

# A Glow of Inspiration

~ Janene Ping

I have been back from the International Conference at the Goetheanum for a few weeks now, and I am still feeling a glow of inspiration from the mysterious veils of encounter that I experienced there. Images of light, color and form in the richness of beauty in nature, the arts, thought—and most of all, humanity—filled my soul and continue to bring sustenance for my work. I am so grateful for the communion of soul nourishment that was shared with so many others. It is a gift to have had the chance to raise voices in song, follow threads of thought woven round the mystery of the child's incarnation, and to have delved into practical activity that deepened those thoughts.

As an enthusiastic puppeteer I was also very interested to experience the work of the Goetheanum Puppet Theatre. There were two presentations given at the Rudolf Steiner Halde that I was fortunate to be able to experience. The first was a fairy tale presentation of Briar Rose brought in illuminated transparencies by Markus Kuhnemann. Mr. Kuhnemann has created the images for the well known Grimms' fairytale in what he names "Fairytale-Light-Magic." This is intended to be a healing alternative to television and film for the young child. Hand-colored veils of colored tissue paper on screens create the images for the story. They are illumined from behind in a light box that allows the next scene to be entered behind the first. A kaleidoscope of colors is created as the first image is removed, revealing a progression of scenes as the story is told. Mr. Kuhnemann explained that he is hoping to be able to produce the materials for this light-magic experience so that they can be re-created in an accessible and affordable way. Thus schools and parents may be able to own their own version of the fairytale to be viewed as often as wished.

The second presentation was the Easter Fairytale adapted from Christian Morgenstern in tabletop puppetry. The story was told in gentle and rhythmic tones by one puppeteer who was accompanied by a musician playing guitar. A beautiful tableau of the transforma-

tion of Winter to Spring unfolded before the audience of community children who seemed to be lifted into a dream as spring flowers awoke and bloomed. Easter Hares brought colored eggs that were discovered by a little girl as she entered the garden on Easter morning. The images were very gentle and invited the audience to let go of the cares of the outer world and live into images of renewal.

What impressed me most about both of these presentations was the deep power of archetypal image. Both invited a kind of inner stillness from the beholder. We were invited to witness a mystery of universal archetype that reflected a truth of the human spirit. The images were beautiful and nourishing to the senses yet left the soul free.

There is so much more from the conference to be digested and brought to my early childhood faculty meetings. I am looking forward to the written translations of the morning lectures which will bring more depth for study in months to come.

But there is one other moment in time that I am hoping to paint for those not able to be in Dornach. For some reason although there were many experiences that moved me and gave me hope for the children of this world, this moment deeply impressed itself and remains an image.

It was in the break time when we were left to wander, visit or rest as needed before the afternoon pedagogical workshops. I sat on the stone steps in front of the great hall of the Goetheanum looking out over the village and distant hills. The sky was dark with storm clouds and there was a sense of urgency in the air. Rolling thunder was sounding. Church bells were ringing. Conversations in unknown languages softly rose and fell around me. A gathering of Japanese men and women were singing circle songs and sharing games on the lawn; the musicality of their laughter and joy was so sweet! Overhead, hovering veils of heavy mist shimmered in grey curtains, but the storm did not rain down. ♦