

Gateways

A Newsletter of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America

FALL/WINTER 2009, ISSUE 57

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR by Stephen Spitalny	3
OBSERVING THE CHILD	
Developing the Eyes to See • <i>Nancy Blanning</i>	4
A Contemplative and Reflective Format for Early Childhood Study • <i>Laurie Clark</i>	8
Child Observation • <i>Angela Michel</i>	10
Self-Review for the Teacher • <i>Sally Schweizer</i>	12
PRACTICAL ARTS FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER	
The Importance of Singing • <i>Karen Lonsky</i>	14
Plant Dyeing in the Kindergarten • <i>Linda Grant</i>	16
FESTIVALS	
Saint Martin • <i>Michael Martin</i>	18
AROUND THE WORLD	
Emmi-Pikler-Haus, Part II • <i>Joyce Gallardo</i>	21
Teacher Training in México • <i>Louise deForest</i>	25
Pictures from Norway • <i>Louise deForest</i>	27
BOOK REVIEW	
<i>Saint Martin</i> Reviewed by Nancy Blanning	29
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	30

From the Editor

Stephen Spitalny

My hope as editor is that *Gateways* stimulates thinking in our readers, that the support we offer to Waldorf early childhood professionals inspires them to something more. When readers respond in writing and share thoughts with us, then the editor knows what speaks to you in our newsletter. The last issue of *Gateways* included an article on nutrition in the kindergarten, and it led to being contacted by Anne-Marie Fryer Wiboltt. She writes: *I am a Waldorf class and kindergarten teacher in Wisconsin as well as a WECAN regional representative. I read Gateways with enthusiasm each time it arrives. Thank you for all your work with the magazine. I especially enjoyed your last article, "Nutrition for Young Children." I too serve a full meal (including sauerkraut) in my kindergarten very similar to what you are serving your children. Last year I published a book [entitled] Cooking for the Love of the World: Our Relationship to Our Spirituality Through Cooking . . . In the book I invite the reader to perceive the world as spiritual activity. I 'lift' food out of the material realm of minerals, proteins, fats etc. into the fluidity of life. . . .*

Anne-Marie's wonderful book is full of the experience of food and eating. Of course it has many recipes and much information about growing and cooking techniques, foods and the body's needs, but it also brings to the reader inspiration for appreciating food as gift of nature to the human being throughout the course of the year. Thank you for this artful and wisdom-filled resource! Anne-Marie has a website full of tasty information: www.cookingforthe loveoftheworld.com. Pass the web address on to parents as well.

We have a wonderful issue in store for you (please let me know what you think). We have some news and thoughts from the Waldorf world beyond North America, and practical ideas for activities in kindergarten. A major portion of this

issue focuses on the realm of observing. We have several articles about thoughts and questions on child observation, and being more aware of one's self in the kindergarten. This is the heart of our work. On the one hand, can we truly see the children, both in the moment, as who they are, and get a glimpse of their becoming? And on the other, can we be aware of ourselves, even in the act of observing? Recently published in English, *The Therapeutic Eye: How Rudolf Steiner Observed Children* by Peter Selg (SteinerBooks, 2008) offers insight into this theme as well. Dr. Steiner is quoted in this booklet as saying that the ability to perceive the inner nature and development of children is a precondition for teaching. He also offers suggestions for developing this capacity. This short book has become the study theme for the early childhood faculty at my school this year, and is a valuable resource for all educators.

Many thanks again and again to all who have contributed articles. I hope they will inspire you to write as well. We received more contributions than could fit in this issue, so some articles we received did not find a place in these pages. Apologies from the editor if that is the case, and hopefully you will not be deterred from future contributions.

A reminder: WECAN offers many wonderful books as a resource for working with young children. Visit www.waldorfshop.net/WECAN/wecan_books.htm.

Finally, I want to mention that AWSNA's website has been redesigned and is more user friendly. Here is the link to their new webpage of books and other educational resources: www.awsna.org/catalog.

*Steve Spitalny
Santa Cruz, CA
Michaelmas 2009*

Developing the Eyes to See

Notes from the 2009 East Coast Early Childhood Conference

• Nancy Blanning

The early childhood educator is sometimes a “magician,” a “priestess” or “priest” who sings form into being. This was the opening picture Dr. Gerald Karnow shared with the early childhood educators at the February 2009 East Coast Early Childhood Conference. He described how he had observed kindergarten classes where he saw apparent chaos while the children played. Yet the chaos was highly structured. Within it he could perceive developing organs of interacting groups, mobile flow forms, messes, battles, and intimate relationships developing. When the chaos lost its organization for a moment, the teacher sang a song. The children suddenly moved into a circle and heard a story from which they moved to put the room into perfect order. The children knew just what to do. When he sees this in an early childhood class, it is utter, beautiful magic.

These experiences reminded Dr. Karnow of an image from Rudolf Steiner’s lectures, *Cosmic Memory*. A priestess sings to a group of people. They move in relationship to what she sings, and the song deeply impresses itself into those who listen. Something is structured through the song into these human beings. Recalling the thoughts presented from the previous year, Dr. Karnow re-emphasized that everything the children experience in our classes literally forms their physical being—as well as their social and psychical being—for the rest of life. Our intention and responsibility as educators is to connect what the children have brought from the past with lawful activities to form and guide their future. To do this rightly, we must find ways through our inner development to become priestly.

The guidance to achieve this comes to us through spiritual science, Anthroposophy. In the “teaching bibles,” *Study of Man* (or *The Foundations of Human Experience*) and *Curative Education (Education for Special Needs)*, Rudolf Steiner gives a reality-based understanding of the

human being that embraces our spiritual nature as well as the sense-perceptible form. Deeply studying these works gives us common ground for building Waldorf education communities. Through time, humanity has become more distant from the divine worlds. Anthroposophy offers us means to re-establish that connection and to work for redemption of the human being from the materialistic picture that dominates today. This requires conscious study and disciplined will to grasp these ideas and bring them into actual practice. This can give us enormous enthusiasm in perceiving the priestly task of the early childhood educator. Yet, cautioned Dr. Karnow, enthusiasm must be filled with real content. Without content, things become sentimental. The children do not need sentimental educators but ones grounded in spiritual-scientific knowledge.

Our understanding has to be grounded in realizing that the little child is entirely a sense organ standing in a devotional mood to what surrounds him. All experiences are taken in, “eaten,” indiscriminately. What the child takes in is consumed and works to structure the body. Not just the physical environment is consumed but also the movement, speech, and inner life of the teacher. Our attitudes and moods, as well as actions, change the child’s breathing, circulation, and metabolic functions, the child’s whole physiology. We wish to be mediators and creative priests who surround the children with a world worthy of imitation supporting healthy development. Consequently, we must observe what is happening within our own souls.

We must also develop eyes to truly *see* the children. Seeing involves more than the common idea that the human eye is like a camera that creates a visual image. Seeing also involves moving and touching with invisible hands and arms that reach out and touch the world through our gaze. This permits us to identify with and become

one with what we are seeing. The children we direct our interest and attention toward want to be perceived and acknowledged as the true spiritual beings they are. In our seeing, we open and empty ourselves to experience the child as though we were that other human being. This is the kind of communication we strive for. Through our knowledge of child development, we have to provide an environment that draws the children into this relationship with us.

Dr. Karnow now returned to expanding and refining the picture of the young child up to the change of teeth. Rudolf Steiner emphasized repeatedly that etheric forces in the child are dedicated to physical growth rather than thinking consciousness up to the change of teeth. The same etheric forces, through which the child grows, are liberated at the change of teeth to be available for thinking. (See Steiner and Wegman, *Fundamentals of Therapy*, Chapter One.) The ability to intentionally direct attention and consciousness is not at the child's disposal before this point. Rather, the body grows and changes and consciousness emerges in three stages from birth to about age seven (see Lievegoed and Schoorel for further description of these phases). Consciousness and attention are still body-bound in young children, as is their behavior. We must have an accurate picture of how development unfolds in order to observe what is typical, healthy development in a child and what is not.

Rudolf Steiner divided human development into seven-year periods—birth to seven years, seven to fourteen years, fourteen to twenty-one—and then each of these periods is subdivided into three parts. Each state results in the development and birthing of a particular aspect of the human being. The time we are essentially concerned with is birth-to-seven and its three divisions. Within these one-third divisions, certain aspects will lawfully arise if the child is developing in a healthy way. (These stages were described in detail in the Fall/Winter 2008 issue of *Gateways* in “Living and Working with So-Called Difficult Children,” part 2.) If we know the nature of each of these segments, we will know what is appropriate to ask of the child at each stage. If we demand activities too early, we can cause etheric damage.

We can see how the child is being affected by

the environment through watching how the child responds to what we do. If we see that certain organic, physiological events have not happened, we cannot demand that the child perform intellectual activities without damaging the child's physical body. This is the kind of *seeing* that we are striving to develop within ourselves.

Development in the first seven years proceeds from the head downward through the nerve-sense system. In these years we see growth and changes in the physical body accompanied by changes and development in the child's consciousness. The child “communicates” its development to us through changes in body and behavior rather than in words or intentionally directed deeds. In understanding the right kind of communication at these stages, we can come to judgment of how development is progressing.

Dr. Karnow went on to characterize the changes in consciousness and awareness that correspond with these one-third segments. A baby in arms, for example, is caught in the human warmth relationship with the mother, not with external objects or people. From birth until this time, the child is intimately bound to the organization of the mother and needs to be nourished in her own etheric formation through this connection. Everything of the body is round and “head.” As consciousness gradually emerges during the first seven years, it shows itself as a purely reflective or mirroring consciousness. At about two years and four months, the etheric formative forces are freed from the head. Physically the head features are becoming more defined and pronounced. In behavior, this change is also marked by the child completely mirroring its environment through imitation. This stage marks the beginning of cognitive intelligence.

The middle period from two and four months through about four years and eight months begins relationship formation. Forces are freed that permit relationship to develop with others besides just the mother. Social development begins. This is the sphere of feeling life, demonstrated physically through the development of the rhythmic system. The head form now recedes and we see a change in the trunk through separation of the belly from the chest. Imitation here is based on relationship, and social and emotional intelligence begins

development during this phase.

In the last stage the limbs lengthen. Willing aspects of the body are freed from the metabolic-limb system and are available for doing things. The child physically becomes long and dangly. The child moves from the rounded aspect of the first third to a more linear form. Play becomes much more goal directed. Objects do not matter so much for what they are themselves but for what they can be made into. This can be called limb and skills intelligence.

Children will go in the environment to what they need. It is our responsibility to provide the right environment which allows and supports these developmental stages to be explored. Observing where and how the children interact with the environment and play helps us read the developmental stage of the child.

Uniting these observations with the other things we notice brings us to child study. In child study, we never want to judge. We do child study only to deepen our insight into knowing what to do that is helpful for the child. Treatment, for the doctor, comes out of understanding the problem; inherent in the diagnosis lies the remedy and treatment. This is true for the educator as well. We strive to understand the dynamics of the child—physical development and outer form, outer movement, inner soul movement, social behavior, and so on—so we can understand and help.

One dynamic we can use in our observation for child study is between round and linear. The nerve-senses system is linear and deadened. Through the nature of the nerves, we are able to have consciousness. Children with very awake consciousness are often thin and pale, and vice versa. The nerve-sense system predominates and intellectual precocity will probably be seen. Dr. Karnow described a child of this nature who was quiet and observing, not interacting. She was having difficulty placing herself into relationship with the world. In its furthest extreme, this inclination leans toward autism.

On the opposite side is the metabolic-limb system, the blood pole. A child Dr. Karnow described here was one who was short, compact, and ruddy, and also very active and prone to bumping. Everything was a little overdone in a “hysterical” reaching out to others. Here there

is excessive working of the blood so behavior is uncontained.

In both of these cases, if the inclinations described proceed into the future, we can anticipate problems for the child. How can we bring nerve activity to cool the blood? We bring conceptual activity and love. How do we bring life to a dead nerve? We bring blood activity to balance the excessive nerve dominance through enthusiasm and love. The particulars of how to do this are ours to discern. Our profound interest in the child will lead to the details of what to do with these two gestures of cooling and warming. When we remind ourselves that everything we do as educators affects the physiology of the child, we can know that what we offer can truly provide healing to such out-of-balance inclinations.

The blood and nerve poles are brought into connection through our breathing and feeling life. To learn how to activate the breathing needs to be part of our training. Educators become soul artists in learning how to appropriately speed up or slow down the child’s breathing. Through doing this, Rudolf Steiner was literally able to change the physical body of his student, Otto Specht. At the beginning of his talks, Dr. Karnow gave the picture of the kindergarten class during free play. When the children engaged in “chaotic” play and then found the way to order—in this case through the priestly singing—their breathing changed. At first the room felt like “a stable” and then it felt like “a church.” Increasing breathing emphasizes the blood pole and slowing it down leads to wakefulness and consciousness, the nerve pole. We are in control of this and can use this insight to the children’s benefit.

Dr. Karnow concluded by saying that we need to carry in ourselves the following statement from *Fundamentals of Therapy* in our blood and our hearts:

These forces functioning in the ether body are active at the beginning of the human being’s life on earth—most distinctly during the embryonal period—as the forces of formation and growth. During the course of earthly life a portion of these forces emancipates itself from this occupation with formation and growth and becomes forces of thinking, just those forces

which, for the ordinary consciousness bring forth the shadowlike world of thoughts.

It is of the utmost importance to know that the human being's ordinary forces of thinking are refined form and growth forces. A spiritual element reveals itself in the forming and growing of the human organization. And this spiritual element then appears during the course of later life as the spiritual power of thought.

This power of thought is only one part of the human capacity for form and growth that weaves in the etheric. The other part remains true to the purpose it fulfilled in the beginning of the human being's life. Only because the human being continues to evolve even when his form and his growth are advanced, that is, when they are to a certain degree completed, does the etheric spiritual force, which lives and works in the organism, appear in later life as the power of thought (Steiner and Wegman, Chapter One).

What we see in children's behavior arises out of the form of the body. To understand behavior, we have to look at the body, not with outer eyes, but stopping midway to read its form. We learn to know that there is meaning in every form. Our attentive observation will lead to understanding the dynamics at play within the child. The soul and spirit create the body and then emerge out of it step-by-step. The life forces, which formed the body, offer themselves first. Only when these forces do emerge, allowing consciousness, can we do thinking activities with the child.

Dr. Karnow urged us to work together and share our observations. Then we will develop "seeing" reality with multiple dimensions. There

is the child's outer form with physical dimensions. There is also the inner form with soul dimensions, as well as the psychological dimensions of thinking, feeling, and willing. It is necessary to also perceive the spiritual dimension. How is the child striving to incarnate? To learn this, we must truly see the child in these multi-dimensional ways to dialogue with his or her being.

References

- Lievegoed, Bernard. *Phases of Childhood*. Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2005.
- Steiner, Rudolf. *Cosmic Memory*. Blauvelt, NY: Garber Communications, 1987.
- Steiner, Rudolf and Ita Wegman. *Fundamentals of Therapy*. Spring Valley, NY: Mercury Press, 1999.
- Schoorel, Edmund. *The First Seven Years: A Physiology of Childhood*. Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 2004.

Nancy Blanning *has been teaching in Waldorf Early Childhood for over 25 years. She has worked the last nine years as the therapeutic support teacher at the Denver Waldorf School. She is recently completing a semester back in the kindergarten full-time to "recalibrate" herself and have fresh experience of the children. This has only increased her dedication to protecting children's right to a less complicated, more health-providing early childhood. She is also a teacher trainer, mentor, and remedial consultant to other Waldorf schools, as well as a WECAN board member.*

A Contemplative and Reflective Format for Early Childhood Study

• Laurie Clark

*It will indeed come to be for us a necessity
That we observe the children day by day
And also exercise in ourselves day by day
Control of our own thought and feelings.
Every child has a subtle perception
Of whether the person looking after him*
Or teaching him is inwardly equipped in her soul.
The child's well-being depends to a great extent
On what is growing and developing in the inner soul
Of the person in charge.
Develop your keenness of observation;
Nurture the powers of your inner Being;
Develop vitality of thinking;
Depth of feeling, strength of willing.*
—Herbert Hahn

*Replace the words “him” and “her” with “her” and “his” as appropriate.

This verse is an amazing one to contemplate when beginning to look into the world of child study. It is so very interesting that Herbert Hahn would emphasize that the child’s well being depends upon the inner striving of the teacher. It is true that when we try to understand and contemplate the child, we are immediately faced with the question of whether we can find the mood of soul that is needed so that genuine perceptions can be born in us and give us the possibility to accompany the child on his or her journey—the child who is, as Henning Kohler so eloquently states, “the guest looking for the way.”

What do we need to overcome in ourselves in order to come closer to the child? How can we develop the selflessness that is necessary to begin to recognize the original intentions of the child? Original intentions have to do with the essence of the will in each individual child and the resolve to incarnate and integrate the heavenly into the earthly with the help of higher powers. The original intentions that we all carry shine above

each one of us as a star guiding us on our way. The Three Kings followed the most radiant star to find the Christmas child and bring their sacramental offerings. Rudolf Steiner stated in a lecture on the three Magi, “To be led by a star means nothing else than to see the soul itself as a star.” How can we find in ourselves the sacramental reflection in order to be led towards recognition of the child’s star? What gifts will we have to offer?

Some of the first questions that the teacher may ask herself upon meeting a child are “Who are you? What do you bring? How can I be of service to you?” This is the initial moment when a different type of hearing is required. A non-judgmental objectivity is required, and an offering of attention with reverence needs to open in the heart of the teacher. All naming and psychologizing of symptoms and behaviors must be laid aside in the mind and soul of the teacher so that the inspiration waiting to be heard behind all of this can be recognized. An awakening capacity of pure listening is planted as a seed in the heart of the educator. When there is utter attention and deep interest from the teacher, the possibility that leads towards the sacred door is opened into the destiny of the other. This is done as if trying to listen to what the angel of the child could be revealing to us at this initial, profound moment.

After this initial gesture of listening has taken place, then a picturing of the child can be developed. Often the children who come to us have obstacles on their life path and are calling to the teacher for their unconditional help. Observing a child and sharing these studies in a group process with those who also hold concern and interest can weave together a picture. When sharing the picture of the child with a group of teachers who are willing to work in this way we may be able to create conversations that may lead to an opening that leads to a healing response. A complete physical description of the child is

a helpful place to begin. Often when observing a child in this way details are noticed that serve our understanding of the child. In Lecture Ten of *Education for Special Needs*, Rudolf Steiner indicates that through the intensive study of the physical configuration of the body, characteristics of soul are revealed. The importance of taking deep interest in the physical description of the child with an absolute “devotion to little things” is enthusiastically emphasized by Steiner. He says, “We must not omit to cultivate this interest in very little things. The tip of the ear, the paring of a finger nail, a single human hair should be every bit as interesting to us as Saturn, Sun and Moon.” Each detail of the child is an important aspect in the unfolding of the study. Can we observe in such a way that after we watch the child move, we can imitate the movement, feel it in our own body, and begin to sense and experience what it feels like to be that child? Looking from the outside and observing the child, and then bringing what is seen into one’s own experience, may guide us to an insightful understanding and lead toward therapeutic steps. Paying special attention to the behaviors that occur at particular times, to play, transitions, speech, and social relationships, reveals various aspects that help to gain a wider perspective.

If the teacher is able to have a conversation with the parents, then there is more information that can add to a comprehensive view of the child. It is always interesting to know as much as possible about the sleeping and waking life of the child. These two thresholds hold many mysteries and give hints about the constitution of the child. Is the child a restless and a light sleeper, or does she sleep so soundly that she is hard to waken? Is she chirping like a little bird and happy in the morning ready for breakfast upon waking, or edgy, nervous, and unable to eat until later? The kind of sleep a child has or does not have deeply affects how her day is lived out. Nutrition is also a key factor in the behavior and energy of the child and can be of significant importance. Another area of observation that is important to pay close attention to is the four foundational senses. The realm of the senses is too comprehensive to explore in this brief article but is well worth the effort to gain a basic understanding

in consideration of the child. The pregnancy and birth as well as the developmental milestones in the child’s life are also important parts of the study to consider.

After this kind of study and observation in one session of child study, it is advisable to continue with a second session in a few days or a week at the most. The picture can then be taken into our sleep life and be woven into a deeper transformed understanding. “Sleep is the little brother of death,” it is said, and if we can bring our thoughts of the child into sleep with us into the spiritual world, asking for inspiration from the child’s angel on behalf of the child, we again are striving towards another kind of hearing. To create a “hallowed” space in ourselves, a sort of inner manger where the birth of the child’s being can find the way to us, creates a kind of reversal in the inner life of the teacher. The teacher can let go of the information that has been gathered about the child, stop thinking about it, and open toward the echo that lives out of the world of sleep. As described in the first step, there is a gesture from the teacher of attentive listening upon meeting the child, with an awareness and hope that the angel of the child may reveal a picture as a seed planted. Impressions and inspirations that arise out of sleep then may be a flowering of this seed that can be received as a kind of heart offering laid out for the child.

The second session can begin with sharing impressions and imaginations of the child that came out of this work in sleep life. Then the biography and developmental milestones of the child can be studied. The reason the biographical information is not shared before this time is that it sometimes tends to color the picture of the child so strongly in our minds that it may affect the open-mindedness needed during the descriptive study and the sleep work. It may cause us to jump to conclusions too soon before receiving and penetrating our observations. Assessments or screenings that have been done can be presented along with the child’s drawings. Then the many threads that have been gathered are woven together into a tapestry that may have the possibility of leading the teacher to what Henning Kohler calls true “inner accompaniment.”

Suggestions and ideas are discussed, but it is

realized that there are no definite solutions. It remains a continual process as the teacher stands by the child in a revived and renewed approach. Sometimes, there are no suggestions or ideas, but that is not the determining factor to success in a child study of this kind. Perhaps success lies in the inner effort of those involved in the study to stretch their own being to make room to really try to know the child, and out of this a new understanding can arise.

Perhaps the purpose of the child study is to offer unconditional love to the child. Through our own endeavor to change and transform ourselves and our capacities, the “star” of the child begins to shine inside of us. It is through this activity of grace that we gaze back at the child with “different” eyes that allow the child the mobility and flexibility to move and change.

Child Observation

• Angela Michel

The Teacher’s Daily Prayer

Loving father, please help me to completely obliterate myself as far as personal ambitions are concerned so that Christ can make true in me the Pauline words ‘Not I but the Christ in me’ so that the Holy Spirit may reign in me. This is the true trinity.

—Rudolf Steiner

Make me empty of noise, fear, prejudice and any form of projection that obscures my seeing what there really is. Do not allow me to imprint my interpretation and judgment on to the imagination of the child before me. Let me stand in the right place, not too close to see only a partial picture, not within the magnetic ring of reaction, not too far to see clearly and with focus and not so far as to wash over the truth. Let me stand where I can clearly see the whole child. Let me be selfless.

Now, please fill me with light to see by, let me stand under your light and understand, fill me with the love that seeks nothing for itself and allows the one it looks at to be entirely free, so that the Holy Spirit may truly reign in the teacher.

Now, having found the right place to look

References

Köhler, Henning. *Difficult Children: There is No Such Thing*. Fair Oaks, CA: AWSNA, 2003.

Steiner, Rudolf. *Education for Special Needs: The Curative Education Course*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1998.

_____. “On the Three Magi,” in *The Festivals and their Meaning*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1981.

Laurie Clark has been a Waldorf kindergarten teacher for over 25 years and currently works at the Denver Waldorf School. She is also a conference presenter, a teacher trainer, and a mentor. Recently she coauthored a book with Nancy Blanning entitled *Movement Journeys* and *Circle Adventures*.

from, having been granted the light of love to see, to understand, let me trust in your guidance to accompany the one I look at responsibly and with the inspiration to give the right sustenance.

You all have been given guidelines towards child observation. For a matter of months now, you have shared study sessions through which you may now hold a view of the child as the picture of an unfolding process, the process of a singular unique spirit, a spiritual being taking hold of its earthly body. This describes a one-time, never-to-be repeated meeting and mingling of the materials of the earth with the most particular needs of the supernatural world. If you turn your gaze on the being of a child, you therefore gaze upon someone who is entirely unique. Among all the myriads of cosmic expressions of “being,” the child before you is the only one of its kind. To become conscious of this commands respect in the very act of looking, of beholding.

So, see the child’s body as the living and working of the spirit into the world. Then it matters, comes to matter, matters greatly whether the head is small or large, rounded or angular; whether the hair lies soft and shining, or heavily

upon the shoulder; or in wisps too fine to hang; or bounces in tight curls—springy, unruly, like wire, a live wire.

The slight tremor that lives in the limbs of a small child with translucent skin, skin which lets light shine through, might describe an intensity of the incarnating process which taxes the earthly body. In the fleshy podginess of another child you may see the cushioning that spirit may need to soften the impact of coming into a life of gravity and noise.

Then, look at the windows of the senses. How formed and developed are the eyes, how bright and shining, or how dreamy and distant? Do they look out or inward? Are they still as deep pools or has something disturbed the reflection into a rapidly moving ripple? Are the ears large and hungry for hearing, generous and open, or are they small ears curled in fetal positions, protective against too much aural stimulus? What of the hands? Are they strong and dry, ready to take hold of this life and to shape it, or are they slender and fingery, more given to softly stroking, caressing, carefully fine-tuning, refining? Are they damp and reluctant, or round, comfortable and small; capable, or clumsy? Are the feet ready to carry? Are they large and strong or small and slender? Do they who bear the impact of incarnation make their mark with a will to do so—preparing, ready to receive the ego onto the surface of this earth—or are they flighty, hollow? Do they only partly meet the ground on tiptoes or along the sides?

How then does this child move, enter a room? How does he hold himself when he stands still? Are the shoulders curving forward, shell-forming, protecting the heart? Does the jaw strut forward like an invitation to meet the world “on the chin”? Do the eyes look openly forward into the space the child walks into, or down with the shield of caution? Does he walk or does he skip, or run, or rush, or slouch, or heavily plod, or sidle, or . . . There are so many different gestures that show, in the small moment, the big gesture of how this spirit comes into this earthly life.

For a moment also listen with your inner ear to the echo of the child’s laughter, or hear her saying her birthday verse, or your name. Where does the voice come from? Does it comfortably cradle in the crib of the heart, or is it high pitched,

pressured like the high whining of a fly, trapped in the cobweb? In the echo of the voice you can find the telltales of the anxieties or confidence of her soul. Also, notice whether the tongue can, within the cavities of the mouth, form and shape and modulate every consonant, or whether there is a lisp, a non-containment of the tongue behind the teeth—which clearly define the inside and the outside of “me.” Are his lips able to press the seal “b” and “p” with the right pressure upon his breath? Can they form the perfect opening for the sound of the colorful spectrum of all the vowels? In listening to what you can hear, you may sense the degree of ensoulment of this child, who is spirit growing into a human body.

How then does she behave in the social context of the class? Does she agitate or soothe? Does she clang together with another child, like the sharp stones in watery torrents, smoothing off each other’s rough edges to become perfect spheres? Does he gravitate toward commotion and noise or does he like his own company? Does he say what pleases others, or initiate themes that become interesting to others? Or does he bore them? Does her presence have a calming effect; does she have to be at the center of all focus and attention or is she content to be on the side? Does he organize himself efficiently to be “independent,” or does he need many reminders and assistance from his peers? Or is he the one who will freely give help; does he give it where it is needed, quietly and with respect, or does he do things for those who would grow by doing it themselves? Does the child, in her way of working, practice herself into a state of ever more fluid capability, or does she need pushing and cajoling into reaching to the full stretch of her abilities? Can you observe how well a child knows the teachers’ blind spots and is able to manipulate or exploit them into having the work done for him?

There are many more levels and areas which could enrich a true observation of the child. I have not spoken of co-ordination or spatial orientation. I have not mentioned balance and rhythm. I have not looked at work presentation, and, above all, I have not looked at temperament. I have merely attempted to give a taste of the quality of your own attention with which you may best try to observe a child. It is indeed *observation*, holding

before your eye that which is, which we are obliged to attempt, not judgment. We must not label, categorize, evaluate, and thus tempt the privilege of our position. The child must remain free—of us, of our prejudice and its snares.

Recently, a colleague spoke to me of her self-teaching program towards better drawing, figure drawing in particular. She delighted in discovering “looking” techniques, which enabled her to see the context in which features were set which she might be attempting to draw. She was thus not only staring at the shape and size of a face and its features but at the shapes made by the spaces in-between. Looking at the spaces in-between is, for me, a lovely key with which to also look with your inner eye, in the reflection of the mirror of your daytime consciousness, and with which to expand your seeing abilities: you might almost say to that which you can see “out of the corner of your eye.”

We began with a respectful acknowledgement of the uniqueness of each human being. In the same way, the constellation of your perceptive abilities is unique. But abilities yearn to be

practiced, to be used, to be expanded. May I recommend you practice by playing games of observation. Observe and describe someone you all know, but guess the person. Concentrate on gesture or movement, on colors, or voice.

Steiner gave another guiding saying to working teachers, a kind of shared mantra. Again it is threefold like the trinity:

*Imbue thyself with the power of imagination,
Have courage for the truth,
Sharpen thy feeling for responsibility of soul.*

Angela Michel has worked in the York Steiner School in England since 1983, initially, and for many years as a German teacher, learning about Waldorf education “on the job,” and later, after her training, as a class teacher. She has taken one class all the way through from grades one to eight, and is currently back at the school after a few years out, teaching sixth grade. (Angela is also an inspiring singing teacher! —Ed.)

Self-Review for the Teacher

• Sally Schweizer

Sally writes, “Some years ago I began to write down questions I had asked myself regarding my work with children and the adults surrounding them; it made it easier not to forget things, as I wanted to feel I was doing the best I could and improve where I knew I was not. Since having the joyful, rewarding and challenging task of being an early childhood advisor for the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, I have extended them and occasionally offered them to a colleague. Now I have been asked to pass on these contemplations to Kindling [our sister publication in the UK].”

The being of the teacher is more important than the doing. —Rudolf Steiner

The teacher’s example is vital: who we are is soaked up by the child.

Am I aware of my own being as a moral example, of my movements, my inner gesture, my thoughts, my speech, and how and what I said? Do I constantly seek to renew my work?

Do I love all the children unconditionally? Am I open to all of them equally, to their strivings and difficulties? Do I have an imagination of their higher being, in their presence as well as in my meditation? Do I remind myself of their tender sense-being? Am I kind and joyful, understanding and attentive to the children’s needs? Do I pay enough attention to care and detail in my work with the children? Have I noticed individual children enough, especially the quiet ones?

Was I appreciative of the helpers, children, parents, and my colleagues? Did we make the visitor feel welcome and cared for? Did I allow my helpers, colleagues, and parents to make suggestions and help me, and even to know

better? Did I happily ask them for help? Did I accept criticism with humility and use it to expand my thinking? Was there a moment to help parents in a friendly and humorous way not to spoil their children—for example not to dress them or carry their things?

What conscious opportunity for imitation did I offer? Did I remember that the children copy *everything*? When did I use gesture rather than my voice? Was there a dreamy mood of the fifth in the room? Were there fun, joy and sparkle in my kindergarten? Was there inner warmth? Was I too serious or whispering unnecessarily, or too noisy or talkative? Did I listen to the mood in the room or was I too busy? Did I *have* to be so busy? Am I trying to do too much? Was one of the adults sitting as a quiet, constant pole?

Was I aware enough of the children's dream consciousness and did I give enough opportunity for development of the will? Was I actually authoritative and instructive on occasion? Did the children come out of freedom to what we did, out of free flow, of their own free will? Did I engage them enough in preparing and *ending* every activity: break, painting, tidy up time, drawing, and leaving the cloakroom tidy, thereby bringing everything to a conclusion, developing conscientiousness, responsibility and other aspects of the will? Were they active enough or did they have to be needlessly passive? Did the children have to sit in silence or wait unreasonably? Did I expect too much or too little of them? Did I give enough boundaries, firmness, and consequences? Did I use playful ways and humor? Was there enough fun and activity for the boys, especially the older ones—rough and tumble/workbench/big building/ropes? Was there enough for the older children: errands, proper responsibility, and special tasks? How was my time-keeping? Did the morning flow from one

activity to another with rhythm and without breaks or authority?

Is my room beautiful? Are the plants watered and do the flowers have fresh water? Are shelves, lampshades and cupboards clean? Are cupboards, shelves and drawers tidy and attractive? Have I checked that cushions, veils, dolls and puppets are clean and mended? Is there no damaged furniture, and are other playthings in order: no knots in ropes, broken pinecones or play stands? Are the crayons clean and block crayons still as blocks? Are outside playthings and tools put away, clean, mended, and tidy? Did I attend to the children's clothing indoors and out (warmth, suitability, logos, slippers)? Have I attended to health and safety aspects: attendance register/gates/matches/candles? What about toilet time, including checking and if necessary properly cleaning between children? Hand-washing before food preparation by both children and adults? Rinsing of washing up? What else can I do to enhance the children's habit life?

Have I found time for myself and practiced some artistic activity every day?

The Three "R"s: Reverence for each other, Reverence for ourselves, Reverence for the environment. Do I practice these in myself, and with others?

I hope some of these questions may be useful to others in their vital, joyful, rewarding and challenging task of being there for the young child.

Sally Schweizer *has worked for nearly 40 years as an educator of children and adults in England. She is the author of* Well, I Wonder: Childhood in the Modern World *and* Under the Sky: Playing, Working and Enjoying Adventures in the Open Air *(both published by Rudolf Steiner Press).*

The Importance of Singing

• Karen Lonsky

I have often found myself involved in a classroom activity wishing I knew a song to sing while grinding grain, or sewing, for example, that would gather the children to the task at hand. I would often improvise a simple song, but I wished for a resource where this type of songs could be gathered. I felt there must be other teachers who had the same thought, so I wrote *A Day Full Of Song* as my final project while in training at Sunbridge College three years ago. It is a book of songs in the mood of the fifth pertaining to work in the kindergarten and at home. There are songs for shoveling, raking, hammering, grinding, baking, washing, folding, and so on.

In earlier times, people sang to accompany their work much more than people do today. Not only can it help to pass the time while one works at the multitude of daily tasks which could, if one let them, become tedious and dull, but I believe there are also other benefits to singing while we work. It can definitely help one to bring more joy to any activity, and it may even facilitate the actual physical movements of the body. Moving in a rhythm while working is more efficient, and you may even get more done!

For young children in today's classroom who may not see real work of this sort being done at home, song is a way to gather them into the activity and is a bridge to the movement that is required. For example, during free play one day, several children began building a house with large blocks. After a short time the house was knocked down and the play began to deteriorate. One child returned to the pile with a stick and began to hammer one block to the next. I began singing a song while sitting in my rocking chair:

*The carpenter hammers nails all day long
to make a house that is sturdy and strong....*

The other children were again drawn to the play

and began to help the carpenter. When I stopped singing, one little girl said, "Keep singing. We're still working!"

In my parent/child classes I find that having work songs can gently bring the parents back to quiet observation when they start chitchatting a bit too much while we are baking or sewing. It has become clear to me that singing does not only focus one's attention on the task at hand, but it can also create form and movement, both within the body and within the physical space of the classroom.

When I began thinking this way, my focus widened and I became more interested in sound itself and how it affects the body and the physical experience of the room itself. How can I use sound to create a healthy space for the children? Could sound be just as harmful as beneficial?

I began to think back to when I first began to ponder these questions. I remembered walking down a residential street in New Jersey as a young mother. I was 22 years old, walking with my then three-year-old daughter. We were enjoying a sunny summer day when all of a sudden there was an angry exclamation from a house across the street. I felt as if I had been hit in the chest by an invisible, dark fist. In essence, I think I was. The form created by that sound shot out with such speed and strength, I felt it as a solid blow. It was a horrible feeling, one I have never forgotten. I actually felt a dark presence in the sound and was so affected by it that I still recall it clearly 26 years later. The other thing that shocked me about that sound was that I believe it was made by a child. This experience had a great impact on me. It was physical evidence for me that sound has form. This all began years before I was to find Waldorf Education and other people who were interested in these sorts of things.

More recently, I was waiting in line to be let into the room where a puppet show would be

performed at a Waldorf school. The hall was full of people and quite noisy. I was facing forward, waiting for the door to open, and several times I heard a child behind me screaming very loudly. I thought at first that the child was merely misbehaving and thought to myself, "Why aren't parents keeping her in line?" After one more yell, I turned around to see a small child of about five standing with her hands over her ears, with a distressed look on her face. Her mother finally stopped chatting and looked down at the child to ask her what was wrong. The little girl said, "The noise!" She was being physically bombarded by the noise of many people chatting in the hallway, and it was painful. I felt horrible that I hadn't recognized her pain earlier, for I knew what it felt like.

It is these kinds of experiences that keep pointing out to me a path of exploration. I believe sound has form and that one can work with these forms to balance and heal the environment, the body, and the soul. Many of us have children in our classrooms today who are in need of healing sound and who need protection from

harmful sound. I feel it is our task as Waldorf early childhood teachers to strive to bring healthy sound into our kindergartens. This is not to say that we should fill our classrooms with music all day long, but rather that we should aim to bring quality sound only into our environment.

Were we to see with our physical eyes the forms created by music in the mood of the fifth, I think we would see rounded, flowering forms with distinct and harmonious patterns. We are creating three-dimensional architectural forms around us, and we can become aware of these forms with our senses as we begin to work more closely with them. This is why it is so important that we sing the tones purely and on pitch and work out of the mood of the fifth in our classrooms.

We are building a true sound environment for the children to live and play in—we should pay attention to it! Conversely, by singing out of tune or changing the key during a song we are, in fact, creating weak and inconsistent forms around the children and within the room. In the same way that it is important to surround the children with an ordered and beautiful environment, it is just as

Each Little Grain Karen Lonsky

Each lit-tle grain we grind to-day is full of sun and
 wind and rain, So when we grind our flour fine and
 with it make our bread, we fill our-selves with
 light and rain from our toes up to our head.

important to surround them with an ordered and beautiful sound environment. Rudolf Steiner said, “The right introduction into the musical element is fundamental to a human being’s overcoming all hindrances that impede a sound and courage-filled development of the will in later life.” This is why it is so important for teachers to work on our singing.

Not all teachers are natural singers, but it is our responsibility as Waldorf educators to work with the intention of singing as clearly and as in tune as possible. This is a big task for some, and I applaud the efforts of those who recognize that singing may be a shortcoming of theirs and who work on improving their abilities. It can be done. In my training there were several teachers for whom singing was a challenge and who took it upon themselves to work on their singing outside of school with the help of a voice teacher, and their improvements were amazing. I believe that everyone can sing and that singing begins with listening. Training our ear to hear the tones correctly is the beginning of being able to reproduce them. Just as we incorporate the gentle,

quiet tones of the lyre to help the children learn to listen and hear pure tones, so too should we do the same: to learn to listen with that same ear, which transforms the tone in the air into our inner being.

We can begin to work with sound in our own classrooms with the intention of creating a space that is wholesome and health giving. It is like giving the children a bath, bathing them in the warmth and softness of pure tones everyday while they are at school. Giving them the gift of a human voice singing music in pure and gentle tones can have a healing effect on the children, and in turn this affects the whole world.

Karen Lonsky has been working in the Waldorf kindergarten for almost 23 years. She has a 29-year-old daughter and is expecting her first grandchild in February. She and her husband Joe are also professional musicians who have a nine-piece rhythm-and-blues band. Her book *A Day Full of Song: Work Songs from a Waldorf Kindergarten*, will be available from WECAN in November, 2009.

Plant Dyeing in the Kindergarten

• Linda Grant

Sitting by an outdoor fire on a grey November day, five pots of colored fleece simmering and with a group of kindergarten children gathered close around me, I felt warmed through. I felt warmed by the fire’s radiant heat and the children’s close attention to all I was doing. The Life Process of Warming was present.

The small wood fire burning out-of-doors is archetypal, as one small child reminded me: “This fire is ancient.” Working with the elemental forces of fire and water, and with the alchemy which happens when these are combined with plant materials and sheep fleece, is a deeply warming and enlivening experience. The feeling that lingered after a morning spent dyeing fleece on an outdoor fire was of inner calm, mellow warmth,

and clear perception. I became aware of a deep and even rhythm in my breath. There was a feeling of physical strength and of being fully present.

What forces are at work here? The plant materials are living substances: leaves, berries or bark, holding the pigments that are expressions of the plant’s etheric force. It is the living substance that yields the color—decayed plants produce no pigment. The quality of water used is important too. Fresh soft water produces the best colors, and a flowing stream, well-water, or clean rainwater will have a stronger life force than chlorinated tap water. The kindling and logs gathered, sawn, and dried are transformed through fire into heat and ash. Choosing firewood from the log-pile on a daily basis brought me into relationship with

wood through the senses of touch, sight, and smell. I developed an unconscious relationship too with the fleece, getting to know its qualities as you would a new friend. These living relationships stayed alive in me during the weeks spent working on plant dyes and for some time afterwards.

Bringing children into a close experience of all these elements and processes is very nourishing. It is life-enhancing. It strengthens their etheric body which in turn builds their physical body. This is quintessentially the work of any kindergarten.

The element of time, present in any process, was particularly noticeable. Sheep fleece has a sensitivity to sudden changes in temperature, so the dyepot must be brought to temperature slowly, and later cooled slowly before rinsing in cold water. The fleece needs to rest in the dyepot. A fire which blazes too quickly will damage the fleece and produce poor color. Learning to let the process take its time while still fitting the work within the kindergarten's daily rhythm became a valuable lesson for me.

For the children, waiting by a slowly simmering pot sometimes alternated with creative play in the garden. One child wondered if it would work at all as the chestnut dyepot simmered and simmered and simmered! But the slowness of the process is ideally suited to kindergarten children, allowing them to breathe into the process, staying within the dream consciousness so appropriate for them. It is not a hurried activity which could be more wakeful for them. Often, stirring small "sample dyepots" was enough to engage them while the main pot simmered on the fire. Tending the fire by bringing more firewood when it was needed kept them connected to the process. When the dyed fleece was cooled there were many hands eager to rinse it, to hold it, to see the transformation of color! This brought teamwork and leadership skills from the group of children as they decided whose turn it was to fill the watering-can with fresh water, who would rinse and squeeze the fleece, and who would empty the basin after the rinsing.

The rainbow of colors (with the exception of blue) which emerged over the weeks was a joy to behold. The colors shone with light yet held a harmony of their own like a musical scale!

From the gathering of the leaves or other plant material, to the drying, then soaking; to the

simmering and straining, then finally simmering with fleece, the children took a journey through both an inner and outer landscape. They followed the path of a very old craft leading them to a new reverence and awe for the world of nature and our relationship to it.

Linda Grant is a professional artist and trained kindergarten teacher currently working as artist-in-residence at An Grianan Kindergarten, Raheen Wood Steiner National School, Tuamgraney, Co. Clare, Ireland. She wishes to thank Marguerite Devane and all the kindergarten staff for their support in this project. The project is part-funded by Clare County Council Artists Assistance Scheme.



Saint Martin

• Michael Martin

The following is an excerpt from volume 10 of the Little Series, newly published in English by WECAN in 2009. The Little Series was developed by Dr. Helmut von Kügelgen, founder of the International Kindergarten Association, to support the inner work of the early childhood educator, and several of the other volumes explore the major seasonal festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Michaelmas. This study can help to awaken modern American readers to the historical and esoteric significance of Martinmas. While some Waldorf early child educators do not celebrate saints in kindergarten or earlier, many programs celebrate a lantern walk at the time of year of Martinmas, perhaps even the same date (November 11). Saint Martin is also reviewed by Nancy Blanning on page 29 of this issue.

Saint Martin in the Fourth Century

Martin was born in the year 316 in the Roman city of Savaria, today part of Hungary. His father was a Roman officer in the local garrison. Thus Martin was born as a Roman into a military environment. His unusually long life (he died in his eighty-first year) was not filled with inward contemplation or bound to one place. He spent his childhood in Italy, then we find him as a young man in Amiens, in Worms, later in Poitiers or on the island of Gallinaria (now Isola d'Albenga) off the western coast of Italy, to name only a few places, until he finally found a base in Tours for his long journeys through Gaul. He could not be prevented from going into the diocese of Candes to mediate a controversy, although he foresaw his death; there he died on November 11 in the year 397.

His active life reflected the fourth century AD, in which crucial transformations took place. Paganism was wiped out by the onset of Christianity, which was made the exclusive state religion by Theodosius in the year 391. At the same time the old Roman world order

broke down, because it was built solely on the development of outward power.

These mighty tremors are the outward signs of profound transformations in the evolution of humanity in Europe. Rudolf Steiner illuminates with his insights the spiritual background of this century:

However, the course of human evolution was so ordered that the ancient primordial wisdom had to be extinguished. And it was during the fourth century after Christ that things reached the point where it was no longer possible for anyone to make use of this primal wisdom. In yesterday's lecture I described, from another point of view, how this wisdom gradually dimmed and darkened. The fourth century was, in a certain sense, the time when man first began to stand alone—to base his conception of the world only on his sense-perceptions and what his reason and intellect were able to make of them. In order that mankind might gain its freedom—which it never could have done had it not rejected the primordial wisdom and its dependence on superterrestrial things—it was necessary for man to lose the ancient wisdom and be abandoned with only a materialistic conception. The first faint dawn of this materialistic conception appeared in the fourth century after Christ and gradually increased in strength, reaching its climax during the nineteenth century.

Yet materialism also has its good side in the evolution of humanity. When the supersensible light no longer shone into the human soul, when man was thrown entirely upon his senses' perceptions in the surrounding world, a feeling of independence awakened in him, a force that strove toward freedom (Steiner, "Wisdom Working in Historical Evolution," 7-8).

With these words the task of Rome is placed before our inner eyes: to anchor humanity to the earth and to enable the individual to experience the self as a citizen of this world. To this belongs the differentiating of one from another as free citizens, including outer ownership and the drawing of regional boundaries. The Roman saying *Si vis pacem, para bellum* (if you want peace, prepare for war) characterizes the result: making one's borders unassailable means pitting one nation against another, arming them appropriately. The realm of the individual is protected by Roman law.

Nation and individual appear as the large and small manifestations of a necessary stream of human development. This stream finds expression on the one hand in the warlike and materialistic attitude of the Romans, and on the other in the development of their legal and judicial aspect. But in the heart of the individual lies the seed of selfless love of Christ, which builds the other pole of development. Both poles are active with especial force in the fourth century: we find this again in the individuality of Saint Martin.

It is astonishing that the saint's life as told in the medieval collection *The Golden Legend* begins with many explanations for the name "Martinus," but the simplest and most revealing is not mentioned. "Martinus" means "the one dedicated to Mars" or "belonging to Mars." And just this name is characteristic of Saint Martin and reveals much about his essential being. In order to understand this, the warrior aspect of the saint must be deeply understood. The image of the Roman war god immediately emerges, but we are dealing with something completely different in the fundamental motif of Mars: the assertion of the individuality who stands for himself.

The "assertion of the individual" is not the goal of every epoch. Earlier, the human being had allowed himself to be led by the archetypal wisdom that streamed down to him from the spiritual cosmos, to be received as imaginative pictures. Independence only began through the separating from divine guidance in the manner described by Rudolf Steiner above. The individual soul forces of the human being on earth can then be strengthened, before being reconnected with the divine-spiritual world.

• • •

Destiny also speaks in Saint Martin's death day, November 11, which reveals something of his being. Rudolf Steiner drew our attention to the path of the human soul through the course of the year, in connection with the cosmic circumference, in the *Calendar of the Soul*. For the week of November 10-16 we find the following verse:

*I feel my own force, bearing fruit
And gaining strength to give me to the world.
My inmost being I feel charged with power
To turn with clearer insight
Toward the weaving of life's destiny.*

The same "I" force speaks out of this verse ... the same devotion to the world as that which fills the life of Saint Martin. Only thus can the "I" protect itself from egotistical paralysis. We find the clarity of his individual being again in *The Golden Legend's* description of Martin's hour of death: "... and his countenance shone as though it had already been transfigured."

Martin worked out of his own innermost forces, but at the same time could fully give himself to others out of the love in his heart. He was not necessarily an easy person to be with, even for his brothers in the faith, as we are told by the monk Severus in his biography of Martin: "His continual wrestling against evil brought hatred from the evil ones. The heretics hated him because he scourged their actions and way of living. On the other hand the good people were full of awe and love."

• • •

A New Legend of Saint Martin

... In summer, the plant world grows toward the sun, opening to its warm glowing, accompanied by the animal world which comes to life through light and warmth. In winter, the life of nature is subservient to the forces of the earth; it dies in the cold and darkness and draws in its forces, concentrated by the seeds into the earth's depths. We can share in this rhythm and observe that we too are woven into this play of forces with our soul: in summer we feel freed from earth's gravity and drawn into the circumference of the outer world; in winter we withdraw into our own

inner soul or self. In summer, there is the general danger of losing oneself in the enjoyment of outer light and warmth, dreaming away life in illusion, freed from all necessity. The forces of winter, on the other hand, entice the soul to harden itself, becoming an egoist in the search for power, ownership, and material gain. In the autumn, the time of transition, the human soul is exposed to both dangers. We hearken back with longing to the intoxication of summer, wanting to remain in the enjoyment of warmth and light, but the winter draws us to focus on material security, only living for oneself.

. . . But to find oneself in the Christ means to educate one's humanity in love towards heaven and earth, to develop the forces of devotion without losing oneself. This seed of the Christ power will be born in human beings at the Christmas night.

But in autumn, both powers threaten to win human beings for their own. The picture arises before us of the two-faced dragon, who wants to prevent human beings from finding themselves in between the opposites characterized above.

The apostle John tells us (Revelation 12:9) of the double nature of the dragon, which is both diabolical and satanic. In the Devil, Lucifer is hidden, the one who entices us into pleasure and sin; in Satan we recognize Ahriman, who brings death through materialism. In this battle against the opposing forces in the form of the dragon, Michael intervenes. He, who stands before the countenance of God, supports and strengthens the power of will, which the human being must call up in order to resist temptation. Only in this way can the human being quicken in himself the seed of Christ's light in the deepest darkness of night. In a wonderful way, the *Calendar of the Soul* describes how at Michaelmas the force of will, hidden in the outer death of nature, is at the same time active and flowing to the human being, who is striving to creatively prepare the Christmas mood within.

Michaelmas Mood
*O Nature, your maternal life
 I bear within the essence of my will.
 And my will's fiery energy
 Shall steel my spirit striving,
 That sense of self springs forth from it
 To bear myself in me.*

This "to bear myself in me" comes to expression in the first two lines of the Christmas verse with the words:

Christmas Mood
*The spirit child within my soul
 I feel freed of enchantment.
 In heart-high gladness has
 The holy cosmic Word engendered
 The heavenly fruit of hope,
 Which grows rejoicing into worlds afar
 Out of my being's godly roots.*

Exactly between the Michaelmas and Christmas verses the newborn feeling of self is addressed, which must first be attained ("That sense of self springs forth from it") so that the human being can bear himself into himself:

*I feel my own force, bearing fruit
 And gaining strength to give me to the world.
 My inmost being I feel charged with power
 To turn with clearer insight
 Toward the weaving of life's destiny.*

This is the verse for the week of Martin's death day, which was earlier mentioned as being characteristic for him. Even more noteworthy is the fact that St. Martin's Day lies exactly between Michaelmas on September 29 and Christmas Eve on December 24! So we have found a way which leads from Michaelmas, through Martinmas, to the Holy Night. The human being's individual power of will is awakened (Michaelmas), this individual being of the self develops in active life (Martinmas), the spirit light will be enkindled in the prepared soul (Christmas Eve).

Martin appears as a human being who treads this path. In his readiness for active life, the Mars-force of the "I" is working, penetrated by the love of Christ, which would devote itself to humanity.

References

Steiner, Rudolf. "Wisdom working in historical evolution," lecture of December 25, 1921, Dornach. Typescript of translation from Anthroposophic News Sheet 1935, Supplement No. 6, courtesy of Rudolf Steiner Library.

_____. *Calendar of the Soul* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2007).

Emmi-Pikler-Haus, Part II

• Joyce Gallardo

Part One of this article, published in the previous issue of Gateways, described a visit to Emmi-Pikler-Haus, a residential home in Germany. Part Two gives more background on Emmi Pikler herself and on the two teachers who took up her work in relationship to that of Rudolf Steiner.

A Brief History of Lóczy

After many children had been orphaned by the war, pediatrician Emmi Pikler was commissioned by the City of Budapest in 1946 to organize and direct a foster home where children would live until they were three years old. The fundamental ideas on which this home was founded have a history which goes back to the 1920s in Vienna, where Emmi Pikler went to medical school and received her medical training under Prof. Clemens von Pirquet at the University Hospital.

Dr. Pikler always referred to Prof. von Pirquet and to Prof. Hans Salzer, a child surgeon, as her first teachers. Under their influence she came to the views which would determine all of her later professional activity. She was particularly influenced by Pirquet's interest in the children's everyday existence in the hospital. Meals were prepared there under his guidance, and under Pirquet, it was forbidden to make a child eat one single spoonful more than he wanted.

All of the children, including the infants, spent several hours in the fresh air each day—even during the winter—and they were kept warm in sleeping sacks, without being wrapped up or swaddled tightly in blankets in a way that immobilized them.

Above all, Pikler learned nursing care at University Hospital in Vienna in a way that gave infants and small children a sense of well-being. After her studies in Vienna, for over ten years Dr. Pikler guided and supported more than 100 infants and small children when she worked with families as a pediatrician. She made daily visits to

the family for the first ten days after a baby's birth and weekly visits for the next few months. Pikler emphasized, as did Rudolf Steiner, the importance of the first three years in the life of a child and how important it was for the whole of his life that he be carefully tended and cherished during these early years.

Choosing the Nurses at Lóczy

When Lóczy (named after the street on which it is located) was first opened, trained nurses sent by the City of Budapest were employed, but these nurses became the greatest source of worry for Dr. Pikler. "They do not really care for the children, they bathe, diaper and feed them in a matter of minutes and with the least possible exertion. So much time is given to the care and distribution of the linens that there is no time left for the children," she is known to have commented.

After three months, she and her colleague dismissed all of these professionally trained nurses and employed young girls from the villages who had little education and no professional training, but had a real love for and were interested in bringing up children and learning to become nurses. With the changing of the nurses from those previously trained to those who were trained by Emmi Pikler herself, something completely new—"artistic" caregiving as French psychiatrist Myriam David would later call it—could happen in the nursery home on Lóczy Street. The cornerstones of this "artistic" caregiving, simply stated, are respect for the self-initiated autonomous movement of the child and respectful, cooperative caregiving.

Choosing the Teachers at the First Waldorf School

This is reminiscent of how Rudolf Steiner chose the teachers for the first Waldorf school just 23 years earlier. He did not so much pay attention

to the amount of knowledge they possessed as to whether they had a real love for children. He sought for and trained those who cherished in their hearts the main qualification for a teacher—the desire to educate themselves. Steiner radically and consciously rejected century-old practices of the bureaucratic state school system when he founded the first Waldorf school and created something completely new—an artistic education out of the Spirit, where each child is seen as a spiritual being in his own individuality.

Pikler, also, radically and consciously rejected century-old practices in hospitals and orphanages where the care given babies and small children was determined by an impersonal system. Without trying to duplicate the affective relationships in a family, she created a comprehensive, consistent, holistic approach to caregiving that brought forth healthy children who were able to bond with and form relationships with the people around them. Myriam David once said after observing at Lóczy that “a mother loves the child, therefore she cares for him, but a nurse cares for the child, therefore she loves him.” The children became open for learning, capable of a deep, long-term emotional relationship and of active social adjustment. The foundations upon which Lóczy is based and operates today existed from the very beginning, as do the foundations upon which Waldorf education is based.

The Melding of Two Pedagogies

The melding of the pedagogies of these two pioneers in early childhood education, Pikler and Steiner, has been successful in the care of children at Emmi-Pikler-Haus mainly due to the long and rich history of the two main pedagogues, Ute Strub and Elke-Maria Rischke, in Waldorf education and in Anthroposophy, and to Ute’s long involvement in the work of Emmi Pikler as well. Ute attended the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. Her teachers were among the original teachers chosen by Rudolf Steiner himself—Herbert Hahn, Erich Schwebesch and Karl Stockmeyer, to name a few. Her mother was an anthroposophist and her father had a deep interest in biodynamic farming. Ute’s gymnastics teacher, Elfriede Hengstenberg, was a friend of Emmi Pikler, and showed Ute photos of children

from Lóczy who were sitting upright, with backs as straight as an arrow, and of children who were learning to walk.

A Visit to Lóczy

Later, when she was working as a physiotherapist at the university hospital in Freiburg with patients who were paralyzed, Ute remembered the photos and wanted to know how the human being learns to walk and become upright. She knew she had to meet Emmi Pikler and to see her work in order to get an answer to her question. In 1979, she went to Budapest to observe the children at Lóczy and met Emmi Pikler. There she observed children who were learning to walk by taking side steps first, before they began to take steps forward. (She later encouraged her patients to side step in her therapy with them before they attempted to take a step forward. It worked!) Her question was answered at Lóczy, but much more was given her.

She learned that at Lóczy the children were seen as perfect in each moment of their development. There was no hurry, no one “trained” them to turn over or to sit or to stand. On the contrary, each stage of their motor development was appreciated and honored. The adults did not interfere in the freely-initiated movement of the children. Ute noted that the children were capable of independently self-initiating an action and of performing it independently, and that their actions were effective.

Respectful, Cooperative Caregiving

She continued to return to Lóczy, where she observed the exquisite and profoundly respectful care of the children by the nurses there. She saw how the children, whose trust in the adults around them had been betrayed through the trauma of mistreatment, neglect or abuse, were thriving under the loving attention they received. Their trust in the adults who surrounded them was slowly restored at Lóczy and they were able to bond and form deep, lasting relationships with their caregivers. Both Emmi Pikler and Rudolf Steiner had pointed out that the actions and words of the caregiver must be worthy of imitation by the child, since the way that young children learn is through imitation. At Lóczy the children were engaged and cooperative during care times,

taking their cues from the sensitive hands, loving hearts, and kind words of their caregivers, who encouraged them to be *active participants* rather than *passive recipients*.

In between these caregiving encounters, the children were peaceful with themselves or with exploring the world around them. As they grew older, they naturally reached out to play with the other children. Ute recognized, however, that a child's desire to be active was highly dependent on the degree of intimacy, joy, and mutual trust he experienced in his relationship with his nurse. She noted that the two factors were interdependent: the child's self-initiated activity and the way the child is handled in the care situation, which is the basis of the human relationship.

Emmi Pikler's Work in Germany

Ute helped to translate Emmi Pikler's first book, *Peaceful Babies—Contented Mothers*. She invited Dr. Pikler to Germany to give lectures and seminars. Ute also began to give seminars in Germany about Emmi Pikler's work. After Pikler's death, Ute worked with Anna Tardos, Pikler's daughter, who is a psychologist and the director of Lóczy. She was invited by Anna to give workshops at Lóczy for the German and English-speaking seminars. I first met Ute in June 2004 in Budapest at the first English-language course offered at Lóczy. That very year the association was formed out of the impulse of a former colleague of Ute's for the creation of a residential nursery home for abandoned and abused children in Germany, and Ute became a board member. She has traveled to the US for the last two years at the invitation of Sophia's Hearth Family Center in Keene, New Hampshire, to give workshops on the Pikler principles. It has been a life's theme of Ute's to bring together the Pikler and Waldorf pedagogies in the care of young children in need of special care, such as those who live at Emmi-Pikler-Haus.

Out of the Work of the Waldorf Kindergarten

Elke-Maria Rischke, caregiver for the older children and board member of the association of Emmi-Pikler-Haus, was a Waldorf kindergarten teacher in Germany for thirty-three years. She founded Waldorf kindergartens in Bonn, Ulm, and

Hildesheim. Ute visited Elke-Maria's kindergarten in Hildesheim in 1985 because she had heard that Elke-Maria had taken up Rudolf Steiner's indications regarding the importance of giving knotted handkerchief dolls to young children. Steiner had said that a child can understand and really love such a doll. Elke-Maria had decided to make knotted dolls for the children in her kindergarten out of soft, natural-colored wool squares which she had knitted.

Rudolf Steiner further emphasized the importance of this simple kind of doll for a child, rather than the so-called "beautiful" dolls which can move, have moving eyes, painted cheeks, real hair, etc., "If we give the child the kind of doll made from a handkerchief, the plastic, creative forces in the child that arise in the human organism—especially from the rhythmic system of breathing and blood circulation—and build up the brain, flow gently upwards to the brain. The child looks at the handkerchief-doll, and that becomes the formative force, real formative force, which then flows upwards from the rhythmic system and works upon the structure of the brain" (Steiner, 11). (Some seventy years later, Joseph Chilton Pearce wrote in his book *Evolution's End* that optimal development of the brain occurs in children if they play with objects that were not meant to be "toys," but leave the children's imagination free).

Since Ute wanted to leave the imagination of children as free and undisturbed by the interference of adults as possible, just as Emmi Pikler and Rudolf Steiner wanted to leave the gross motor development of children free from the interference of adults, she was interested in knowing how the use of only knot dolls in Elke-Maria's kindergarten would influence the children's play. With the introduction of the knot doll in her kindergarten, Elke-Maria soon realized that other things would also have to change. She gradually brought in more soft, less-formed toys in place of the formed animals, people, boats, etc. that were in the kindergarten then. She substituted the more formed toys with objects directly from nature—shells, bamboo sticks, stones, pinecones, acorns—all with various different textures—smooth, rough, bumpy, even. She began to notice that the children's play with the dolls and the

objects from nature was fuller, richer, and more imaginative than before. A pinecone became a baby bottle, the top of an acorn a little cup for the baby, a seashell was the baby's dish, a stone became a cookie for baby. These same knotted dolls and objects from nature are the playthings of the children who live at Emmi-Pikler-Haus.

After her visit, Ute gave Elke-Maria a copy of *Peaceful Babies—Contented Mothers*. It wasn't until a year later that Elke-Maria communicated with Ute and told her, "You have left me a wonderful gift." Their friendship grew, and Elke-Maria visited Lóczy to learn more about the Pikler pedagogy. When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, Elke-Maria went to Jena and helped to bring to birth a "free" kindergarten at the request of a group of parents there.

The caregivers of Lóczy and Emmi-Pikler-Haus are caring, devoted, and courageous women. The words of Karl König below reflect the quality of the work these women do in service to the children in their care and, ultimately, in service to the children of the world:

There is a knighthood of the twentieth century whose members do not ride through the darkness of physical forests as of old, but through the forest of darkened minds. They are armed with spiritual armor and an inner Sun makes them radiant. Out of them shines healing—healing that flows from a knowing of the image of Man as a spiritual being. They must create inner order, inner justice, peace, and conviction in the darkness of our time.

References

Steiner, Rudolf. *Understanding Young Children: Excerpts from Lectures by Rudolf Steiner*. Silver Spring, MD: Waldorf Kindergarten Association, 1994 (distributed by WECAN).

Joyce Gallardo has been an early childhood educator for more than twenty-five years. She is the director of Los Amiguitos, a family daycare home, where she works out of the insights of Waldorf early childhood education, offering a kindergarten-nursery program that is enriched by the work of Emmi Pikler. She has completed RIE Level I training in the U.S. and introductory and advanced training at the Pikler Institute in Budapest, Hungary.

Waldorf Education in the Middle East

In October, 1922, Rudolf Steiner said, "The most important thing is to establish an education through which human beings learn once more how to live with one another."

I often think about the comment, and take it to be the core of the work of Waldorf education. And I recently heard of some people taking that idea to a new level. I attended an inspiring presentation by the Salaam Shalom Foundation. They are working to create peace in the Middle East through three visionary programs. One is an Arab Waldorf school, already serving a mixed Arab community of Muslims, Christians and Druze, building bridges of common activity and festivals with their parallel classes at Harduf (the nearby Jewish Waldorf School). Another program is Ein Bustan where Arab and Jewish children attend Waldorf kindergarten together in equal numbers, with similarly diverse teachers. And they are creating a teacher training for Palestinian teachers in the West Bank. Their work toward peace is very hope-filled! More information can be had at www.ssefoundation.org. For information about the Arab-Jewish Kindergarten program go to www.ein-bustan.org and click on the language of your choice.

—Stephen Spitalny, ed.

Teacher Training in México

• Louise deForest

Waldorf education is alive and well in México! This summer marked the ninth year that the Centro Antroposófico has hosted teacher training courses, currently at the Waldorf School of Cuernavaca, (the City of Eternal Spring) in the state of Morelos.

The teacher training started in 2001 and the directors of the Centro at that time were Alida González, Teri Block and Verónica Gabucio. Feliz and Beatriz Zimmermann, longtime Waldorf teachers from Switzerland, had already spent years offering workshops, conferences and talks on Waldorf education in México and, given the interest and the rapid growth of Waldorf programs and schools, the time seemed ripe to offer professional training.

Teri Block has since gone on to pioneer new ventures, but Alida and Verónica have steadfastly carried the Centro and its students for each three week intensive. This past summer was no exception.

Both kindergarten and class teacher training take a total of five consecutive summers (or the equivalent) of three weeks each to complete. This is a substantial commitment for Mexican teachers, whose normal summer vacation is only four weeks long. This summer, like most summers, teachers came from all across México, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, the United States and Colombia for a total of 101 students.

The faculty of the Centro is equally international with this year's teachers coming from Switzerland, Argentina, the United States, and México. Many, such as the Zimmermanns, have been teaching almost every summer; others were here for the first time this year, though many hope to return in the future.



This summer there were three students who finished the teacher training program: Marta Olga, a nursery teacher from the Colegio Yeccan in Guanajuato, Carmen María, who teaches in her own kindergarten program in Monterrey (La Escuela Micael) and Adrian, who just graduated his eighth grade from the Colegio Yeccan and is hoping to go on to the first ninth grade there this September. Also attending was Olga, a kindergarten graduate last year, also from the Colegio Yeccan, who returned as a part of her ongoing professional development.

The program itself is very similar to teacher training programs world-wide: anthroposophic study, artistic activities and music, movement (eurythmy, spatial dynamics or Bothmer gymnastics) and methodology, with evening presentations and lectures each week. Class and kindergarten teachers join together for the study and various artistic activities, separating for the methodology and specialty classes.

Because of the shortage of experienced teachers in México, ongoing mentoring is only occasionally available, which is a great

disadvantage to the teachers-in-training. As part of their training, all teachers must visit another early childhood program in a Waldorf School, but here, too, there are challenges, as there are few Waldorf schools within México that are developed enough to offer solid programs to observe. As with other part-time trainings, no practice teaching time is offered, though all the students are currently working in some kind of program or school.

There is no Mexican Waldorf Association yet (though there is an active interest in creating one), so México comes under the umbrella of WECAN and AWSNA. Twice a year there are gatherings for representatives from all the schools and programs in México, with each school taking turns hosting the gathering. The Pedagogical meeting is held in November and the Anthroposophical meeting is usually in April or May. These gatherings are well attended and offer the possibility, through the workshops offered, for ongoing professional development, as well as the opportunity to visit another school and reconnect with colleagues. Unfortunately, the schools in both the far north

and the far south of México are often unable to attend because of the distance and expense. An AWSNA and/or a WECAN representative tries to attend each of these gatherings.

To learn more about the work of the Centro, you can go to their website (in Spanish): [www. antroposofiamexico.org](http://www.antroposofiamexico.org). Or you can contact Alida or Verónica (both speak English) by writing to centro@antroposofiamexico.org.

Louise deForest *has been a Waldorf kindergarten teacher for many years and is now the Pedagogical Director of the Early Childhood program at the Rudolf Steiner Waldorf School in Manhattan. Louise is also a WECAN board member, a regional representative of WECAN in México, one of the representatives from North America to IASWECE, and leader of the Waldorf early childhood teacher training in Cuernavaca, México.*

We are delighted to announce a forthcoming new WECAN book *in Spanish*, edited and translated by Louise deForest. This book will be a compilation of articles previously published in other WECAN books, along with Roberto Trostli's excellent article, "The Waldorf Kindergarten: The World of the Young Child."

Louise writes, "Almost every summer I teach early childhood courses at the Centro Antroposófico, in México, which offers teacher training courses to class, high school and early childhood educators. I know firsthand how difficult it is for our Mexican colleagues to find resources in their own language and what a challenge it is for them to get a true sense of a Waldorf early childhood program when there are so few mature Waldorf schools in their country. I have chosen these articles because each one provides insight into the life of a Waldorf early childhood classroom, as well as clear, warm pictures of child development. Included will be articles by Joan Almon, Dr. Joop van Dam, Freya Jaffke, Dr. Helmut von Kugelgen and Susan Howard."

WECAN offers this book out of a deep desire to collaborate with and support our Mexican early childhood colleagues and to contribute to the deepening of Waldorf early childhood education in México. It will be available early in 2010.

Pictures from Norway

• Louise deForest

In early May, 2009, I found myself waiting to meet Susan Howard in the airport of Oslo, Norway. We were on our way to Arendahl, a small, seaside town close to the southern tip of Norway and we had come to speak (along with Ann Sharfman, from South Africa) at their national early childhood association yearly conference. These yearly conferences are held in different schools each year and the school hosting this particular conference, Stjerneglimt (Star Glitter, or Shine) was also celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. Founded by Eldbjorg Paulssen, who still teaches there, it is now home to infants through five-year-olds. When we attended an Open House there, we met several young mothers who themselves had been children there in the early years of the school.

My first impression of Norway was that of granite, pushing the land into jutting mountains, steep hills and rock-strewn valleys. It is no wonder that the Norwegians became a seafaring people—the land looked impossible to farm! Trees are tall, forests dense, and the rock, almost like a sleeping beast just under the surface, always present. I understood all the trolls and giants in Norse tales now that I had seen this rugged and wild landscape.

The early childhood conference was held on a lovely island accessible by bridge and dotted with old army barracks and halls dating back to the Second World War. It is a small island but spacious enough to host several events at once and our neighbors were, much to our amusement, a large motorcycle club and a working dog show.

Approximately 250 teachers came to the conference, enthusiasm and good will as obvious on their faces as on the ones I see in our own North American EC conference every year. Luckily, almost everyone in Norway also speaks English—and often very, very well—so we were able to meet and speak to many teachers before

going on to the IASWECE Council meeting held a few days later in Oslo.

The Waldorf school movement began in Norway in the same year as it began in North America: 1926. Rudolf Steiner first spoke in Norway in 1921 and the resounding echo in the souls of those present was strong enough to found the first school in Oslo. The first kindergarten was founded in 1932 by Gulle Brun, a eurythmist and faculty member in the first school, whose work and vision still inspire teachers today. The schools grew slowly until 1970 when the Norwegian government passed legislation to subsidize all schools, public and independent, which led to the rapid founding and growth of many new Waldorf schools.

Today there are approximately sixty kindergarten programs, serving about 1,300 children and their families (there are just over four million people in Norway). For many years, the early childhood programs formed part of the National Waldorf School Association but in 1997 the Norwegian Waldorf Early Childhood Association was formed. Like our WECAN, the Norwegian EC Association hosts conferences, publishes newsletters (four times a year), engages in research and keeps a finger on the pulse of childhood within Norway. Currently, Mette Johannessen, a longtime kindergarten teacher in Oslo, represents Norway on the IASWECE Council.

Some of the burning issues facing our EC colleagues in Norway are similar to the challenges we are familiar with here in North America; others, however, are particular to Norway and perhaps to Europe in general. One of the big questions living among early childhood teachers and class teachers is the six-year-old groups. In an effort to delay the entrance into first grade until a child reaches seven years old, special classes have been introduced for the six-year-olds. These

classes are called first grade in Norway, but the hope and intention has been to have these classes remain play-based groups for older kindergarten children. Because these classes are subsidized by the government (and nursery and kindergarten classes are not), the six-year-old groups are now increasingly part of the elementary schools, which has many EC teachers concerned. Finding capable and knowledgeable teachers to carry these classes is challenging, and the elementary schools for the most part offer little guidance for the content of these programs. As one kindergarten teacher told me, "Each person does their own thing; sometimes it feels like a kindergarten but mostly it feels like just another grade in the school." For this reason, the quality of these programs varies widely; the early childhood association did write guidelines for these programs but because they do not take place in kindergartens, the guidelines rarely reach the teachers who need them. Many EC teachers fear that these classes serve to give the children a head start into the grades, with numeracy and literacy taking precedence over the envisioned play-based program.

All the kindergarten teachers I spoke with felt that the same-age class is an unhealthy social situation for the older children, who no longer have the opportunity to be "big brothers and sisters" to the younger children, and many teachers felt that, being a part of the elementary school left the six-year-olds unprotected and in a position to try to keep up with the older children on the playground. Just a month or so ago I heard that the government will no longer be subsidizing these older-child groups, so it is now a question whether they will return to the kindergarten programs or become a real first grade.

On the other end of the spectrum, younger children are now entering into the Waldorf Early Childhood programs in record numbers, often as young as months old. Norway offers long maternity and paternity leaves to new parents (imagine!), but once a child has turned one, the expectation is that the parents will reenter the work force full time. Today, 98% of all one-year-olds are in some kind of institutional care setting, often for full days. None of us in the early childhood would agree that this is a healthy situation for the child or for the family, but this is

a reality in many countries and now the question becomes how to make this long day as stress-free and as healthy as possible. I saw many nap rooms, with cradles and carriages and little beds covered with quilts and draped with soft cloths in all the schools I visited. Here, too, finding capable caregivers is a huge challenge and establishing the essential elements of a healthy program for this age in all the schools and programs has yet to be done. Full-time and part-time teacher training is offered in Norway but there are no courses or trainings for the care of the very young child, which is now a task for the EC Association to address.

Innovative work is happening among anthroposophical initiatives and the Anthroposophical Society as they become more united and more visible in the broader community. Last year, in a gesture of sharing and reaching out, a cultural gathering took place outside of City Hall in downtown Oslo, completely open to the public. Various workshops were offered, as were classes of eurythmy, performances of plays, art exhibits, agricultural expositions and a lecture in the very lively Literature House close by. The practical and more esoteric aspects of the School of Spiritual Science were freely shared. It was such a successful gathering, and so much fun for everyone involved, that another gathering is planned for this autumn, with the theme of the economic situation in the world.

The Waldorf Teachers' Conferences are also changing in nature. The one last year was opened to Waldorf teachers, parents, public school teachers and professionals in diverse fields, and the keynote speakers and workshop leaders were renowned experts in their fields and came from outside of the Waldorf perspective. This, too, proved to be a rewarding experience for all those involved and the conferences will continue in this direction, bringing together all those who are actively working toward the future and the well-being of the next generation.

I left Norway on May 17, the Independence Day of Norway . . . bigger than Christmas, one Norwegian told me. Having grown up with the flag waving, veterans marching, military parade version of Independence Day, I found the Norwegian celebration a very pleasant

surprise. Preparations begin many days before the celebration, and in Oslo I saw many soldiers sweeping the sidewalks and streets, pruning bushes, and making everything beautiful. Everything closes on this day, most streets are for pedestrian use only, and there is an air of great joy and celebration everywhere. This is a festival by and for the children and on THE day, children in traditional Norwegian dress gather together, their arms full of flowers, and walk to the King and Queen's castle, in the center of Oslo, and

give the flowers to them. As they walk up the long, lilac-bordered road, they sing joyful songs, and are joined by the adults standing along the sides of the roads, also dressed in traditional Norwegian clothes, waving boughs of flowers and singing along with the children. It is a thoroughly peaceful, joyful celebration of not only Norway's independence from Sweden, but, more importantly, the great gift of the future of Norway as embodied by their children.

BOOK REVIEW

Saint Martin

• Reviewed by Nancy Blanning

Saint Martin: Between Michaelmas and the Holy Nights by Michael Martin (WECAN Books, 2009).

Martinmas is not one of the American traditional celebrations (outside of some Waldorf schools), yet it is appealing in its images. The simple story of the legend of Saint Martin we know. Martin, a Roman soldier, took pity on a poor, shivering beggar. He cut his cloak in two and bestowed half of it upon the beggar. Later in a dream Martin saw that the beggar he had served was the Christ. This event at age eighteen transformed his young life completely, and shortly afterward he sought baptism and true, humble dedication to his new Christian faith. Two years later while still serving in the Roman army, he laid down his sword and refused to bear arms against another human being—in opposition to family expectation, training, and instruction of his Roman commanders. Martin went on to become bishop of Tours in France. He was known for his humility and compassion toward others, especially the downcast, the poor, and those whom society had rejected. The light and sense of hope he brought to these people is reflected in the Lantern Festival some of us celebrate in our Waldorf schools each autumn around November 11.

That is the simple story. The new WECAN publication, ***Saint Martin***, expands the picture. It shows how profoundly and courageously the

example of Martin stands for humanity seeking its own understanding of spiritual realities and striving for unselfish, personal development. This tenth volume of "The Little Series" was written by Michael Martin, a handwork teacher in Nuremberg. The English translation provides a wealth and depth of information and insight into this autumn festival. The Roman era marked a change in human consciousness toward individualization, which can become aggressively ego-centered, a Mars characteristic. Martin's biography, occurring at a turning point in this evolution of consciousness, offers a striking counter-image. His life radiated quiet humility and compassion toward other human beings, incredible self-discipline, and firm courage to oppose acts of inhumanity. He carried firm conviction to replace earlier pagan beliefs and practices with Christianity.

Martinmas is not one of the four major festivals—Michaelmas, Christmas, Easter, and St. John's—but occurs in November, a transitional time of the year. This is the month when the dead are remembered, an aspect connected in European celebrations to St. Martin. The gates to the spiritual world open at this time. The light of heaven streams down to illumine our deeds and reveal their true nature—kind, selfish, generous, greedy, indifferent. The book explains that in European tradition St. Martin has been

accompanied by “Pelzmartl” or “Fur-Martin,” whose spirit is more familiarly represented in our celebrations by St. Nicholas’ companion, Ruprecht. As the book elaborates on Pelzmartl and this mood of evaluation, it becomes very striking how Martinmas is the first step from Michaelmas toward Advent and Christmas.

In the festival year, Martinmas stands between Michaelmas and Advent, offering a path from one to the other. November 11 stands exactly midway between Michaelmas on September 29 and Christmas Eve on December 24. Martin’s life occurred at a pivotal moment in the evolution of human consciousness when strong individuality emerges. At Michaelmas we confront the dragon with the fierceness of his oppositions and intention to rule. The light we experience at that time comes from the far cosmos in shooting stars and from sparks of weapons clashing in a warrior mood. Martinmas, with its encouraging yet revealing lantern light, pictures the saint who stands as a strong individuality developing with humility and unselfishness. This example naturally leads toward the images of Advent. The journey toward Christmas is a long path that requires



preparation. Advent is the time of preparation for Christmas. In a similar way, Martinmas can be looked upon as the preparation time leading to Advent when acts of kindness and generosity serve others without desire to elevate oneself.

Saint Martin fills the picture standing behind the simple traditions with rich biographical and historical information. The book further reveals spiritual content within these traditions through the insights of Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy. The more we, as educators, understand what stands behind each experience we bring to the children, the more potent it becomes. Festival images thus become spiritual nourishment for humanity. This book provides a wealth of information to help us deepen our understanding and derive new inspiration for this festival. Deepest thanks to the author, Michael Martin; to Dr. Helmut von Kùgelgen for making these “Little Series” resources available to Waldorf educators; and to the translators (for this volume, Dorothea Mier together with Lory Widmer, WECAN Managing Editor) for making this quiet treasure available to us all.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Conferences

February 12 – 14, 2010, Chestnut Ridge, NY: **Deepening Our Capacities to Meet the Children in Our Care**, WECAN East Coast Conference. Third of a series focusing on so-called difficult children, with Dr. Gerald Karnow. Online registration opens December 4; registration deadline January 19. Contact 845-517-2388 x11 / conference@waldorfearlychildhood.org / www.waldorfearlychildhood.org.

Feb. 13 – 14, Bellingham WA. **WECAN Pacific Northwest Early Childhood Conference**. Dr. Steegmans continues the investigation of the first seven years of life, focusing on the middle years. Contact Holly Koteen-Soule, 206-528-1702 / hollysgarden@qwest.net or Annie Gross, 250-537-4644 / anniegross@gmail.com

February 18 – 20, Marin Waldorf School, San Rafael, CA: **A New Impulse**, conference with Christof Wiechert for Waldorf professionals and those with or in training. Contact Dave Alsop, Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training, 415-332-2133, dave@bacwtt.org.

February 18 – 20, Fair Oaks, CA: **West Coast Educator's conference with Early Childhood conference.** Theme is Therapeutic Aspects with Laurie Clark, Nancy Blanning and Suzanne Down. For more information contact Lauren Hickman at 916-961-8727 ext. 117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

April 14 – 15, Fair Oaks, CA: **Mothering and Spirituality: Resourcing Feminine Wisdom.** Parenting conference with Regina Ryan, author of *The Woman Awake*, Nancy Jewel Poer, Rahima Baldwin Dancy. For information see www.waldorfinthehome.com or call 303-546-0070.

April 23 – 25, Chestnut Ridge, NY: **Handwork Conference** hosted by the Fiber Craft Studio. Contact the Fiber Craft Studio, 845-425-2891, fibercraft@threefold.org.

April 23 – 24, Calgary, AB Canada: Gateways Conference: **Imagination and Story— Foundation for Learning.** Contact [<k.brunetta@calgarywaldorf.org>](mailto:k.brunetta@calgarywaldorf.org)

June 2 – 5, Dornach, Switzerland: **The Healthy Development of the Child Under Three.** Birth to Three conference open to child care providers and those working with young children in education, care and therapeutic situations. With Dr. Michaela Glöckler and others. Further information will be available on the International Association website at www.iaswece.org.

July 4 – 8, Sao Paulo, Brazil: **Childhood as an Impulse for the Development of the Human Being,** International Early Childhood Conference co-sponsored by the Alliance for Childhood, Federation of Waldorf Schools in Brazil, and IASWECE. Keynote speakers: Louise deForest and Nancy Mellon from the USA and Helle Heckmann from Denmark. Further information will be available soon on the International Association website at www.iaswece.org, or contact Chantal Amarante in Sao Paulo at fewb@fewb.org.br or visit their website at www.fewb.org.br.

Workshops and Short Courses

Nov. 12 – 14, Boulder, CO, **Development of Speech in Early Childhood** and how storytelling and puppetry support it, with Suzanne Down. Contact Rahima Baldwin, 303-546-0070, rahima@informedfamilylife.org

November 14, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Your Child's Amazing Mind:** Brain Development with Cynthia Lambert. Family Ways Parenting Series for

parents, teachers and caregivers of children birth to seven. Contact Lauren Hickman at 916-961-8727 ext. 117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu.

November 14, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Circle Time Magic:** Educator's Enrichment Series Session II for teachers and caregivers working in state and independent preschools, playgroups, extended day programs, or family childcare homes. CE hours available. For more information contact Lauren Hickman, 916-961-8727 x117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

November 14 – 15, Chestnut Ridge, New York: **Felting Slippers Workshop** with Mikae Toma. Contact the Fiber Craft Studio, 845-425-2891, fibercraft@threefold.org.

November 15, Eugene, OR: **Exploring Healthy Movement and Speech for the Young Child,** with Helle Heckmann from Denmark. Contact the Eugene Waldorf School, 541-683-6951, info@eugenewaldorf.org

November 16, Eugene, OR: **Preserving Childhood,** a presentation by Helle Heckmann. 7 pm. Contact the Eugene Waldorf School, 541-683-6951, info@eugenewaldorf.org

November 21, Pacific Northwest, Location TBA: **Pacific Northwest Regional Gathering.** Helle Heckmann will be our guest speaker. Contact Holly Koteen-Soulé, 206-528-1702, hollysgarden@qwest.net

December 5, 9 am – 3 pm, Sophia's Hearth Family Center, Keene, NH: **Creative Discipline, Part I: Strategies for Guiding Two and Three Year olds in Developing Successful Social Behaviors** with Susan Weber. Contact Bonnie Chamberlin, 603 357-3755, bonnie@sophiashearth.org

January 12 – March 2, 2010, Chestnut Ridge, New York: **Making a Waldorf Doll** with Chris Marlow. Contact Fiber Craft Studio, 845-425-2891, fibercraft@threefold.org.

Jan. 16 – 17, Vancouver, BC, Canada: **The Art and Delight of the Rod Puppet.** Contact Suzanne Down [<suzanne@junipertreepuppets.com](mailto:suzanne@junipertreepuppets.com)

January 23, Sophia's Hearth Family Center, Keene, NH: **The Pikler Approach to Gross Motor Development** with Jane Swain. Contact Bonnie Chamberlin, 603 357-3755, bonnie@sophiashearth.org

January 30, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Eat Your Veggies! Nutrition for Young Children:** Educator's Enrichment Series Session III. Contact 916-961-8727 ext. 117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

January 30, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Discipline through Pictorial Language with Veronica Gunesevara**. Family Ways Parenting Series. Contact 916-961-8727 x117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

Feb. 13, Sacramento, CA: **The Archetype of the Worker Character**, puppetry workshop with Suzanne Down. Contact suzanne@junipertreepuppets.com

February 20, Sophia's Hearth Family Center, Keene, NH: **Creative Discipline, Part II – Reframing Discipline Using Sensory Strategies** with Jane Swain. Contact 603-357-3755, bonnie@sophiashearth.org

March 6, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Mealtimes** with Kristin Loughheed. Family Ways Parenting Series. Contact Lauren Hickman at 916-961-8727 ext. 11, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

March 6, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Crafts and Art for Young Children: Educator's Enrichment Series Session IV**. Contact Lauren Hickman at 916-961-8727 ext. 117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

March 6, Spring Valley, NY: Mid-Atlantic Regional Gathering: **The early childhood educator's work in outreach and admissions** with Patrice Maynard. Contact Karen Atkinson, 609-466-1970 ext. 611, atkinsonkaren@comcast.net

March 24 – 27, LifeWays Early Childhood Center, Milwaukee, WI: **Nurturing and Nourishing** with Trish McPhee, Anthroposophic Nurse. Contact Cynthia Aldinger, 405-579-0999, ck.aldinger@sbcglobal.net

April 6 – 10, Sacramento, CA: **Color and Light Puppetry**, healing the eye and soul. Contact: Suzanne Down, suzanne@junipertreepuppets.com

April 17, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Fathering: Reaching for the Future** with Robert Hickman, Ph.D. Contact Lauren Hickman at 916-961-8727 ext. 117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

April 17 – 18, Sophia's Hearth Family Center, Keene, NH: **Creating and Enlivening a Rod Puppet, Part II** with Libby Haddock. Contact Bonnie Chamberlin, 603-357-3755, bonnie@sophiashearth.org

May 8, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **Tell Me a Story from Your Mouth: Storytelling** with Karen Viani. Family Ways Parenting Series. Contact 916-961-8727 x117, earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu

May 15 – 16, Sophia's Hearth Family Center, Keene,

NH: **The Why and How of Reflexes** with Jane Swain. 603-357-3755, bonnie@sophiashearth.org

July 5 – 9, Boulder CO: **From Womb to Three**, with Nancy Blanning and Suzanne Down. Contact suzanne@junipertreepuppets.com

Performances

February 27 – March 7, 2010: Midwestern US and Maine. **Eurythmy Spring Valley Ensemble Tour**. Contact Lura Jacobs, 845-352-5020, ext. 13, info@eurythmy.org.

Ongoing Trainings and Courses

November 9 – 13, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: Last call for enrollment in the **Early Childhood In-Service Program**, a part-time teacher training program designed for people currently working in a Waldorf early childhood setting. Graduation slated for Summer 2011. For further information, contact Lauren Hickman, 916-961-8727 x117 or at earlychildhood@steinercollege.edu.

November 16, Sunbridge College, Chestnut Ridge, NY: **Open House for the Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher Education part-time program**, with Susan Howard, Program Director. Join us for an Open House to learn more about this program, enrolling now for summer 2010. RSVP via our website. Contact Anna Claire Novotny, 845.425.0055 x18, info@Sunbridge.edu.

Starts January 2010, Chestnut Ridge, New York: **Sheep to Shawl—A One-Year Course in Fiber Exploration** with Renate Hiller and Mikae Toma, 10 Saturdays. Contact 845-425-2891, fibercraft@threefold.org.

February 26 – March 5, Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, CA: **LifeWays Training** with Cynthia Aldinger and Rudolf Steiner College colleagues. First of three sessions of new LifeWays Training. Contact Rudolf Steiner College, 916-961-8727, info@steinercollege.edu

May 1, Coast of Maine: Registration due for **LifeWays Early Childhood and Human Development Northeast Training** with first session of four-part certificate training course this July with Susan Silverio, Rachel Ross and others. Contact Susan at 207-763-4652 or silverio@tidewater.net

Please submit calendar items for May through December 2010 by March 15 to Lory Widmer, publications@waldorfearlychildhood.org.

Editor: Stephen Spitalny
Editorial Advisor: Susan Howard
Managing Editor: Lory Widmer
Proofreading: Jennifer Kleinbach
Administrator: Melissa Lyons
Cover Art: Michael Howard
Production: Frank Costantino

Special Thanks

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

Grateful acknowledgement is made of permission granted to reprint articles from *Kindling*, our sister journal in the UK. In this issue, "Child Observation," "Self-Review for the Teacher," and "Plant Dyeing in the Kindergarten" previously appeared in *Kindling*.

The images on pages 15 and 16 are from the forthcoming WECAN book *A Day Full of Song* by Karen Lonsky, illustrated by Victoria Sander

Photograph on page 25 courtesy of Louise deForest.

Image on page 25 from *Saint Martin* (WECAN, 2009).

Past issues of Gateways are available online with many articles posted at <http://www.waldorflibrary.org/gateways.html>. The most recent issues will not be posted online. Hard copies of current issues and back issues can be ordered from WECAN.

Seeking Your Contributions

- Articles based on your experiences, observations or research.
 - Practical activities such as stories, circle times and crafts.
 - *Reviews of books that support our work.
- Articles about or interviews with the elders in the Waldorf early childhood movement.
 - Websites that support early childhood work.
- Your comments and questions about *Gateways* and past contents.

Annual individual membership, which includes subscription, is \$40.

Gateways is published twice yearly by
the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, 285 Hungry Hollow Road,
Spring Valley, New York, 10977. Telephone (845) 352-1690, Fax (845) 352-1695
info@waldorfearlychildhood.org.

Gateways

A Newsletter of the
Waldorf Early Childhood Association
of North America

FALL/WINTER 2009
ISSUE 57