controlled. Renunciation is a truly Christian and noble anarchism.

An Intersection Of Science and Art in an Image

Alva Noë, *University of California, Berkeley, USA*

[First posted at *National Public Radio*, 9/7/16]



Doctor Tulp's Anatomy Lesson, by Rembrandt

A couple of years back, my neurosurgeon showed me some snaps she'd made on her flip phone of my open forearm during a surgery she had performed on me.

She offered me the pictures as evidence that her diagnosis that I had been suffering from an entrapment of the radial nerve had been correct. About a year later, I found myself sitting in another doctor's office, this time a neurologist. The surgery had not been effective. I had come to him for advice on whether it needed to be redone. He explained that he had good news and bad: The good news was that I didn't need another operation; the bad news was that I hadn't needed the first one either. The surgeon's diagnosis had been incorrect.

What about the pictures she had shown me? I asked. His reply was curt: "You see what you want to see in that kind of picture."

I thought about this as I stood before Rembrandt's 1631 painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* during my recent trip to the Netherlands. (The painting hangs in

the Mauritshuis museum in The Hague.) *The Anatomy Lesson* shows professor Tulp as he probes the anatomy of a cadaver's left arm with an instrument in his right hand, while, with his left hand, he demonstrates the movements of which the left hand is capable, and illustrates their dependence on that anatomy.

The painting is gripping in a documentary sort of way. It presents an actual event — and was painted in a lecture theater in Amsterdam that is still in use at the university there. There is some dispute, I believe, about whether Rembrandt gets the anatomy of the dissected left arm of the cadaver correct. It takes knowledge to do so, of course. When it comes to cadavers, you can't just look and draw. You need to know what you see.

This is true, even if it is also true, as my anecdote above reminds us, that false thoughts or misguided expectations can blind you to what is there (in my arm, for example, or in the picture of my arm).

Rembrandt seems actually to explore this very issue in *The Anatomy Lesson*. We begin to appreciate this when we notice the care with which he depicts the doctor's students and, in particular, the way he illustrates what they are looking at, where their attention is directed. Two of them are staring straight out, at us or perhaps at the painter himself. A third has his mind on something or someone in the audience, it appears. But four of the students are engrossed in the demonstration.

One seems to be looking at the teacher's face. At first, I thought the other three were looking at the cadaver under investigation. But, on closer inspection, their attention seems to be directed past the lifeless arm to a text book that rests open on a stand before them. Perhaps the book performs something like the role of PowerPoint today. As Dr. Tulp lectures and dissects, he refers them to graphical representations or verbal descriptions of the relevant anatomy and physiology.

This is a nice twist, and it gives the painting an epistemological weight that it would otherwise lack. These particular spectators focus not on the corpse, but rather on a representation, a rendition, on a picture book. Is this like opting for Cliffs Notes or watching the movie version?

Perhaps. Plato may have believed something like this. We



Newton (1795), William Blake

should turn away from books and pictures to know things themselves. But there is another idea — one with which Rembrandt may be experimenting — according to which there's no such thing as the direct inspection of reality; that is, there is no encounter with how things are that is not shaped or informed by our thoughts and pictures and, indeed, by our scientific theories.

From this point of view, we can think of what is on display in *The Anatomy Lesson* differently: The students are not turning away from reality when they turn their attention to the book in front of them. They are using the books and images *in order to see* what is there before them. The book teaches them to see what is there by showing them what they are supposed to see. The book gives them the knowledge necessary for comprehending sight.

In Rembrandt's painting, then, we meet a lovely epistemological circle: We need pictures (and books and theory) to assess the reality that alone provides us the means to verify and correct our pictures (and books and theories). And this goes for what Rembrandt is doing, too. To make a convincing painting of the anatomy lesson, Rembrandt must be able to see it, to really see it. But as he himself shows in his picture, you need books and more pictures, in order to do that.

Rembrandt's painting of a scientist at work is also an argument for the irreducible importance of art to the scientist's basic project. There is no science without art.

Alva Noë on Facebook and on Twitter @alvanoe

Science Is Not Enough--

Politicians trying to dump humanities education will hobble our economy

[First published by the Editors of *Scientific American*, October 1, 2016]

Kentucky governor Matt Bevin wants students majoring in electrical engineering to receive state subsidies for their education but doesn't want to support those who study subjects such as French literature. Bevin is not alone in trying to nudge higher education toward course work that promotes better future job prospects. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, a former presidential candidate, put it bluntly last year by calling for more welders and fewer philosophers.

Promoting science and technology education to the exclusion of the humanities may seem like a good idea, but it is deeply misguided. *Scientific American* has always been an ardent supporter of teaching STEM: science, technology, engineering and mathematics. But studying the interaction of genes or engaging in a graduate-level project to develop software for self-driving cars should not edge out majoring in the classics or art history.

The need to teach both music theory and string theory is a necessity for the U.S. economy to continue as the preeminent leader in technological innovation. The unparalleled dynamism of Silicon Valley and Hollywood requires intimate ties that unite what scientist and novelist C. P. Snow called the "two cultures" of the arts and sciences.

Steve Jobs, who reigned for decades as a tech hero, was neither a coder nor a hardware engineer. He stood out among the tech elite because he brought an artistic sensibility to the redesign of clunky mobile phones and desktop computers. Jobs once declared: "It's in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough—that it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the result that makes our hearts sing."

A seeming link between innovation and the liberal arts now intrigues countries where broad-based education is less prevalent. In most of the world, university curricula still emphasize learning skills oriented toward a specific profession or trade. The ebullience of the U.S. economy, which boasted in 2014 the highest percentage of high-tech outfits among all its public companies—has spurred countries such as Singapore to create schools fashioned after the U.S. liberal arts model.

If Bevin and other advocates of a STEM-only curriculum look more closely, they will find that the student who graduates after four years of pursuing physics *plus* poetry may, in fact, be just the kind of job candidate sought out by employers. In 2013 the Association of American Colleges & Universities issued the results of a survey of 318 employers with 25 or more employees showing that nearly all of them thought that the ability to "think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems"—the precise objectives of any liberal arts education—was more important than a job candidate's specific major.

Those same skills, moreover, are precisely the ones required for marrying artistic design with the engineering refinements needed to differentiate high-end cars, clothes or cell phones from legions of marketplace competitors—the type of expertise, in fact, that is least likely to be threatened by computers, robots and other job usurpers. "Consider America's vast entertainment industry, built around stories, songs, design and creativity," wrote commentator Fareed Zakaria, author of the book *In Defense of a Liberal Education*, in a *Washington Post* column. "All of this requires skills far beyond the offerings of a narrow STEM curriculum."

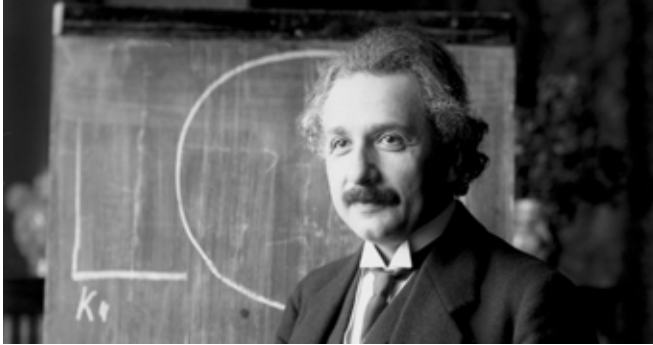
The undergraduate able to cobble together a course schedule integrating STEM and the humanities may be able to reap rich rewards. Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg became an avid student of Greek and Latin when he was only in high school, in addition to setting about learning programming languages. And the same government officials who call for a shift in educational priorities should know better than to trash the liberal arts. Take Bevin's call to eschew French literature: Bevin is someone with his own debt to the humanities. He graduated from college with a bachelor's degree in East Asian studies.

The way to encourage high-tech industry to move to Kentucky—or any other state—is not to disparage Voltaire and Camus. Rather the goal should be to build a topflight state educational system and ease the way financially for students from even the most humble backgrounds to attend. The jobs will follow—whether they be in state government or in social media start-ups.

Education for Independent Thought

Albert Einstein, Princeton, New Jersey, USA

[First published in the New York Times, October 5, 1952]



Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

It is not enough to teach a man a specialty. Through it he may become a kind of useful machine but not a harmoniously developed personality. It is essential that the student acquire an understanding of and a lively feeling for values. He must acquire a vivid sense of the beautiful and of the morally good. Otherwise he – with his specialized knowledge – more closely resembles a well-trained dog than a harmoniously developed person. He must learn to understand the motives of human beings, their illusions and their sufferings, in order to acquire a proper relationship to individual fellow men and to the community.

These precious things are conveyed to the younger generation through personal contact with those who teach, not – or at least not in the main – through textbooks. It is this that primarily constitutes and preserves culture. This is what I have in mind when I recommend the ‘humanities’ as important, not just dry specialized knowledge in the fields of history and philosophy.

Overemphasis on the competitive system and premature specialization on the ground of immediate usefulness kill the spirit on which all cultural life depends, specialized knowledge included.

It is also vital to a valuable education that independent critical thinking be developed in the young human being, a development that is greatly jeopardized by overburdening him with too much and with too varied subjects (point system). Overburdening necessarily leads to superficiality. Teaching should be such that what is offered is perceived as a valuable gift and not as a hard duty.



Screens In Schools are a \$60 Billion Hoax

Dr. Nicholas Kardaras, East Hampton, New York, USA

[First printed in *Time Magazine's* “Ideas Education”, August 31, 2016]



As the dog days of summer wane, most parents are preparing to send their kids back to school. In years past, this has meant buying notebooks and pencils, perhaps even a new backpack. But over the past decade or so, the back-to-school checklist has for many also included an array of screen devices that many parents dutifully stuff into their children's bag.

The screen revolution has seen pedagogy undergo a seismic shift as technology now dominates the educational landscape. In almost every classroom in America today, you will find some type of screen—smartboards, Chromebooks, tablets, smartphones. From inner-city schools to those in rural and remote towns, we have accepted tech in the classroom as a necessary and beneficial evolution in education. This is a lie.

Tech in the classroom not only leads to worse educational outcomes for kids, which I will explain shortly, it can also clinically hurt them. I've worked with over a thousand teens in the past 15 years and have observed that students who have been raised on a high-tech diet not only appear to struggle more with attention and focus, but also seem to suffer from an adolescent malaise that appears to be a direct byproduct of their digital immersion. Indeed, over two hundred peer-reviewed studies point to screen time correlating to increased ADHD, screen addiction, increased aggression, depression, anxiety and even psychosis.

But if that's true, why would we have allowed these “educational” Trojan horses to slip into our schools? Follow the money.

Education technology is estimated to become a \$60 billion industry by 2018. With the advent of the Common Core in 2010, which nationalized curriculum and textbooks standards, the multi-billion-dollar textbook industry became very attractive for educational gunslingers looking to capitalize on the new Wild West of education technology. A tablet with educational software no longer needed state-by-state

curricular customization. It could now be sold to the entire country.

This new Gold Rush attracted people like Rupert Murdoch, not otherwise known for his concern for American pedagogy, who would go on to invest over \$1 billion into an ed-tech company called Amplify, with the stated mission of selling every student in America their proprietary tablet—for only \$199—along with the software and annual licensing fees.

Amplify hired hundreds of videogame designers to build educational videogames—while they and other tech entrepreneurs attempted to sell the notion that American students no longer had the attention span for traditional education. Their solution: Educate them in a more stimulating and “engaging” manner.

But let’s look more closely at that claim. ADHD rates have indeed exploded by 50 percent over the past 10 years with the CDC indicating that rates continue to rise by five percent per year. Yet many researchers and neuroscientists believe that this ADHD epidemic is a direct *result* of children being hyper-stimulated. Using hyper-stimulating digital content to “engage” otherwise distracted students exacerbates the problem that it endeavors to solve. It creates a vicious and addictive ADHD cycle: The more a child is stimulated, the more that child needs to keep getting stimulated in order to hold their attention.

Murdoch’s Amplify wasn’t the only dubious ed-tech cash-grab. The city of Los Angeles had entered into a \$1.3 billion contract in 2014 to buy iPads loaded with Pearson educational software for all of its 650,000 K through 12 students—until the FBI investigated its contract and found that now-former Superintendent John Deasy had a close relationship with Apple and Pearson executives. (Before the deal was killed in December 2014, the Pearson platform had incomplete and essentially worthless curriculum and such feeble security restrictions students that bypassed them in weeks.)

Despite the Amplify and LA debacles, others still seek to convince naïve school administrators that screens are the educational panacea. Yet as more American schools lay off teachers while setting aside scarce budget dollars for tech, many educators and parents alike have begun to ask: Do any of these hypnotic marvels of the digital age actually produce better educational outcomes for the kids who use them?

We could look to Finland, whose school system routinely ranks toward the top globally and has chosen to skip the tech and standardized testing. Instead, Finnish students are given as many as four outdoor free-play breaks per day, regardless of the weather—while here, a sedentary American child sitting in front of a glowing screen playing edu-games while over-scheduled and stressed by standardized testing is seen as the Holy Grail.

Dr. Kentaro Toyama, an associate professor at the University of Michigan’s School of Information, once believed

that technology in the classroom could solve the problems of modern urban education. No Luddite, he had received his Ph.D. in computer science from Yale and had moved to India in 2004 to help found a new research lab for Microsoft; while there, he became interested in how computers, mobile phones and other technologies could help educate India’s billion-plus population.

Rather than finding a digital educational cure, he came to understand what he calls technology’s “Law of Amplification”: technology could help education where it’s already doing well, but it does little for mediocre educational systems. Worse, in dysfunctional schools, it “can cause outright harm.” He added: “Unfortunately, there is no technological fix...more technology only magnifies socioeconomic disparities, and the only way to avoid that is non-technological.”



The list of supporting education experts and researchers is long:

- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development said in a 2015 report that heavy users of computers in the classroom “do a lot worse in most learning outcomes” and that: “In the end, technology can amplify great teaching, but great technology cannot replace poor teaching.”
- An exhaustive meta-study conducted by Durham University in 2012 that systemically reviewed 48 studies examining technology’s impact on learning found that “technology-based interventions tend to produce just slightly *lower* levels of improvement when compared with other researched interventions and approaches.”
- The Alliance for Children, a consortium of some of the nation’s top educators and professors, in a 2000 report concluded: “School reform is a social challenge, not a technological problem...a high-tech agenda for children seems likely to erode our most precious long-term intellectual reserves—our children’s minds.”
- Patricia Greenfield, distinguished professor of psychology at UCLA, analyzed more than 50 studies on learning and points out that reading for pleasure among young people has decreased in recent decades, which is problematic

because “studies show that reading develops imagination, induction, reflection and critical thinking, as well as vocabulary...in a way that visual media such as video games and television do not.”

- Education psychologist and author of *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds* Jane Healy spent years doing research into computer use in schools and, while she expected to find that computers in the classroom would be beneficial, now feels that “time on the computer might interfere with development of everything from the young child’s motor skills to his or her ability to think logically and distinguish between reality and fantasy.”

John Vallance, a Cambridge scholar and headmaster of Australia’s top K-through-12 school, Sydney Grammer, has said: “I think when people come to write the history of this period in education...this investment in classroom technology is going to be seen as a huge fraud.”



There has also been surprising research coming out of Canada: Students don’t even prefer e-learning over traditional education. In a 2011 study, researchers found that students actually preferred “ordinary, real-life lessons” to using technology. Those results surprised the researchers: “It is not the portrait that we expected, whereby students would embrace anything that happens on a more highly technological level. On the contrary—they really seem to like access to human interaction, a smart person at the front of the classroom.”

We are projecting our own infatuation with shiny technology, assuming our little digital natives would rather learn using gadgets—while what they crave and need is human contact with flesh-and-blood educators.

Schools need to heed this research in order to truly understand how to best nurture real intrinsic learning and not fall for the Siren song of the tech companies—and all of their hypnotic screens.

Dr. Kardaras is the author of the new book *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction is Hijacking Our Kids—and How to Break the Trance*. (drkardaras.com)

The “Art” of Becoming a Teacher: What does it take to become a teacher?

Douglas Gerwin, Keene, New Hampshire, USA

[First published in the online newsletter *Center & Periphery*, Autumn 2016]

In college, my favorite professor was a barrel-chested giant of a man with a rough chiseled face, booming voice, and a voluminous nose that reminded me of Jimmy Durante’s celebrated schnauzer. A professor of philosophy, this teacher usually lectured without notes, though on occasion he would reach into a faded leather satchel to pull out some classic text such as Rene Descartes’ *Discourse on Method*, a treatise he was especially fond of dissecting.

More striking, though, than this man’s facial or vocal attributes were his huge angular hands, leathery as his worn satchel. So strong and vibrant were these hands that their gestures could give almost physical outline to the most metaphysical of concepts. Indeed, one might expect these hands belonged more to a woodsman or farmer than to a college professor.

And indeed this professor *was* a farmer — a sheep farmer, to be precise. Though I would not have thought it at the time, looking back I will now venture that the secret to the sculptural energy and verve of his philosophical explanations had something to do with his agricultural practice. Whatever his background, his teaching was infused with something of special and lasting influence.

What is this special “something” that distinguishes a great teacher? On the one hand, it is tempting to say that a teacher is born with this “something”, rather like musicians who are born with perfect pitch. And yet there is more. Whether it forms part of a freely chosen destiny or is received as an inherited gift (think only how many teachers, like musicians, are born into families of their eventual profession), this “something” needs to be practiced as a disciplined *art*. In other words teaching, like any art, requires continuously to be developed and enhanced.

Herein lies the essential need for teachers, however gifted and dynamic as educators, to submit their talents to the discipline of training and also to the ceaseless pursuit of further professional development and renewal. In that sense Art, including the art of teaching, is much more about rehearsal than about performance.

In a cycle of lectures given not to teachers but a group of young people three years after the founding of the first Waldorf school in 1919, Rudolf Steiner sets out the crucial role of artistic practice in the vocation of teaching. “Every human being is a teacher, but he is sleeping and must be awakened,” he says, “and Art is the awakener.” A good teacher “does not depend on the giving out of knowledge but on activating the individuality of the soul, upon the pre-earthly existence. Then it is really the child who educates himself through us.” To activate the inner nature of the child, in other words, requires an artistic encounter. “We only educate when we behave in such a way”—that is, in an artistic way—“that through our own behavior the child can educate himself.”

Now, there is something as unusual about becoming a Waldorf teacher as there is about becoming an unpublished chairman of a philosophy department. In readying the inaugural circle of 12 men and women who constituted the first Waldorf faculty on the Uhlandshöhe of Stuttgart, Rudolf Steiner made it clear through his expectations and actions that the preparation of teachers must proceed at three levels. These can be summarized as:

- a) Undertaking rigorous self development
 - b) Studying the human being in its archetypal stages of development
 - c) Practicing what I will call “the craft of teaching”
- For those early teachers, these three levels constituted a hierarchy of training. By “hierarchy” I mean they entailed an order of priority by which they were to be taken up.

To explore briefly each level:

- a) In becoming a Waldorf teacher, *self development* comes first and remains primary for the duration of one’s career. As Steiner put it to the teachers in Stuttgart, “the more we think of leading a right and proper life ourselves, the better will it be for the child . . . For you can only become good teachers and educators if you pay attention not merely to what you *do*, but also to what you *are*.”

Ultimately, the purpose of any schooling is to help each child go through a process of self-transformation. By definition, of course, “self-transformation” can be practiced only by—and on—one’s self. That said, a child needs to be guided in this process, but only by adults who continuously practice it on themselves. As Aristotle would put it, “All learning proceeds by *mimesis*.”

Even teenagers—who, in the end, learn only by the exercise of their own judgment—will imitate their teachers: not, of course, their outer behavior (which may very well be the object of teenage mockery) but rather their inner striving.

- b) *Study of human development*. This can take many forms and involve many of Steiner’s writings. Perhaps best known among them is the lecture cycle quoted above and familiar to Waldorf teachers as *Allgemeine Menschenkunde* (in English called *Study of Man: General Education Course* but more pre-

cisely translated as “General Study of the Human Being”), which Steiner gave over a period of two weeks to the first Waldorf teachers shortly before the opening of the Stuttgart school. In many other lecture cycles and books, however, he paints sweeping archetypal pictures of the human being—two-fold, three-fold, four-fold, seven-fold, twelve-fold, and more—in its unfolding from earliest beginnings to furthest future. Here is invitation to a lifetime of study!

- c) Finally, in light of these first two levels, and only in this light, comes the *craft of teaching*, which embraces all that has to do with curriculum, teaching techniques, organization of the classroom, relations with colleagues and parents, and the role in education of the world at large. Whatever is gained at this third level will be of lasting value only to the degree it is saturated with a profound understanding of the archetypal human being, and the study of the human being in its archetypal nature presupposes a rigorous and disciplined program self-development. Hence the hierarchy of these three levels.

To be sure, there are many ways to undertake this hierarchy of training, and I speak only out of the approach pursued in the high school and elementary teacher training programs sponsored by the Center for Anthroposophy and Antioch University. And yet I believe any full-dress program for prospective Waldorf teachers will share the essentials of this approach.

First, *self development*. Rudolf Steiner offered all manner of exercises and indications in this regard, from the initial so-called six “basic” (sometimes called “supplementary”) exercises for any student of anthroposophy to verses specifically written for teachers. But perhaps some of the most powerful stimuli to self-development arise from a disciplined practice of the arts, especially those most closely associated with the Waldorf curriculum such as eurythmy, speech, veil painting, sculpture, and spacial dynamics. That is why fully 50% of teacher training, as we undertake it, is spent in the practice—at times painful and frustrating, at other times liberating and rejuvenating—of the arts. The primary purpose here is not to train teachers to become artists or teachers of art (though these may be necessary skills, especially for teachers in the elementary grades) but rather



to tap those fonts of creative imagination that can give rise to genuine and lasting metamorphosis of self as well as a profound encounter between teacher and student. In the artistic encounter we discern the true individuality of the other. And discernment of one's essential individuality—in the student by the teacher; in the teacher by the student—lies at the fundament of education.

Then, *study of human development*. Again, Steiner provides countless entryways into this arena, either through his so-called basic books or through any number of lecture cycles and practical courses. Beyond the study of these, however, prospective Waldorf teachers take up “biography work”, in which they come to a more intimate understanding of the general phases of human development by mapping the phases of their own. Here too a disciplined practice of the arts as a path of self-discovery can help immensely to get teachers beyond the dizzying array of their own biographical data to educe the essential—and often undiscovered—streams weaving through them.

Finally, *the craft of teaching*. Like the previous two levels, practice at this level continues indefinitely, even though along the way teachers may earn a certificate that bespeaks a certain level of competence. Ultimately, though, craft means practice, and practice means regular and disciplined time in the studio, which for the teacher is the classroom. Some teacher training programs emphasize this aspect of the training more than others. Generally I find that the longer the internship or practicum in the classroom, the greater the success of the teacher post-training.

Ultimately, as the Ancient Greeks knew long ago and as modern empirical science is demonstrating anew, the pathway to changing the workings of the *body* resides in changing the activities practiced by the *spirit*. And the route to changing the work of the *spirit* resides in changing the practices of the *body*. Think only of recent studies in neuroscience that demonstrate the degree to which our thoughts give rise to the structures of our brain (not the other way around) and how changes in diet and exercise give rise to changes in our mental and emotional states.

In other words, as Waldorf teachers, we are agents of change—first in ourselves, then in the children entrusted to our care—to the degree we work on soul and spirit to effect changes in soil and substance, and vice versa.

The implication is that, to be teachers we need to be farmers, too.



'It's the thing I'm most proud of!'

Tilda Swinton starting her own alternative school

[First published in *DAILYMAIL.COM REPORTER*, October 4, 2016]



She's an over achiever by anyone's standards.

But rather than her varied career on the big screen, her Oscar or her Cambridge degree, Tilda Swinton says the alternative school she founded is her proudest achievement.

The 55-year-old co-founded the Independent fee-paying Drumduan School in Moray in the Scottish Highlands, from which her twins Xavier and Honor will graduate next summer.

She said that the Waldorf school was: 'Probably the thing I'm most proud of.' The school prides itself on using no government testing, offering academic study through a mixture of physical coordination, athletic skills, music and artistic work. Instead of being tested and graded, students learn core subjects such as maths, English and science in original ways and regularly enjoy activities such as canoeing, hiking, snowboarding and mountain biking. The curriculum is based on the radical Steiner education system, which encourages children's creativity, spirituality and morality.

'My co-founder, Ian McCook, and I started with four children between us in need of a happy completion to their great Waldorf start in school and founded an independent upper school for them to graduate to, which has, in the last few months, amalgamated with the junior school to complete the circle.'

According to Drumduan's website, pupils learn academic subjects such as maths, English, physics, chemistry and geography but lessons are balanced with craft-based subjects and outdoor activities. There are no hierarchies at the school, which has an emphasis on celebrating individualism, and pupils are encouraged to document their work 'to their own best intellectual and artistic standard.'

Oscar winner: Tilda has a Cambridge degree and a whole clutch of awards. Tilda, who famously lived with both her children's father John Byrne and her new partner Sandro Kopp in the same house for some time, has always insisted her children are 'very happy'.

The star also talked to *Out* about her close friendship with the late David Bowie.

'We talked about literature a lot, actually, and used to send each other recent finds and old passions,' she said. 'One of the things I am happiest about in my life is introducing him to the essays of Montaigne, which I've loved since I was a teenager. And he sent me *Bruges-la-Morte* by Rodenbach, for which I am forever grateful. Beyond all the myriad things to miss, I miss our conversation most badly.'

Tilda, who won Best Supporting Actress for her role in *Michael Clayton*, also touched on the 'whitewashing' controversy surrounding her role as The Ancient One in *Doctor Strange*. 'Anyone speaking up for a greater accuracy in the representation of the diversity of the world we live in has me right beside them,' she said. Talking further about her close friendships with members of the gay community, Tilda touched upon the 'war' that was the early days of the AIDS epidemic. 'This is an extremely defined time in my memory. In 1994 alone I attended 43 funerals.'

"Opening up": The full interview can be read in the latest edition of Out magazine. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3822072/Tilda-Swinton-opens-starting-alternative-school-close-friendship-David-Bowie.html#ixzz4NIUOWKwM>

Successful Anniversary Conference for ELIANT in Brussels

Michaela Glöckler, Dornach, Switzerland

[First published in the ELIANT online Newsletter]



On 7th November ELIANT held its own conference in Brussels for the very first time. We were able to show how applied anthropology is a significant player in making respect for human dignity and the rights of freedom, equality and solidarity enshrined in the European



constitution, a practical reality. Although the European Union has defined these fundamental rights in the Charter, the wider citizenry is largely unaware of and makes no demands on them. Situations where these rights are compromised are continually being accepted. It is therefore vitally important that civil society wakes up, looks carefully at what is going on and claims these rights.

Sophie Beernaerts from the department for schools and pedagogy within the EU Directorate for Education and Culture, emphasized that the freedom of choice and having those choices available depends on there being well-informed citizens. She therefore sees education as the foundation for European development. Gerald Häfner pointed out how highly dependent

democracy is on the democratic perceptions and attitudes of individual people and how it is unthinkable without an active civil society movement.

Participants in the seven working groups brought clarity to the questions that need addressing in the near future. We will be taking these up as part of our on going public relations work in Brussels.

Here are some preliminary photos from the conference. Videos and conference reports will be available on our website from the end of November. With more than 140 people attended the conference was very successful.

The European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) provided invaluable assistance in the preparing and running of this event. This incurred costs however that we have not yet been able to recover. We are therefore very grateful to you for supporting this conference and our on going work. info@eliant.eu | www.eliant.eu

Graduate Certificate in Steiner Education within the Master of Education

Tracey Sayn Wittgenstein Piraccini, Steiner Education Australia

A Masters in Steiner Education and Graduate Certificate course will start this year at the University of the Sunshine Coast. It will be available online as well as on campus and students will also attend the two day intensive in beautiful Queensland each semester.

I am thrilled that we have been able to develop this in partnership with the university. Steiner Education Australia is part of the Advisory Committee and Quality Assurance and we were able to select our own highly experienced Steiner educators to write and deliver these courses. Neil Boland from AUT in New Zealand is also part of this committee and supporting the courses. It is a very exciting initiative to ensure that teachers are deepening their understanding of Steiner education and to promote Steiner education more widely. If you want to read the course outlines they should be available in February via the USC website or on this link when I have the information to update it.

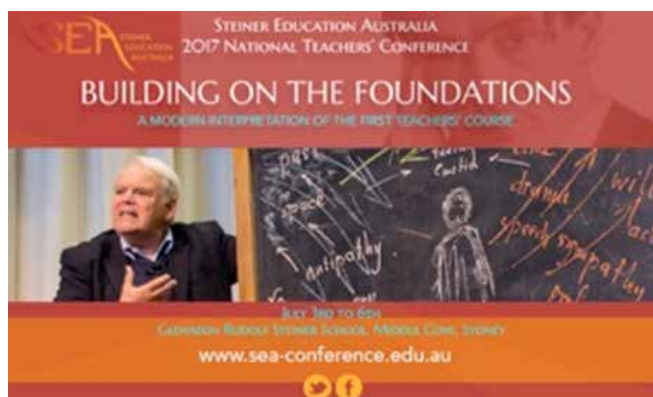
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN STEINER EDUCATION?



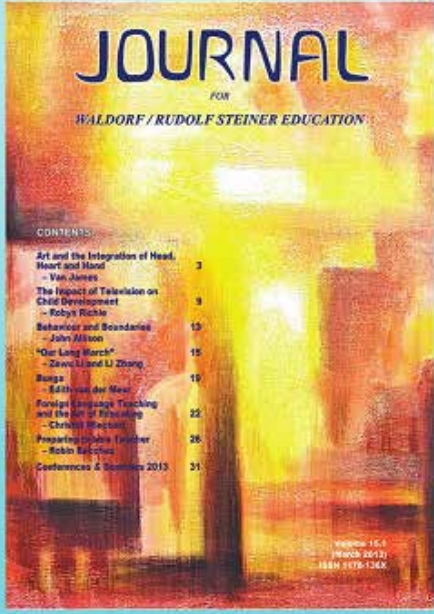
The University of the Sunshine Coast in conjunction with Steiner Education Australia, are pleased to offer postgraduate studies in Steiner Education starting in 2017. To find out more visit: www.steinereducation.edu.au www.usc.edu.au

<http://www.steinereducation.edu.au/events/graduate-certificate-steiner-education-within-master-education/>
Also, you are all invited to our teachers' conference next year to celebrate 60 years of Steiner education in Australia!
<http://www.steinereducation.edu.au/teachers-conference-2017/>

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Journal for Waldorf/Steiner Education is a joint production for educators throughout Oceania: Australia, New Zealand, and Hawai'i. (Order information below.)



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Experiential Education in the world - A Waldorf perspective

The global challenges that children will face in coming decades will be intense and multi-dimensional - The task therefore, for Waldorf educators working with the Steiner pedagogy, will be to ensure that the next generation can form a social order with capacities developed from experiences that are formed from living pictures within them. An experiential education program that incorporates multiple geographic and cultural learning environments provides dynamic learning-spaces that are intellectually, emotionally and physically stimulating and they help students form living pictures of the lesson within them. In this context, the Waldorf curriculum offers an excellent basis for a harmonious blend of addressing the high school student's needs to engage not only with himself, but also with the world around him in a dynamic and active manner.

Some main lessons, which are currently being offered, where these perspectives are integrated and made into living experiences are given below:-

1. **Oceanography & Meteorology – Class 10/11 – The Andamans - India, January –** The 'Living Earth' and all that influences it, from the core of the planet, to the stars above, will be covered in this lesson. Fundamentals of our climate/weather and various factors that affect it will be taught, while experiencing the oceans underwater and the land above it. To give students an experiential understanding of science, art and movement, in relation to this lesson, scuba diving and forest walks, will be a part of this program.



2. **History of Art/Architecture – Class 9/10 to 12 – Greece/Italy, March/April –** Art, from Caves, BCE/CE to the Renaissance periods, will be covered, with special reference to the Renaissance painters. Their art, biographies and socio-cultural environment will be an important part of this lesson. Students will travel through Greece (Athens) ,Italy (Rome and Florence) and visit historical sites, museums, art galleries, see the works of great masters such as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli and others, while learning to paint in Greek/Italian Waldorf schools.



3. **Surveying – Class 10 – Australia, May -** The practical application of trigonometry and mathematics in land surveying, will be taught in this lesson. Students will learn to draw a map of the terrain they survey using modern technical equipment such as Theodolites, Dumpy Levels, GPS measuring instruments and related equipment, besides understanding the fundamentals of grid coordinates, vertical profiles and mapping.



4. **Binary Logic and making a 3D printer – Class 11/12, Holland, August –** How machines think and communicate with each other, will be the central theme of this lesson. Students will make a basic adder with semi-conductors, while learning binary logic, and then move on to building a 3D printer with integrated chips and basic programming. The lesson will include understanding binary logic and how 'and /nand/or/not' gates, in integrated chips, are used in machines.



5. **Mechanics and Boat Building – Class 10/11 – South India, October:** Students will learn to build a 14ft flat-bottomed skiff, and the basics of navigation, using a sextant. After building the boat they will travel to a river-site where the contours, cross sections and flow-rates will be measured, calculated and drawn. They will also read about the experiences of navigating the seas from the perspective of seafarers of the 18th/19th centuries. Related topics, such as the working of internal combustion engines, will also be practically demonstrated and applied while motoring/rowing the boat on the river.



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In Remembrance of Sheri Reiner

Michael Hughes, Makawao, Maui, Hawai'i

Sheri Reiner was born in New York City and her early childhood was spent in Brooklyn. Her parents were hard working, first generation Americans. Her father ran a small family owned neighborhood grocery store. I believe her mother probably kept the books, as when Sheri and her brother were older, she worked as a bookkeeper. Her mother loved music, and had sacrificed a possible singing career to have children.



Sheri Reiner, 1951-2016



She passed on to Sheri a love both of music and singing. As a teenager, to the consternation of her parents, Sheri frequented Greenwich Village, an epicenter for music and poetry and the 'counter- culture' in New York City. In the mid sixties Sheri matriculated into the High School of Art and Design in Manhattan. Here she had the good fortune of having Daisy Aldan as a teacher. Daisy taught literature, poetry and creative writing, and was a source of inspiration to many students. Sheri received a special recognition from Daisy, who once described her as 'one of my three muses', amongst her many students. Daisy invited Sheri and Curtis Wheeler (who also became a eurythmist) to an evening of her translations of Albert Steffens poetry, some of which were also expressed in Eurythmy. Thus it was through Daisy that Sheri was introduced not only to the writing of poetry, but also to the movement art of eurythmy and the works of Rudolf Steiner, sparking a clear call of destiny.

As a young person Sheri said she 'had a wish to meet everyone', so it is not surprising that soon after high school she left home, traveling the country. While on the West coast she became seriously ill, and after recovering at her parents home, she moved to Spring Valley and lived with Dr. and Mrs. Scharff in the early days of the Fellowship Community (a community of all ages centered around the care of the elderly). During this year she also began eurythmy lessons in Lisa Monges' living room, and took part in the preparatory group for the 1972 Youth Conference, *On the Threshold*, in Dornach, which she then attended. Immediately following the conference she began the three-year curative education training course in Glencraig Camphill, Northern Ireland. These were important years as well as challenging times--an intensive new life in a different country, and important and lasting friendships were formed. In this community of special needs people, the cycle of the year and celebrating the seasonal festivals was important and central to the community life, and it was a practice Sheri took up for the rest of her life. During these years, the first part of her twenties, she wrote two papers which pointed toward her path and goals. The first was entitled *The Search for the Human Soul*, and the second, *Art as the Bridge Between Two Worlds*. The conclusion of this second paper reads:

" If man strives to develop, to discover the Truth in all earthly manifestations-- in the Kingdoms of Nature, in Man himself, in the relationships that all things have-- through

experiencing all that he meets, he acquires knowledge. He becomes ever more conscious. When he strives to create out of this experience, to create with the intention of doing good, of aiding all that lives, of giving through his deed-- he must sacrifice his own personal self and reveal that which is more than himself: what is true and eternal. He manifests the ideal which becomes real through his deeds. Art is conscious creative active sacrifice for our fellowmen, for the earth and for the stars. It is deed. Awareness of truth stands behind it. Deed is in its hand. It is imbued with love. Its purpose is love. The healing of mankind lies in the individual's creative power. "



So, not surprisingly, the world of art and eurythmy continued to tug at her.

Needing to wait a year following her three-year curative course to begin a Eurythmy training, Sheri pursued another great interest and attended a year long course in color studies and painting with Anne Stockton at Emerson College in Sussex, England. It was here that she met Robert Logsdon. It was also here that our angels obviously collaborated, for we had both independently applied to and were accepted to the same Eurythmy school, and so we had this year to meet each other and to celebrate our wedding on the day Sheri planned-- Whitsun, 1976. Then it was off to our eurythmy training, which took place in two Camphill communities, in the South and North of England. Eurythmy is an intense training, and illnesses plagued Sheri, but with great determination and support from our teachers, she managed. Following this,

we moved to Germany for a short period, so I could begin a therapeutic eurythmy training. While there, Sheri gave regular eurythmy classes, including her first course in color eurythmy-- a natural fit!

In late spring 1981 we visited the Camphill community in Northern Ireland, and there Sheri was christened, at age thirty. We then returned to the U.S., visiting a number of places. The enthusiastic children --with the blend of races and socio-economic situations at the Detroit Waldorf School spoke most strongly to us, and we took up positions there.



Thus began many years of teaching in Waldorf schools. In Detroit Sheri taught eurythmy in the high school, encouraging frequent performances with a curriculum that spanned the Old Testament to Motown music, from large group forms (including a Thornton Wilder play in Eurythmy) to solo graduation performances. We also taught at the Ann Arbor Rudolf Steiner School in its beginning years and at Kinship Homes, for special needs people. Sheri took the initiative of teaching adult eurythmy classes not only in the schools, but also out into public spaces. We performed eurythmy duo's, as well as with other eurythmists. Annelies Davidson would inspire us from afar, and sometimes join us. During these years Sheri was also one of the founding members of the Detroit Branch of the Anthroposophical Society, was central in the festivals committee, and a regular member of study groups. When the Waldorf Institute moved to Spring Valley, Sheri brought to the

fledgling Branch a pageant out of Goethe's fairy tale of *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, inspiring new memberships in the Anthroposophical Society and giving an added impetus to several of the participants towards their own artistic trainings (Julie Lamb and Hilary Hafner, Eurythmy; Katherine Thivierge, Creative Speech). After seven years of this pioneer work we were ready for a year of further artistic work in Europe and Henry Barnes helped us secure funds for this.



Upon our return to the States a year later we jointly took a position at the Live Oak Waldorf School in Northern California, to begin a eurythmy program there. We worked there for twelve years, participating deeply in the school. During this time we also taught at the nearby Mariposa Waldorf School, offered adult courses and performances, performed with other eurythmists, and were engaged in the life of two area Society Branches: Gaia Sophia in the foothills, and the Sacramento Branch in Fair Oaks. Sheri continued to have health challenges which ultimately led to her stopping in the schools, and increasing her own studies and her art. In these years she continued her anthroposophical participation, worked in our garden, and took up weaving, often dying her own colors. She also joined a three-year painting course with Leszek Forczek.

In 2006 I took a teaching position at the Haleakala Waldorf School on Maui to start the eurythmy program-- we arrived on Michaelmas day. Soon after a dear colleague, Keith Mc-

Crary, who had initiated courses for adults (AWE-- Adult Waldorf Education) invited Sheri to teach Eurythmy in these courses. This work was to introduce or help people deepen their relationship to Anthroposophy and Waldorf education, and it has as well brought a number of teachers to the school movement. In ensuing years Sheri's teaching expanded also into painting, creative speech and anthroposophical studies, all areas she had dedicated herself to. Sheri also began working with a home-- schooler on the Waldorf curriculum, emphasizing the art in the education.

In late 2011 a diagnosis of an invasive cancer was given



and a breast was removed. Thanks to the incredible support of friends, we were able to visit a cancer clinic in Mexico, where Sheri was given alternative treatments to chemo and radiation, and therapies she could take home with her. Through this Sheri was able to continue both her teaching as well as her own artistic strivings. However, in 2015 the cancer was again spreading and in April 2016 she began to experience a general loss of energy. Shortly before her passing, her homeschooler wrote to her that she had "brought art into his life, he learned to love colors and to bring beauty into everything he did." The final weeks were under Hospice, at home, and Sheri had a peaceful passing on July 12, 2016.

Throughout her adult life Sheri was deeply engaged with Anthroposophia, eurythmy, the world of color and transformation of the soul. Already at the end of high school she

had recognized her path, and she was deeply moved at that time by the Hamburg cycle of lectures that Rudolf Steiner had given on the *Gospel of St. John*. This relationship of the two John's, their unique roles at the Mystery of Golgotha, and their profound commitment to human and earthly evolution lived strongly in Sheri's soul over decades. She now joins other active helpers across the threshold seeking in love to further humanity's great endeavor of transformation.

All paintings by Sheri Reiner.

Eva Helena Kudar--In Memorium

Bonnie Ozaki-James, Honolulu, Hawaii



Eva Helena Kudar, 1925-2016

Eva Helena Kudar died on Michaelmas Day, September 29, 2016, in Fair Oaks, California. She was 91. Eva was born in Germany and suffered many deprivations as a young girl during Hitler's rise to power and then during the allied attacks on Dresden. During her early years, she had briefly attended a Steiner School until the Nazi's closed it, and after the war became a Waldorf kindergarten teacher. In 1961 she relocated to Honolulu and became one of the founding teachers of what was to become the Honolulu Waldorf School. After more than a decade in Hawai'i, she moved her two daughters to the Fair Oaks area and joined the Sacramento Waldorf School, teaching kindergarten until her retirement, when she ran a small day care in her home for several more years.

Eva's deed of helping to start the Honolulu Waldorf School has enriched the lives of thousands of students and their families over the past 55 years. Full of joy, genuine warmth and with a hearty laugh, she exhibited unflappable calm in guiding young children, no matter what sort of silliness was underway,

and was a wonderful role model for aspiring teachers.

As Eva's friend Nancy Poer so eloquently wrote of her, "Thank you, and blessings on your journey, dear Eva, spirit-warrior of Michael for our time. May you inspire us from the spirit as you inspired and nurtured so many in this life." (*The Weaver* #5, Nov 20, 2016.)

In Memory of Robert Lord

Robert Lord passed over the threshold last autumn, a week before his 70th birthday.



Robert Lord, 1946-2016

After receiving a B.Sc. Honors degree in mathematics and physics from Bangor University in Wales, Robert went on to spend over 35 years in the construction industry, running his color consultancy business *Colour Transformation, Ltd.* with projects throughout his native England and across Europe. His client list included over 100 ING banks in Holland; Principles clothing stores; eight law courts in London; food bars in Terminal 3, at Heathrow Airport; Crest Hotels, (in London, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Bologna); a high security prison near Uttoxeter, and many private residences.

His anthroposophical clients included Rudolf Steiner House; many Camphill communities; Christian Community chapels; Haus de Jaager (Dornach); Medical Centres in the UK; the Merlin Theatre; and Ruskin Mill and its many initiatives.

Robert was a trustee of the Cultural Freedom Trust, setting





Lazure design work by Robert Lord.

up the Biodynamic Land Fund, and he also spent three years as a trustee of the Biodynamic Association. In 2010 Robert played a central role in preventing the closure of Emerson College and, as an Emerson trustee he obtained Listed Building Consent and supervised a partial refurbishment of Pixton House at the college. Later he was initiator and course leader of 'Goetheanism' at Emerson, and also a valued contributor to the colleges 'Cultivating Wisdom' programs in Guangzhou and Zhengzhou. In recent years he developed many warm relationships in China and it was there that he became aware of the serious illness that six weeks later ended his life on September 14, 2016.

Robert will be remembered with deep gratitude for his love and dedication to art and anthroposophy.

Eulogy for Mary Joan Fajardo

Isa Belmonte, Manila, Philippines



Mary Joan Fajardo, 1950-2017

January 14, 2017

Dear students, parents, teachers and friends,

We are gathered here today to bid farewell to our dear, dear friend, teacher, colleague, mentor and sister, Mary Joan Villanueva Fajardo. Mary Joan was born on the 24th of June, 1950, in a garage clinic in Bambang, Manila. Her mother was an educator and PE teacher while her father was an accountant who worked for Kodak. She studied in Jose Abad Santos Memorial School, took her degree in Psychology at the Philippine Women's University and later earned an MA in Psychology at Ateneo. Her artistic side was very much alive when she joined the Philippine Bayanihan dance troupe and went twice on an international tour. She later went on tour again with the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA). At PETA, in the early 80's, she was responsible for children's theatre and pretty much co-wrote the instructional manual, becoming instrumental in popularizing theater among young people.

In 1987, Mary Joan, with her friend Manny Pambid, watched Goethe's Faust in the Goetheanum, at Dornach, Switzerland. This is the center of anthroposophy. She was moved by the performances and wanted to learn more about anthroposophy. At the suggestion of Virginia Sease, she and Manny sought out Nicanor Perlas upon their return to the Philippines.

Mary Joan then studied Steiner's lectures and teachings with intense earnestness and attended study groups. In anthroposophy, she found a way to learn more about the spirit, how to work on one's thinking and develop one's heart forces... explore new, creative ways of living with others and contributing to the community. Anthroposophy's practical aspect merged with Mary Joan's already meaningful work with the youth. Anthroposophy would be the spark in her life that would give her a deep way of understanding the human being and a way to social transformation – something very much needed in the Philippines.

She then chose to leave professional theatre and focus on educating children. Education was to be her calling from that moment on. Together with courageous friends Nicanor Perlas, Joaquin and Bella Tan, and Kathryn Perlas, they worked together to establish Waldorf education here in the Philippines. She was sent to Spring Valley, New York to earn a masters degree on Waldorf Education while Bella went to Melbourne, Australia.

Between 1992 and 1994, Mary Joan and Bella lectured and gave workshops on Waldorf education for teachers, workers in sugar plantations and interested parents in Northern Luzon and the Visayas. In 1992 they founded the Association for Rudolf Steiner Education in the Philippines.

Finally, in 1994, a kindergarten was established in the Fajardo residence. It was in their garden pavilion and garage that Waldorf education in the Philippines took root. This initiative was later called the Manila Waldorf School.

From that time on, Mary Joan's destiny was inextricably

tioned to MWS. She loved being a teacher. Already, at a young age, Brenda Fajardo caught a glimpse of what her sister's life's work would be. When Mary Joan was a little girl, she suffered from tuberculosis of the bones, her right leg was affected and she was hospitalized. While recuperating, Brenda saw her teaching songs to the other children in the ward.

She was a natural and because of her numerous abilities, had the tools to be the teacher of the pioneer class. She loved the children. She was strict and serious in her intention to address the needs of the young students. How alive she would be in the classroom! To her pupils, she was larger than life. Her uprightness, fairness, care for her students and selflessness shown through her teaching. Each student felt recognized and respected. Many attribute a large part of who they are to their loving teacher.

The pioneer combined class she started completed their class 7/8 in 2004. After that, her role as mentor to the younger/newer teachers began. Still in 2007, Mary Joan took her second class and taught them for 4 years. I was witness to her sincere ways of transforming herself. It was as though she was teaching again for the first time. She was demanding on herself as she faced new challenges as a teacher of a new group of children.

In addition, the years leading to the transfer of the school from its leased facility in Quezon City to its permanent venue in Timberland, San Mateo, Rizal were challenging. The community was beset with division, yet she was headstrong to re-establish the school in its new home in the mountains, whilst letting go and entrusting the move to others. With the faculty, Mary Joan, strove to work together and strengthen the community. The school was growing and there were problems. She always tried to be open and always reserved a space within herself for objective criticism. With her strong inner spiritual life she was able to meet even harsh criticism gracefully.

It was in 2010, the year we moved to Timberland, that she was first diagnosed with cancer. We were all looking forward to the move. However, the illness of Mary Joan, affected us all. She accepted her illness with her signature positivity, equanimity and grace. Always, with a touch of humor, she would share her journey with us. She underwent surgery at that time, as her lymph nodes were positive for tumor cells. She also decided to change her diet, had the discipline to follow it and underwent mild chemotherapy. One could think she was quite well, as she would come to school regularly. But a year later, metastasis was detected in the bones of her spine and hips. She continued anthroposophic and allopathic medications and explored other natural remedies and numerous therapies. She discovered that she had kept much pain tucked in her heart and that she had many things to resolve. She was determined to face these.

With a strong conscious effort to work on subsidiary exercises of Rudolf Steiner, and work with the angels, she

decided that she was still strong enough to take on a class in 2012. This was amazing. It was a big class but she had an able young teacher to co-teach with her. In 2014, together with Ms. Joei, she taught the present class 4 for 3 months when their class teacher resigned. That was how much of a fighter she was or to put it more appropriately, a person of *action*. She lived her life as a teacher to the fullest. She was so dedicated. In fact, after the Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference in 2015, she was so inspired by Ben Cherry that she said she was thinking of teaching class 1 again. Her spirit was not to be dampened.

She still wanted to do many things. She wanted to take a trip to South Korea with Brenda. She attended the Extra Lessons course to become an Extra Lessons teacher while she mentored. She planned on giving a workshop in the Asia Waldorf Teachers' Conference (AWTC) in China this year. She also wanted to learn how to play the cello refusing my offer to purchase it until only last month.

But the cancer had spread viciously. When we went to Japan to attend the AWTC in 2015, she was already feeling much discomfort. Right when we arrived back in Manila, she was brought to the hospital. She underwent two surgeries to bypass tumor growth. It was only then that her visits to MWS became sparse. She became weaker and weaker until last week she was brought to the hospital where she took her last breath.

As a human being, Mary Joan was tall, arresting, statuesque and constantly radiating warmth and joy. She always exuded a mood of positivity and was always encouraging. We admired Mary Joan for her perseverance and sincerity to lead a virtuous life. She was even mistakenly called Sister Mary Joan by some of the children. She was a picture of transformation. She gained through her striving, a capacity to guide new teachers as they began their journey but she was always very humble. She generated a real interest and wonder in others because of her striving to transform herself. This was amazing! We always enjoyed her company. But one thing Mary Joan did not like was public speaking. Nevertheless, let her handle a workshop for new teachers and there the fire of St. John would manifest.

There really is such a special bond that ties the two sisters together. Their love for each other was especially evident during the last weeks of Mary Joan. Brenda shared that when Mary Joan was little, she declared that she wanted to be a saint with a little "s." When she reminded Mary Joan, saying, "Joanie, all the saints went through suffering and pain." Mary Joan said, "Oh, then I take it back."

As Brenda watched Mary Joan take her last breath, she marveled at how beautiful Mary Joan was, how like a saint. It is in peace and with much love she left us.

Thank you Mary Joan for your loyalty and devotion to Manila Waldorf School. Your love carried us through our joys and pains. May our love and prayers now aid you on your further journey.

NEWS

Conferences and Courses--2017

January 15 - 20

Glenaeon Class Teacher Intensives

Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, Sydney, NSW

Contact: peggyd@glenaeon.nsw.edu.au

January 16 - 20

Deepening the Work of Early Childhood Teachers: A Steiner / Waldorf Intensive

Samford Valley Steiner School, Brisbane, QLD

Contact: jweir@samfordsteiner.qld.edu.au

January 16 - 20

Caring for the Adolescent:

Intensive Course for High School Teachers

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar, Victoria

<http://steinerseminar.net.au/highschool-intensivecourse>

February 18 - 20

Hawaiian Islands Waldorf Education Conference Nurturing Self—Nurturing Soul

Haleakalā Waldorf School, Kula, Maui, Hawai'i

Contact: www.waldorfmaui.org

March 10 - 12

Learning Support Conference

Samford Valley Steiner School, Brisbane QLD

Contact: jweir@samfordsteiner.qld.edu.au

April 18 - 22

Conversing with Nature:

Phenomenological Engagement with the Living World,

Dr Craig Holdrege and Henrike Holdrege

The Mullumbimby Steiner School, Shearwater, NSW

April 19 - 26

Intensive Training in Bothmer Gymnastics

Dan Freeman

Tarremah Steiner School, Hobart, Tasmania

Contact: john.correy@tarremah.tas.edu.au

April 23 - 28; July 16 - 21; October 8 - 13

Certificate in Rudolf Steiner Education, 2017

Contact: info@taruna.ac.nz , visit www.taruna.ac.nz

April 25 - 28

Conversing with Nature: Phenomenological Engagement with the Living World

Dr Craig Holdrege and Henrike Holdrege

Perth Waldorf School, WA

Contact: konradkorobacz@mac.com

April 28 - 6 May

Asian Waldorf Teacher's Conference

Christof Wiechert

Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Contact: berlin@freunde-waldorf.de

May 12 - 13

Governance, Leadership and Management Conference

Steiner Education Australia

Willunga Waldorf School, SA

[www.steinereducation.edu.au/event_category/
eventsconferences/](http://www.steinereducation.edu.au/event_category/eventsconferences/)

July 3 - 6

SEA National Teachers' Conference

Building on the Foundations:

A Modern Interpretation of the First Teachers' Course

Christof Wiechert

Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, Sydney, NSW

<http://www.steinereducation.edu.au/teachersconference>

October 1 - 5

Early Childhood Conference Towards Freedom and Responsibility

Clara Aerts (IASWECE)

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School, Hastings

Contact: edith.vandermeer@gmail.com

Conferences and Courses—2018

February 16 - 19, 2018

Hawai'i Kolisko Conference

Truth, Beauty and Goodness:

The Future of Education, Healing Arts and Health Care

Honolulu Waldorf School, Hawai'i

Contact: pacificajournal@gmail.com

May, 2018

Chengdu Kolisko Conference

Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Contact: chinawaldorf@126.com

July 1 - 7, 2018

The Dawning Mysteries of the 21st Century

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar, Australia

Contact: peggyd@glenaeon.nsw.edu.au

Some Anthroposophical Newsletters and Websites

Anthroposophy WorldWide

<http://www.goetheanum.org/Newsletter.aw.0.html?&L=1>

Ardent

contact@ardent.co.nz

Being Human

info@anthroposophy.org

Chanticleer

<http://www.berkshiretaconicbranch.org/chanticleer.php>

Journal for Steiner/Waldorf Education

journalwe@gmail.com

New View

http://www.newview.org.uk/new_view.htm

News Network Anthroposophy

www.nna-news.org

Scope

scope@anthroposophy.org.nz

Southern Cross Review

<http://southerncrossreview.org/>

Sphere

sphere@anthroposophy.org.nz

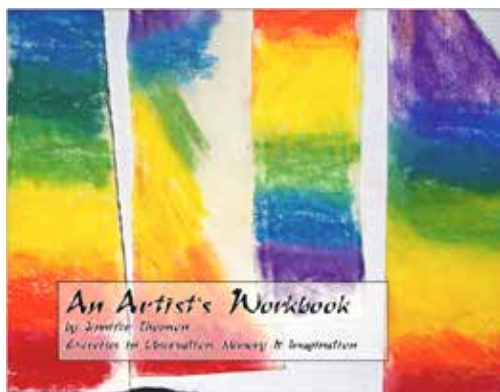
The Sophia Sun

<http://www.anthroposophync.org/sophiaSun.htm>

The Anthroposophical Society in Hawai'i;

new website and older issues of *Pacifica Journal* can be downloaded at: www.anthrohawaii.org

Book Review



An Artist's Workbook: Exercises in Observation, Memory & Imagination

Jennifer Thomson

Self-published, 2016, \$15.

Reviewed by Van James

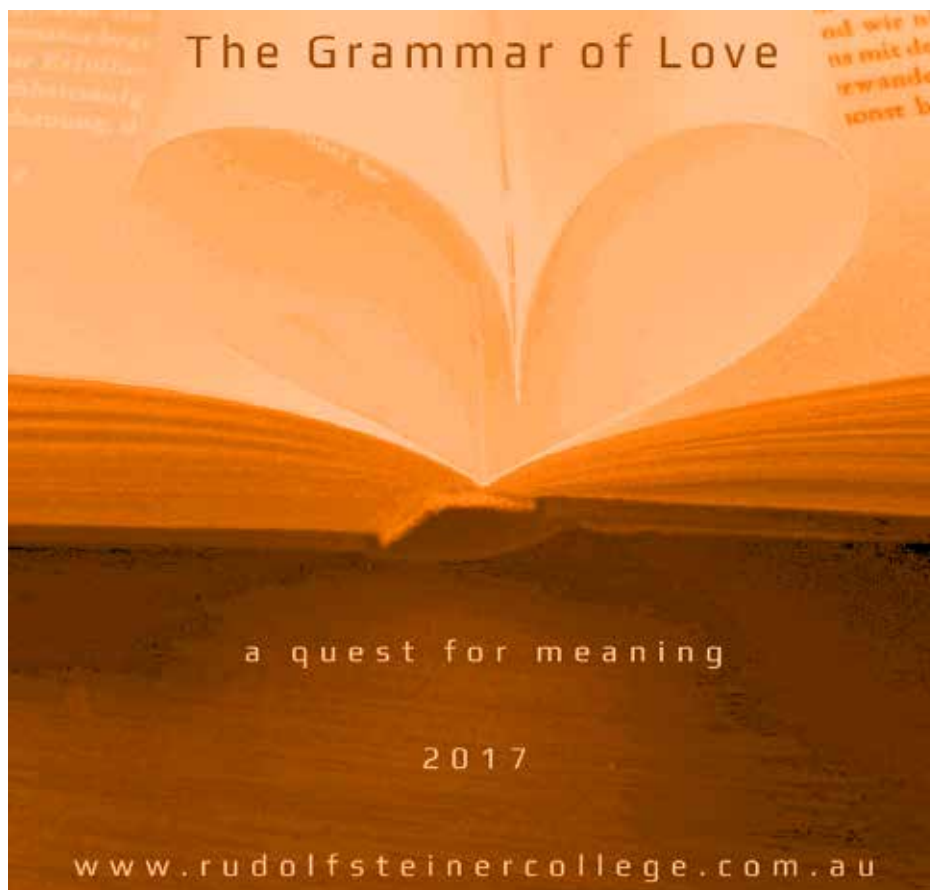
“Art must become the lifeblood of the soul,” so Rudolf Steiner said in lectures published now as *The Younger Generation*. Jennifer Thomson's *An Artist's Workbook: Exercises in Observation, Memory & Imagination* is this artist-teacher's way of helping to realize this statement.

A lifetime of artistic practice, meditative work, teaching and a love of nature have been the canvas and pigments for this modest, yet gem of a workbook. Forty-five painting exercises are included in this glossy, full-color, spiral-bound production. Each exercise has written step-by-step instructions and an illustrated example or two. Many are described in scribbled, notebook style—not always easy to read—which gives the entire booklet a fresh and creative workbook look. The exercises demonstrate the influences of Goethe's color theory, Rudolf Steiner's ideas on art, Beppe Assenza's painting style, and Jennifer Thomson's own lifelong pursuit and personal direction in the visual arts. Poetic quotations and aphorisms from the author, from other artists, and from Rudolf Steiner, are sprinkled throughout the booklet as inspirational vignettes.

Some exercises explore Steiner's idea of Luster and Image Colors. Others deal with line and composition problems. There is even an intriguing Cy Twombly Exercise that utilizes drips from which flower paintings may arise. Watercolor and gouache are the mediums of choice here and freedom of expression is implicit in all of the exercises, there is no threat of doing something incorrectly. The spiral binding allows the pages to lie flat as a reference while one paints and the glossy finish will even protect a little against water spills. Certainly, for both artists and non-artists, there are exercises in this workbook that will catch one's eye as something intriguing to try out!

Jennifer Thomson holds a BFA in painting, has studied painting at the Goetheanum in Switzerland, and taught for many years in her own studio school in upstate New York and more recently in eastern Colorado. Ms. Thomson holds regular art retreats at her studio and she can be reached through her website www.jenniferthomson.net. The self-published workbook can be ordered directly from the artist at: Jennifer Thomson, PO Box 894, Crestone, Co 81131. Sunstudio.thomson1@gmail.com





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Wed 08 February 2017,

jennifer.kornberger@gmail.com or phone Jennifer Kornberger 08 - 93311880

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In Search of **F**rancis of **A**ssisi

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with **Jeff Feldman** and **Sarnia Guiton**

In order to penetrate still more deeply into the question from whence do moral impulses come, we must inquire in the case of such an exceptional personality as Francis of Assisi as to ... what had really happened in his case. We shall have to look more deeply if we want to understand what was active in the soul of this outstanding human being.
—Rudolf Steiner

Francis of **A**ssisi continues to be one of the most loved and revered people in the history of humanity. He was pronounced a saint by the Roman Catholic Church as long ago as 1228 and is regarded as the patron saint of animals and the environment as well as one of the great peacemakers of all time. This impulse was so profound that he sought out a private meeting with a prominent Muslim political and military leader and Sultan, Malik al Kamila, nephew of Saladin, with hopes of bringing about an end to the Fifth Crusade. The current Pope has chosen to name himself after this beloved patron saint of Italy. St. Francis is loved and respected by members of various religious traditions. What is it that continues to be so endearing about this simple mendicant from a small town in Italy? What can we learn from the life of St. Francis that can help us become more fully human?

Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian philosopher and spiritual teacher, held St. Francis in great esteem. During our visit to Francis' home, the Umbrian hillside town of Assisi, we will spend time exploring why he felt the life of Francis was so important to human development while, at the same time, we will examine the works of others who have also had particular insights into the life of Francis.

We will visit various sites where this remarkable human being lived while initiating and developing a life of brotherhood and sisterhood with others who shared his vision. Together, we will get a sense of the love of all creation that Francis and his followers experienced and spread, that continues to reverberate through the human heart and soul more than eight hundred years later.



*'I have been all things unholy.
If God can work through me,
He can work through anyone.'*
—Francis of Assisi

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We will be focusing on the study of form, structure, pattern and ecology, especially of mammals, birds and plants, applying methods developed by Goethe, the great poet and scientist. This will include practicing the skill of observing nature carefully by using clear description, discussion, sketching and other artistic activities, daily reviews, and seeking patterns of relationships among the many natural history observations we make.

We will try to imagine, and even emulate, how Goethe would have experienced nature in East Africa. This trip will be especially valuable to Waldorf teachers and anyone who has an interest in holistic science.



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*The second Goetheanum building in Dornach,
Switzerland. (Photo by Ritman Gurung)*

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*"Tangled the paths that lead to higher truths!
And only those may hope to reach the goal
Who walk in patience through their labyrinths."
--RUDOLF STEINER*