

THE SPIRAL

2020 ISSUE

A PUBLICATION OF NEW YORK'S RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL



STEINER RESILIENCE



RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL
NEW YORK CITY

WALDORF SCHOOLS CHANGE THE WORLD

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF WALDORF EDUCATION



WE ARE
—the—
World



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A YEAR OF RESILIENCE

A LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

— MAYA ANGELOU



Gabriela Cordo,
School Administrator

The 2019-2020 school year is one that we will always remember. A year marked by the distressing effects of social and racial injustices. A year of a worldwide pandemic and, with it, the sadness of losing family and friends. A year that challenged us in many ways and took away some of our treasured celebrations and gatherings. Yet, a year when we grew in strength, courage, resilience, and care for each other.

We found hope amidst what appeared to be a perplexing and uncertain future. Each one of us stretched far and beyond what we had thought possible. We rose to the circumstances and made it possible to successfully complete the school year through our distance-learning model. It was inspiring to witness how our faculty shifted to remote teaching with grace. Our students stood strong and showed adaptability, confidence, and perseverance during a time that proved most challenging on many levels. We established the Steiner Resilience Fund to preserve the fabric of our community, to ensure the continuation of our program, and to support families who were adversely affected by this global crisis. We accomplished this by putting our best foot forward, by extending empathy and understanding, and by keeping at the center of it all the wellbeing of our entire community.

We are grateful to our faculty and staff for their care, passion, determination, and dedication, all of which made it possible for us to deliver our rich Waldorf curriculum during such

extraordinary times. We are indebted to our parents and alumni for their continued partnership, boundless generosity, and ongoing support. We commend our students for their eagerness, growth, and solidarity; their presence strengthens our community. We remain thankful to the Board of Trustees for their trust and responsible stewardship of the present and future of our beloved school.

The resilience that we developed during the last year set a solid foundation from which we were able to imagine a program for the 2020-2021 school year that would honor the importance of human connection, keeping true to our mission and our core pedagogical values, while staying malleable, nimble, and creative along the way.

It has been an absolute honor to serve at Steiner during this time and to walk in partnership with each of you.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gabriela'.

Gabriela Cordo, School Administrator

FOR THERE IS ALWAYS LIGHT

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

"When day comes, we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade? ...

For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it.

If only we're brave enough to be it."

— AMANDA GORMAN



Terri Adler, Chair



Tushar Shah, Treasurer

The 2019-2020 school year feels a decade away. Our lives were disrupted in ways that were previously unimaginable. In response, we did and continue to do the hard work necessary to heal and rise to our better selves. We continued forward and we tried to find the light.

In this annual report you will read about the challenges facing our School, as well as the commitment and dedication of the teachers, parents, administration, and alumni of Rudolf Steiner School. Our Leadership Council and teachers pivoted to distance learning – proving once and for all that we are in fact not luddites and embrace technology as and when appropriate. Our parents rose to the challenge of becoming substitute teachers and tutors to our children.

The board acted swiftly to safeguard the financial health and stability of the School. We successfully applied for and received a Paycheck Protection Program Loan (PPP Loan), established the Steiner Resilience Fund through which we raised over \$300K and carried out a series of prudent cost savings measures. Due to these actions, as well as stabilized enrollment, we expect to end the 2020-2021 school year in a strong financial position. We incurred a relatively small loss the 2019-2020 school year and currently expect to end the 2020-2021 school year in a secure financial position due to forgiveness of the PPL Loan we received. We have not had to dip into our endowment beyond our annual draw. We continue to own our buildings free

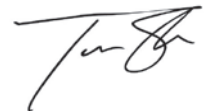
and clear of any mortgage. We cannot predict what the future will hold but we are optimistic about our School's future. Indeed, we will soon kick off a capital campaign to help support the significant renovation of our cafeteria.

So, thank you to all who have served our school through these unprecedented times. Your dedication in the face of adversity has been a gift to the parents, students, faculty, and administration at the School.

Onward and upward,



Terri Adler, Chair



Tushar Shah, Treasurer

2019-2020 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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A LABOR OF LOVE

A LETTER FROM THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS



Dan Marsch, College Chair

“Quiet I bear within me, I bear within me forces to make me strong.”

—RUDOLF STEINER

On March 13, 2020, the College of Teachers held an emergency meeting in the 78th Street building to assess the rapidly deteriorating public health situation and how it might affect the School’s pedagogy and program in the coming weeks or months. Terms like “distance learning” or “beyond the classroom” were just being invented, only one or two of us had ever led a Zoom meeting, and the protracted shutdown that ensued was not yet obviously imminent. Spring break was just beginning, buying us a little time to plan and adjust; nevertheless, fear was spreading in the wake of the pandemic, and teachers recognized right away that the immediate pedagogical task would be to counteract anxiety, isolation, and discontinuity of experience already emerging. It was a reassuringly calm and circumspect meeting: we knew better than to make concrete plans, and we felt that years of direct and interested engagement with children and families would allow us to adapt our offerings and our ways of teaching. Because our curriculum derives from an intention to meet individually developing human beings rather than from extrinsic standards or regulations, we felt quite ready to adapt school to whatever seemed needed in whatever ways we could. We knew that we would make mistakes, that we would have to forego aspects of school that had seemed essential, and that we would need to work harder than ever before. But we also knew that if we remained attentive to our core principles (that our work with students is for life and not just for now, that teaching and learning are inherently collaborative and not just to and from individuals, and that capacities for intuitive understanding can be strengthened and put to use and not just wished for in the abstract), we would discover and invent paths through the crisis—varying and evolving the program in consonance with our philosophical-pedagogical convictions.

The leading work of the College of Teachers is to coordinate, support, assess, and transform the School’s program and curriculum according to

2019-2020 COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

Cybelle Afable	Dan Marsch
John Anderson	Jorge Martinez
Carol Bärtges	Marisha Plotnik
Gabriela Cordo	Deb Renna
Denise Crane	Jeff Spade
Rallou Hamshaw	Alexandra Spadea
MaryLynn Hetsko	Wendy Kelly
Tim Hoffmann	

our shared pedagogical ideals. By far the most important dimension of this endeavor is to perceive the life activity of the School in as many ways as we can, and last spring that's exactly what was needed more than anything else as we experimented and revised. Moreover, the main project wasn't the emergency conversion to online teaching and learning—it was to plan simultaneously for the summer and for the upcoming school year. Resilience for the College was less an ideal than a method: we needed to sustain a centered imagination of an institution that no longer had a location (much less a way to gather), and the only way to do this was to sustain a manifold of dialogues all through the community. It was this work that was "harder than everbefore," namely, to reach out to parents, colleagues or students with warmth and interest but without the ability to offer specific reassurances about concrete future plans. Resilience meant that the College had to meet far more frequently than usual just to consider what had to change right away, what was actually happening, and what would be needed down the line.

This work was and is a privilege rather than a burden. The College is not an emergency management group, but it is an emergency understanding group, which is a logical consequence of our commitment to an education in freedom. Our free responsibility has been to meet the

pandemic conditions not as obstacles to be circumvented but as comprehensible life circumstances for which we teachers are always inwardly preparing; to encounter these things out of reverence for human development and with devoted regard for our students' well-being.

The College meeting in March 2020 turned out to be the last in-person gathering of teachers until we began arriving again at the school in August. It has been a labor of love to reinvent school, not because everything we have put together has been lovable but because we have felt the trust and support of the community as we have essayed to meet the moment through a period of bewildering changes. Resilience is not a longing for normalcy but inner strength for the future and a disposition to welcome it. Resilience is not somehow invoked by teachers but practiced in conjunction with our students every day.

With heartfelt appreciation, and on behalf of the College,



Dan Marsch, College Chair

DISTANCE LEARNING AND THE VISUAL ARTS

A LETTER FROM RALLOU M. HAMSHAW



**“All the best ideas come out of the process; they come out of the work itself.”
—CHUCK CLOSE**

A true studio experience is most valuable when painting and drawing are taught in an art studio setting. One has only to imagine Courbet’s large picture, *The Artist’s Studio*, or the photographs of Hans Hoffman surrounded by eager students in his Provincetown studio to feel the special atmosphere that is generated when young artists work intensively in spaces specifically designated to the creation of visual art.

Rudolf Steiner School’s art studio is located on the 5th floor of the Upper School building on East 78th Street. A modest room at best, it is nonetheless enhanced by its pleasing, almost square shape and the

loveliness of its indirect light. Work tables and easels abound; a few flat files and a generous library of art books are also part of the architecture of this well-traveled room. Students come here to draw, paint, design, and illustrate. They work in various media, often on large sheets of watercolor paper or stretched canvases of different sizes. Classes can be crowded and the space often feels congested. Still, it is a true studio space, a non-classroom space, and it is evident that most students fully appreciate the quiet time they spend in this room.

Demonstration and one-on-one instruction are certainly the most essential ingredients for the success of rewarding, skill-building art lessons. When the school closed in mid-March, however, remaining shut throughout the spring months, industrious tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students worked independently on their art work from the confines of their homes. Most often, they chose their own subject matter and shared their efforts with me at several stages of development by photographing their projects and sending them directly to my email address for commentary. Responding to each student individually, I offered personalized critiques of their work in written form. In this edition of *The Spiral*, I am delighted to present a selection of creative, self-motivated student art work enthusiastically produced during a challenging period of quarantine and distance learning.



Tomas Rodriguez, 12th Grade Self-Portrait as a Child



Max Volk, 12th Grade Watercolor



Juliette Richenthal, 10th Grade Pastel

WALDORF 100 CELEBRATIONS

A LETTER FROM ALEXANDRA SPADEA

Last September 2019 we celebrated 100 years of Waldorf education - a festive day that was joyfully marked all over the world with various events and performances.

Here in the city at the first Waldorf School in North America, we organized a beautiful evening event at Ethical Culture with performances and talks from Waldorf Alumni, and a street fair the next day for all of our students.

The street fair also served as our Michaelmas celebration, and was complete with games, music, art, exhibitors from other Waldorf schools and initiatives, and unlimited snacks and food for all. After lunch we had a talk on the importance of Climate action by current Seniors Leah New and Julia Byrne, and alumna



Danielle Sang '14, followed by a silent Eurythmy moment and a climate march around the block.

In true Steiner Michaelmas spirit, everyone was wearing red that day. Students, colleagues, and parents alike loved the street fair, and we look forward to doing it again - hopefully, next Fall.

The joy and strength of coming together as community was palpable in both events and gave us the right spirit and courage we needed for the year.....and we can still feel it!



WALDORF 100 CELEBRATIONS





IT TAKES A VILLAGE

A LETTER FROM ADELE GRANT, STEINER PARENT

This past school year has shown us that the timeless proverb is more relevant than ever.



We often hear the African proverb “it takes a village” being thrown around when it comes to raising children, but what does it really mean in this day and age? Traditionally we had generations of family and neighbors around to help raise our offspring. Today many of us live far away from our families and move often for work opportunities which leaves us on our own to raise our children. This means that we need that proverbial village more than ever.

Like many, when we first had Jack we were living 800 miles away from all our family and were first in our circle of friends to have children. To get true support one had to hire a nanny or baby nurse as there was no grandma, sister or neighbor to come and hold the baby so mom and dad could get a couple hours of uninterrupted sleep. As the years went on, we met other friends with children to help us on our parenting journey but not until we discovered Rudolf Steiner School did we finally feel like we had found our “family.” From the first cool fall evening when we stepped foot in the school on our first tour I was brought back to my own childhood and my fond

memories of my time with my grandmother in Lithuania. From the smell of baking bread and the beautiful natural aesthetic of the classrooms to the warmth of the teachers welcoming the children with literal open arms and laps this place was unlike any other school we had toured. I knew that night that this is the school we wanted for our children.

It was immediately evident what a warm and inclusive community we were joining. Within the first few days as new parents in the school we were invited to attend the fall fair workshops where our new friendships would start to blossom. As the weeks went on there were many opportunities to get to know other parents, visit classrooms and partake in lectures. Over the years I went from attending my first knitting workshop as a participant not knowing anyone at the school, to now leading the workshop myself and coordinating and overseeing all the various workshops that are available to the parents. There have been class holiday parties at parents' homes, school festivals to attend like the Lantern Walk and May Day and group apple picking trips. In addition, there were smaller birthday parties, vacations with other families and many other wonderful memories.

All these experiences were especially meaningful because many were so unique to our school. It was during those fall mornings in the cafeteria teaching a parent to knit or learning how to make a Waldorf doll that I was first exposed to parents from across the whole school. As a new parent I was able to learn from the more seasoned parents about what's to come in the grades, how to keep our children protected and balanced in our screen heavy society and how on earth I'll find it in me to send off my child for a week's farm trip in 3rd grade. It felt that if I had any questions or challenges in my life, if I was to come to the cafeteria after drop-off there would be someone there with an ear to listen and genuine thoughtful advice to offer. It really felt like having a large loving extended family.

This past school year ended differently than previous

years because of a worldwide pandemic and so we couldn't be physically together for many months. However, the feeling of community and family continued. It's because of the many wonderful parents that I met at the school that the isolation and stress of a quarantine was bearable. I'm grateful that despite being physically apart I felt connected through regular class Zoom meetings, emails and texts. Once things started to open up more, we eagerly met up with other families for beach days and outings upstate. And while we didn't know how the fall would look, my family knew that no matter what and no matter where we would be, we would feel that there are others supporting us.

In conclusion, I will forever feel grateful to have found Rudolf Steiner School for our family. While we continue to live in a huge city that can feel overwhelming and isolating, I no longer feel like I am parenting alone. It has not only become a warm and nurturing school for my children, I have also found my proverbial village within the Rudolf Steiner Family.



Adele Grant knitting



FALL FAIR

Saturday, November 23, 2019 | Celebrating 100 Years of Waldorf Magic

Our beloved Fall Fair comes to life every year thanks to the support, participation, collaboration, leadership, and enthusiasm of all the organizers and volunteers, who work endless hours from the very beginning of the school year to make this a special day. Fall Fair symbolizes the annual seed we plant for our entire year together as a community. THANK YOU for your presence, passion, and inspiration.





FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO GET INVOLVED:
Please reach out to Ariana Induddi at ainuddi@steiner.edu

PARZIVAL IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

A LETTER FROM CAROL BÄRTGES

Those of us who teach in a Waldorf high school know well the archetypal questions and observations that resound from the text of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*.



Carol Bärtges, Humanities Teacher & Alumni '73

Although in recent years I have dispensed with other “Ur” main lessons, such as *Faust*, instituting instead a seminar on 20th and 21st century female authors, I have deliberately chosen to keep the *Parzival* block in the 11th grade curriculum. From its strikingly modern and innovative themes of inclusion—for example, Parzival’s brother, Feirefiz, born to an African mother, is essential to Parzival’s success in finally re-discovering the Grail castle; the influence and agency of the book’s female characters is incontrovertible—to the text’s exploration of the young soul’s journey through life, this 13th century work is an invaluable well-spring for the questions and insights that students experience when studying the text in its entirety. (I am impatient with watered-down presentations and approaches to this work and strongly recommend that high school teachers give their students the privilege of reading von Eschenbach’s artful, stem-winding prose in its entirety.)

So how can one teach *Parzival* in a pandemic? How does such a significant moment in the 11th grade curriculum translate in the cyber world of remote learning? The New York City Rudolf Steiner School students and I had the following experiences this past April.

Continuity was Key

The class “met” online, via Zoom, for 90 minutes every day throughout the four-week block. Prior to teaching the course, I toyed with the idea of meeting every other day as other colleagues were doing with younger grades. I decided against it: the impact of the text, I felt, would dissipate if we didn’t deepen the discussions of the sixteen “books” that make up *Parzival* through conscious review and day to day elaboration.

Movement was Essential

What worked was to begin with movement – sitting for a Zoom meeting for 90 minutes would have been debilitating. We spoke the morning verse, standing, and then our Upper School eurythmy teacher, Alexandra

Spadea, began our day – working with Rudolf Steiner’s indications for the planetary movements and their corresponding colors and moods. Students stood behind their “desks” at home as we moved together to the gestures and sounds conveyed by Ms. Spadea:

Sun:	AU, white–	the complete human being
Venus:	A, green–	loving devotion
Mercury:	I (ee) yellow–	egotistical potentia
Moon*:	Ei (i) purple–	creative potential
Mars:	E (ay) red–	aggressive potential
Jupiter:	O, orange–	wisdom
Saturn:	U, blue–	“Tiefsinn”, deep pondering, memory of times past

* Moon is a central place of balance – the only gesture that does not move. Imagine a lemniscate around the place where your wrists cross, and experience the relations of above and below at the crossing where your wrists meet.

The views of planets and their influence are mentioned several times in the *Parzival* text. In later Zoom discussions, fruitful connections were made by the students between the gestures they were learning and the astrological import of these movements. As distant as we all were during our Covid spring, moving together to begin the main lesson united us.

Break-Out Rooms

Discussions of specific questions and themes in smaller groups proved invaluable to the success of the main lesson. The Zoom option of ‘breakout rooms’ gave students time to debate and educate one another on the topics set the day or week before. The ability “visit” each one of these breakout rooms allowed me to answer questions as they arose and share further thoughts before moving on to the next group. I truly enjoyed the function that allows the host to end the breakout sessions at the same time for all. This proved so much more effective and efficient than the experience, surely familiar to other high school teachers, of having to run all over the school to gather back small discussion groups which had become so immersed in their discussions that they “forgot” to return to the main classroom.

Timely and Immediate Response to Student Work

At the end of the week, students sent me cell-phone pictures of their artwork and emailed their journal entries and essays on an almost daily basis. I could correct these on my computer and return them immediately for revision and final entry into the students’ main lesson journals. The rhythm of daily and weekly gathering and the immediate return of corrected work kept the momentum going, kept a check on who was not completing assignments, and most importantly, kept the intensity of the main lesson experience alive.

Individuation

With more time at home, it was important to encourage students to be creative and independent in their approach to the study of the text. They were asked to keep journals, into which artwork and personal essays were crafted every few days. Perhaps the isolation at home gave the students more time and space to think more deeply about the questions concerning individual freedom and destiny that the *Parzival* text brings so vividly to life. Clearly, students had more time throughout the day and week to do outstanding artwork as well as truly reflective writing in response to questions such as:

- A. What is the Grail and what does it mean as a symbol, both in *Parzival* and in our lives today? *Parzival* is described as a “Brave man slowly wise.” How does a person find the Grail? What qualities are needed—for *Parzival* and for any individual—to find it?
- B. Who are the main female characters in *Parzival*? What roles do they play in the book? How do they both visibly and invisibly move the plot?
- C. Describe the role of polarities or opposites in *Parzival* – black and white, joy and sorrow, love and hatred, alertness and dreaminess, physical love and spiritual love, innocence and experience, etc.

Here are some examples of work, in word and image, from student journals:

PARZIVAL IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

Journal Entry 5: The sorceress, Cundrie, who reveals Parzival's disgrace in front of Arthur's court, can be seen as representing an alter ego, or shadow side of Parzival's persona. Do you have a "shadow side?"

I have never been a patient person. Even from a young age, if something wasn't coming easily to me, a mild tantrum was about to ensue. My parents always tell me that I was an easy and docile child, but the smallest things could frustrate me. My first enemy was learning how to put on my socks. After my mother would calmly explain that there was no "left" sock and "right" sock like the shoes that I was already fairly adept at putting on myself, I expected to be able to just pull them on my feet and be done with it. Sadly, this was not the case, as half of the time I would put them on upside down so that the heel was bulging on the top of my foot. This would make me suspicious, thinking that maybe my mother was wrong; I would switch the socks from one foot to the other. Of course, the socks would be upside down again, causing me to rip the socks off my feet and throw them across the room.

Although I eventually did figure out how to put socks on correctly, I had quite a few other learning curves that caused me great frustration. I was the very last child in my grade to learn to read, and after hours of programs and games and exercises I would ball up my fists and swear that I would never be able to do it. Similar to my sock dilemma, however, I overcame my aversion eventually and became an avid and passionate reader a few years later. I have developed more patience with myself at this point in my life, and have even developed a perseverance for accomplishing things, once I put my mind to it. I have found a way to harness my impatience with myself as a power source which feeds my determination. Out of stubbornness (that is also a definite shadow side of mine), I refuse to allow my frustration to get the better of me. I try to recognize my impatience as an expectation that I have for myself, and it acts as a driver to push me towards my goals.

Journal Entry 6: Love and its many manifestations is a dominant theme in Parzival. What are your thoughts on Love?

Love is the bond between two beings. It is often a sense of safety that one feels in the presence of another. Love does not have to be mutual; in fact, some people find it easier to love someone who does not love them back, someone who does not reciprocate their feelings.

Not all love is romantic. Two close friends may have love for each other that is created by their reliance on one another. But when one person loves another, and it is not mutual, it can hurt. In Gawain's case, the love that he feels for Orgeluse is initially only based on her outstanding beauty. His attraction to her is amplified when she teases him and denies him. This is because of Gawain's curiosity and pride. Gawain is not used to being rejected by women, which is why Orgeluse stands out to him. The evolution of their relationship is one of my favorite parts of Parzival. It is revealed that Orgeluse used to have a husband whom she loved dearly, but he was killed. This is the reason she pushes Gawain away and tests him so severely. This fact reveals that there is always more to someone than meets the eye. And only when you Gawain learned to feel someone else's pain could he truly love in a truly selfless way. Love is about feeling: if you cannot feel someone else's emotions you can never understand them. And if you cannot learn to have patience for someone else's love, then you will wait for it forever. When you truly love someone and feel like you are completely bound to them, it will feel like you are on fire.

J. H., Class of '21



Illustration by
Leah New,
Class of '21

Final Thoughts

Remote learning cannot take the place of what Waldorf education prizes so highly – the spontaneity and inspiration inherent in a live, classroom setting. Waldorf teachers know that there is an invisible but palpable spiritual substance built up through the person to person engagement of human beings: nothing can substitute for the community experience that teachers work so hard to achieve in the “trenches” of the daily classroom. On-going study, mediation and collaborative research allow Waldorf teachers to strive to be ever flexible and creative. Still, through the challenging and exhausting work of our Covid spring, I found that the remote learning platforms that I learned to use for teaching high school literature classes could be shaped and directed to achieve a semblance of the participation and immediacy that make teaching a course like *Parzival* such a rich gift for students and teacher alike.

Lucia
Villanueva,
Class of '21



INTERVIEW WITH MATRE

A INTERVIEW FROM STUDENTS SEBASTIAN LENART AND SHELBY GOODWIN

"I try to leave space for the possibility that there is something new that could come through that I haven't even seen yet. Because that place that new things come from, if we don't leave that door open, we just keep repeating our same thinking."

What is your full name?

Matt or Matthew Sawaya

Where were you brought up?

I grew up in Santa Monica, Los Angeles.

While you were growing up, which rappers influenced you?

I grew up in a musical family. Some of my aunts and uncles were singers and songwriters, my brother is a jazz bassist. He's older, so I grew up listening to a lot of the music he would show me. I first got turned on to hip hop when I was around eight or nine years old. I had an older cousin and turned me on to early stuff because it was early in hip hop at that point. It would have been around 1989, while the first rap record came out in 1979. I listened to a group named Run-D.M.C. Later I got into a later generation - these rappers were from New York, so it's a pleasure to be here. There's a rapper named Rakim, another one named KRS-1, Slick Rick, these were some of the founding rappers that developed the kind of rapping where you talk about life experiences, what's going on in the world, a lot of them were political, philosophical, or spiritual. Rap was different from mainstream rap today. Some rappers today like Kendrick Lamar and J cole are keeping the deeper tradition alive. There's a lot of underground rappers still doing it as well.

When did you start writing your own music?

In the piece that I described to you about the LA riots, I was 10 years old and the city was on fire because a man named Rodney King, a black man, was driving and got pulled out of his car and was beaten by the police. It was caught on video tape. When the police were found not guilty, the city essentially exploded and my first rap was about that.

Did you have a view of your career path at that age? Is it different than what it turned out to be? How has that vision evolved for you?

The basic path was clear for me from a young age, but I don't think it's necessarily common in all people. From the time I started writing raps I just had the feeling like "this is what I'm going to do." The forms that it has taken have been totally different than what I could have ever imagined. I think it's good to keep in mind that just because something looks different than how we thought it would've looked, doesn't mean



it's not the right thing. Doors have opened for me in strange places. I've spent a lot of time doing music in Finland, for example.

When you realized you wanted to get into rap, how did you begin your career?

I grew up in a scene, a community, where a lot of people were doing it at that time. It turned out that one of my best friends at the time started making beats, he was probably 15 and I was 13. At my high school there were always cyphers, cyphers are circles where people rap and battle. That made it so that I could plug into a community and I stay tuned to where shows were happening - maybe there's an open mic, maybe there's a chance to get up and rap with somebody else who's more established. I started to look into where those doors were open. There was an open mic close to our high school. When I was about 16, I used to go there and rap. I was always super nervous, but I forced myself to do it.

You mentioned that the political and philosophical message that you found in rap when you were younger has changed in the mainstream, can you elaborate on what you think about the former message as opposed to what's being presented today? Do you still enjoy mainstream music?

Some rappers that continue to demonstrate a message in their music are mainstream too, like Kendrick, he's really well known. But it's different than some radio stuff that

focuses materialistic things and being cool, without the deeper message. But sometimes some of those rappers are really good rappers, technically. Most of the time they'll have around 15-20 songs and 1 or 2 of them actually do talk about something deeper. So they are able to convey such a message. The real question is what our economy and culture support.

A lot of these rappers, young rappers, feel like they can't make a living or make it big without talking about that kind of content - cars, women, partying, and drugs - because that's what the music industry has pushed so hard. One thing that I find important is asking how we can support rappers and artists in talking about deeper content, so that they feel that they can make a living and talk about real stuff. I think a lot of these artists have the potential, we just have to support it instead of just supporting this really flashy, mainstream thing. Historically, hip hop has always been about speaking the truth and saying what other people won't say. But at a certain point, that became really threatening to the way that things are. When rap became more popular, record labels started to say, "If we take the kind of more provocative, flashy, violent, shocking aspects of rap music and support those artists, we could make a lot of money on this." So rap took off commercially, but it's really about those outside forces of business that wanted to take that energy and make money off of it. The true kind of hip hop spirit has always stayed alive, it just might be a little bit more in the shadows. Your generation, growing up with

INTERVIEW WITH MATRE

the internet, which we didn't grow up with, has access to all of it, just start searching and you'll find good stuff.

Do you think that mainstream rap music will remain about cars, women, drugs, and money, or that it will return to a more meaningful message?

I think it kind of goes up and down. That message and that original spirit has never been lost - thank goodness. There are still artists, like Chance the Rapper, for example, who are connected to this original impulse. And a lot of these younger guys are. As opposed to thinking that it's something out there, my thing is like, "What can we do to support it going in that direction?" Part of it is creating alternative record labels and alternative ways of accessing music. I work with a lot of people who are involved with new economic forms, like gift economy, new currencies - new ways of thinking about things. So we see that mainstream rap is stuck in this trap of the industry - well, what can we create that is actually a form that would allow rap to flourish differently? I ask myself that question a lot. If it's not working, how can we create something else? I think there is always an opportunity for things to go in a different direction.

Do you ever write with the intention of reaching a specific audience?

A lot of times when I write, I sit like you all just did, and try to listen to what feels like it needs to be said. And over the years, I've created a practice out of that. If you can imagine that deep, true voice - let's say we all

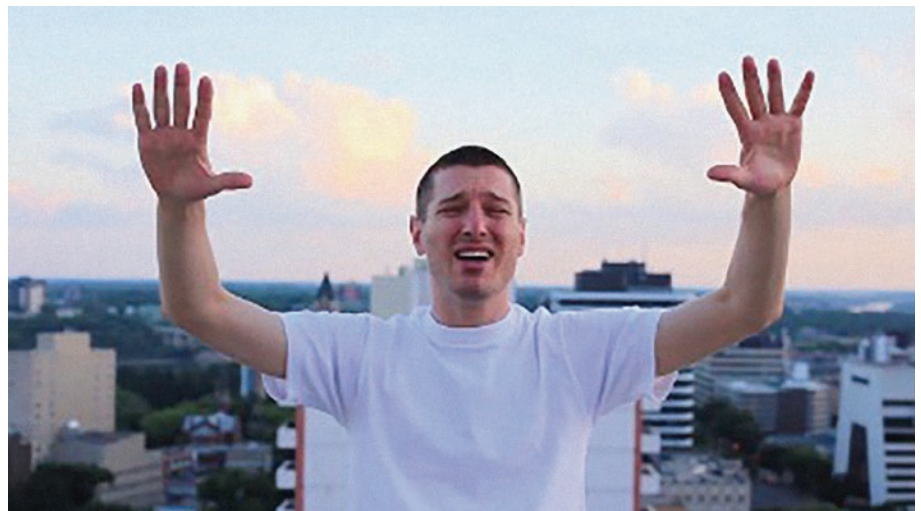
have this voice inside of us. If you can imagine the relationship you have with anyone - the first time you meet them, you might not get into a deep conversation, but little by little, you find your way into trust and connection. For me, having a relationship with that part of myself is like any other relationship. And I've built it over many years through a practice of listening to that part of myself and learning how to distinguish between what's just a passing thought and what's the truth. I've learned to recognize this overtime and I really try to write from that place. Sometimes, I realize, as it starts to come out, that there are particular people this may be connected to, that this could be a helpful message for.

You used the term "creating out of nothing." What does that mean to you?

If we can imagine, right now, the time that our world is in, we see a lot of things that are collapsing or not working very well. It's pretty clear that there is a dysfunction in the way

that we've been doing things that are creating all these different social challenges. I think the "creating out of nothing" asks us if we can leave enough open space for something new to come, instead of just repeating the same old pattern. I've heard a lot of people say, "We could do it this way," "things could be different," and people say "no, this is the way it is." Nothing could be further from the truth. That's a trap! Because there's nothing that exists, that we have going on socially, as a culture, that we didn't create as human beings. It was different before that, and it was different before that, and it was different before that. Everything is always changing, but sometimes it feels a lot safer to say, "that's the way it is, I'm just going to fit in and do my best." If we keep doing that, then we're buying into what keeps things going in these dysfunctional directions.

So the question for me, in terms of something out of nothing: the nothing is the open space to say "I don't know." But I'm not going to just say "I don't know," and then jump right back into



what I do know. I'm going to leave enough space in the uncertainty to ask, "Through this uncertainty, what wants to come?" And it's a vulnerable, challenging place to be. Maybe we only dip into it for a minute. But through that, we start to access the beginning pieces of something new. I think that one of the biggest challenges in our culture is that we are terrified of silence.

Every time somebody asks me a question, I could just say what I've already thought of. Which is, a lot of the time, what happens in an interview. I repeat what I know to say; it's nicely packaged. But instead of doing that, when somebody asks me a question, I try to leave space for the possibility that there is something new that could come through that I haven't even seen yet. Because that place that new things come from, if we don't leave that door open, we just keep repeating our same thinking. And if we keep repeating our same thinking, we keep repeating our same social forms.

All these political candidates we have, the absolute last thing any of them are allowed to do is to say, "I don't know." And it's really ridiculous because none of them know. The point is not to know. What we need is somebody who has the courage to say, "I don't know, and I have the courage to stand together with others who don't know, to hold a space for what can come, to come." Then, we start knowing from a deeper place, instead of just knowing what worked well enough to get us by. If we want to undo these patterns, we have to be willing to be uncertain - in the space of the unknown.



Another line you've said is, "I'll be walking through a different door." What does that door look like?

Maybe it was the same door that I was just talking about. When we leave enough space to say, "There's a possibility for something deeper than just my day-to-day thinking that I'm used to." Because in that space, all kinds of stuff connects. I wrote that song in Canada, that's why I'm saying "1,000 miles from home." The first lyric of the song says, "I light a candle and I feel you in my room." I was writing about an ex-girlfriend of mine. We had separated and it was a really painful process. We still had a lot of love but it just wasn't the right thing.








Years later I shared with her that I was writing that lyric about her, and she was like, "That is so crazy, every night I was lighting a candle and thinking about you. And I was wanting to send you that love even though we couldn't talk." My point in sharing that is not about romantic love, it's about that deeper place, where things connect in ways we couldn't imagine. There is a deeper current flowing through our lives. There are other levels that things

are lining up at, but we don't reach that sort of current if we just keep doing things in the same way. If we don't make time for a deeper level of conversation or inner reflection.

Maybe you're a dancer, or you're a photographer. That's the doorway. That is the different door... if you love it. Whatever the thing is that connects you in that way, when you're like, "I have to do this; I love this!" That opens the door. And through that, we light the candle and feel the other person. We start seeing through that door that the world is connected in different ways, and through that, start to see a path. Through all the craziness, how do we connect with something that is actually true? Finding those things that light us up, really inspire us, whether it's the camera, writing - it could be anything. I have a friend who is an engineer and he talks about engineering as if it's rap music, he's so excited about it. If we find our doorway it can connect us not only to something we can do with our lives, but also to something which connects us to the world in a whole different way.

BUDGET RESULTS

2019-2020 (Audited Figures)

	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL	
INCOME			
Gross Tuition and Fees	\$12,850,954		
Tuition Assistance	(\$4,553,188)		
Net Tuition & Fees	\$8,297,766	88.0%	
Additional Program & Misc. Income	\$454,002	4.8%	
Net Fundraising	\$679,318	7.2%	
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,431,086	100%	
EXPENDITURES			
Salaries & Benefits	\$7,161,003	79.4%	
Program Expense	\$873,132	9.7%	
Facility Expense	\$310,069	3.4%	
Administrative Expense	\$673,939	7.5%	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$9,018,143	100%	
Net Operating Excess (Defecit) before depreciation	\$412,943		
Capital Improvements	(\$518,000)		
NET CASH	(\$105,057)		

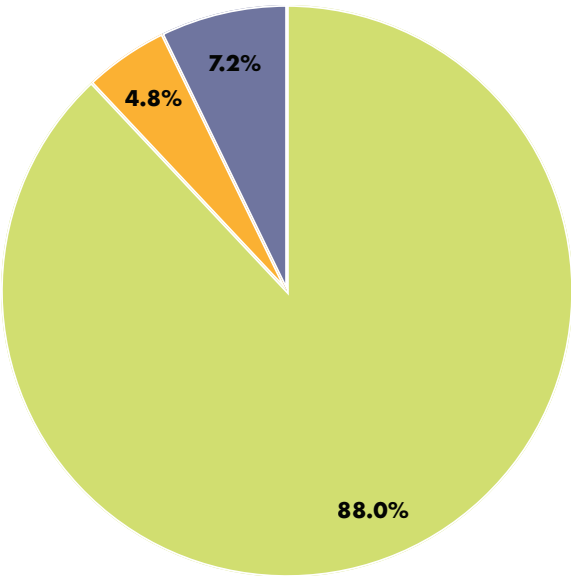
SUMMARY OF FUNDRAISING

* Reflects funds received and booked July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

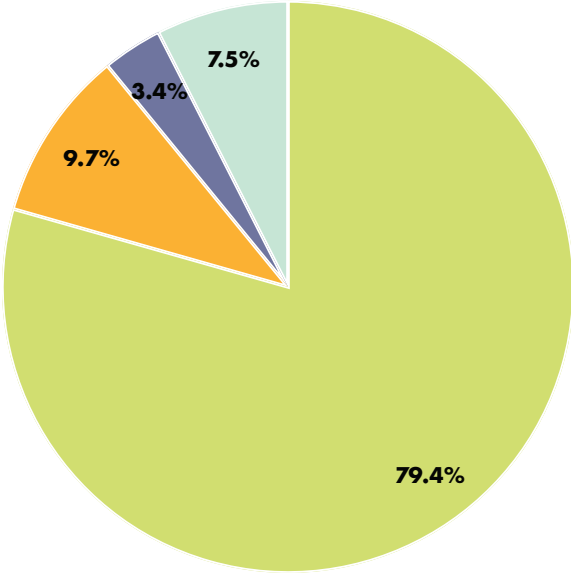
ANNUAL GIVING

Steiner Resilience Fund	\$301,042
Steiner Annual Fund	\$228,321
Steiner Fall Fair (Net)	\$70,478
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	\$55,000
Faculty Development Fund	\$18,327
Miscellaneous Scholarship Funds	\$6,150
TOTAL ANNUAL GIVING TO CURRENT OPERATIONS	\$679,318

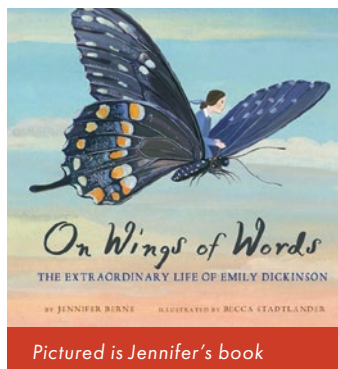
INCOME



EXPENDITURES



CLASS NOTES



1960s

JENNIFER BERNE '62

Hi fellow alumni. Despite this crazy year and all its upheavals, I've still managed to get another book published. Actually, it came out in February, just before everything

got crazy. My new book is a children's picture book biography about Emily Dickinson. Its title is *On Wings of Words: The Extraordinary Life of Emily Dickinson*. And happily, it's already received 4 starred reviews. This book was five years in the making, so obviously I'm really excited to share it with you. I'd love to hear from you. You can get in touch with me through my website www.jenniferberne.com.

FRANK HALDEN '64 After spending the last 40+ years in the dairy animal feed development business, I have retired and returned home, to the Northwest corner on CT. Here I am rejuvenating a small business that my bride started some 30 years ago. H. J's Surprises. Crafts & Stitchery. When your kid returns from college with a box full of t-shirts, send them to me and H. J's will turn them into a quilt. PM me for details.



Frank Halden's new small business

ELIOT SHEIMAN '65 I built my very first website and found putting it together challenging. The Steiner school made me feel like it was an important place to learn history and art, and I then continued my education keeping those goals alive.

1970s

JOHN TAKACS DO '72, AND JOAN TAKACS (BASHAW) '73

We continue as physicians practicing in these challenging time, supporting Anthroposophic extended medicine along with clinic therapists.

Son: John Paul, 2016 graduate Portland Waldorf School, recent '20 graduate Pacific University in Mathematics and education begins work at a new Waldorf initiative school teaching grades 6-12.

ANDREW J. MOOS '78 In June, after 29 years of working for a company doing government affairs and community relations, I went out on my own and started my own consulting business doing what I knew best. The name is A J Moos Advisors, LLC and our website is ajmoosadvisors.com. I'm now assisting non-profits and continuing my local lobbying efforts here in Tampa Bay, Florida.

JENNIFER LYONS '79 I run my own literary agency and we are just welcoming a fourth full agent. Our son just graduated high school and will start college next month. Our daughter graduated Wellesley College two years ago and works and resides in Boston.

1980s

CHRISTOPHER GRANOZIO '82 I married Mary Ellen Cuneo on April 7, 2018. In my 24th year working for the New York Yankees. Finished my 29th season broadcasting college basketball games for my alma mater, Le Moyne College.

SUBMIT YOUR UPDATES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE SPIRAL TO THE PHILANTHROPY OFFICE

Contact Ariana Induddi, Manager of Special Events and Alumni Relations, at ainduddi@steiner.edu

2000s

Aili Venho



AILI VENHO '05 In March, Broadway Records released the album *Losing My Mind: A Sondheim Disco Dream* and it received rave reviews from critics (even from Stephen Sondheim himself) and has over 20,000 streams. Aili Venho sings *The Miller's Son* on the album, which has been submitted to be considered for a Grammy nomination. Along with being the resident voice teacher at Steiner and teaching virtually, she has been spending a lot of time with her cat, Chubbs and brand new Corgi puppy, Rosie (aka Ro-ro) in her cozy one bedroom in Harlem.

Miller's Son on the album, which has been submitted to be considered for a Grammy nomination. Along with being the resident voice teacher at Steiner and teaching virtually, she has been spending a lot of time with her cat, Chubbs and brand new Corgi puppy, Rosie (aka Ro-ro) in her cozy one bedroom in Harlem.



Ivan on his wedding day

IVAN RAHMAN '07 and his wife had their wedding this past June. They didn't let the pandemic stop them!

2010s

CHIARA MADHU '15

I graduated from Skidmore with a degree in Physics. I am thrilled to be working back at Steiner as a Math and Science teacher in the Upper and Lower Schools. It is a pleasure to be working with my former teachers, and a joy to be back in a community that I grew up in.



Chiara pictured in the halls of the Steiner School present day

ANNABELLE VAËS '15 graduated cum laude from Skidmore College with a Bachelor of Science in Theater and a Bachelor of Arts in German. Since graduating, she has been busy taking acting classes with Alum parent Karen Braga and supporting her dramatic dreams with various endeavours. This includes a stint as a directing assistant with Mr. John Anderson for the Rudolf Steiner's 10th grade class play and facilitating wine tastings for NLC Wines. She currently works as an independent contractor with Elila, a

plus size bra company, created by Rudolf Steiner parent Ellen Jacobson and is going to be co-teaching the Rudolf Steiner Parent-Child class in the Park. She hopes to find ways to stay creative in her acting career during these COVID times.

Annabelle Vaës



GRACE FRIEDMAN '19 Currently I am halfway through my Sophomore year at Hamilton College in Clinton New York. I was fortunate in that Hamilton was fully operational and in person this semester. The college was able to preserve our experience while keeping us safe, which is rare in the COVID era. As I studied abroad in London the first semester of my freshman year and we were sent home early my second semester this was my first full semester on campus. I will declare a major in theater at the end of the year, and am considering minoring in Literature and French. I have already received distinction in my intended field as I won The Edwin Barrett Prize, which is awarded to a student who, at the end of the year, has

made a significant contribution to the College's theatre program. Over the break I will begin my application to hopefully study abroad at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London during the spring of my junior year. I will also be doing a number of Zoom auditions in an effort to be cast in a regional summerstock production this summer.



Grace Friedman

REMEMBERING COLONY ELLIOTT SANTANGELO '65

BY RALLOU M. HAMSHAW

On October 7, Rudolf Steiner School informed the community of the sudden passing of alumna, Colony Elliott Santangelo, on October 3, 2020. She was my classmate and closest of friends; the sadness and emptiness that come with such a loss have been profound. Both members of Virginia Paulsen's class, Colony and I journeyed through the grades together, graduating in 1965. Instead of growing apart as is so often the case with connections formed in high school, we continued to forge a unique friendship that would endure and deepen throughout the years.

Colony was well-known for her lively wit, humor, and many remarkable gifts, including a fluid, exemplary facility with verse and rhyme; her poems were featured every year in the school's literary magazine, "The Key." An avid reader throughout life, Colony had a rapport with the written word that enhanced her impressive literary skills; coupled with her creative imagination, Colony's love of writing very much informed her education at the school. Later in life, Colony's fine achievements as a visual artist are equally notable, and she is the founder of "Stories in Wood" and "Pet Portraits in Wood." Her children's book, "Brother Wolf of Gubbio" was published by Handprint Books in 2000. Colony's art work has been featured on Etsy and at various craft fairs, including the seasonal Holiday Fair at St. John the Divine. In addition to her time as a student at Steiner, Colony served as the receptionist in the Lower School during the years when her daughter, Bronwen Weiss O'Keefe was a student at the school. She was also a soprano with the Oratorio Society of New York City for many years; her lovely, bell-like voice was yet another of Colony's many gifts.

One of the goals of Waldorf Education is to cultivate the value of self-reflection in its students. Below is a sonnet written by a young Colony Elliott as an eighth or ninth grade student at Rudolf Steiner School. Brilliantly apparent in this early verse, despite the youth of its author, is a depth of feeling and thinking reflective of an exceptionally sensitive human being. For many who never knew her, and for all of us who did, Colony's poignant words speak for themselves and offer a picture of the loyal, generous, thoughtful, and dimensional woman she would become.



THE BRIDGE

A little child is God's for naught he knows
Of questions asked in life, of seeking mind.
His faith is all; it's real and pure and grows
Until he takes his place among mankind.
But with his manhood, knowledge takes the throne
And vies with faith, though being much the same.
For knowledge must have faith in what is known,
And faith is knowledge of a higher aim.
So man who deals with things that he can see,
And knows the happy certainty of life
Thus much secure in knowledge, can he be
Content to follow faith in worldly strife?
Between man's faith and knowledge lies a ridge
And he alone is there to be the bridge.

CLASS OF 1973 REUNION

A LETTER FROM ALUMNA ANNE MCMULLEN REUB '73



It has been 47 years since the class of 1973 graduated from the high school at Steiner. Many of the graduating class had been together at Steiner since 1st grade and some since nursery school.

I am not sure why, after all those years, we gravitated toward one another in early 2020. A few of us had remained close through the years, a few of us found one another on Facebook, others through Linked In.

I travel to NYC several times a year to see my family. I have lived in Olympia, WA with my husband and two children, for the last 30 years, and am the only member of my family who strayed west; hence the frequency of my visits, especially since my mom, Diane, is 91 years old.

In January of this year, I started to plan for a visit in April, and after connecting with several of my classmates, decided to pursue the idea of a class reunion. I spoke with Carol Soybel Bartges (we have remained friends all these years), who graciously volunteered to have the reunion at the high school building; and so, the planning began.

As we all know, best laid plans can change, and a pandemic took care of that. I started to reach out by phone or social media to classmates

I had not talked to in 47 years. It was amazing connecting with Andre Bondi, Madeleine Marshall Lowinger, Christopher Franceschelli, Amy Kohn, Ann Mendelsohn, Amy Elliot Andersen, Larry Bauer, Jane Velez Mitchell, Alex Spae, Stig Isacson Fromm, Steven Wolf, and several others. Even Larry Chertoff who transferred to another school after 6th grade was tracked down. It was as if we have never missed a beat. I also reached out to my dear friends Amy Weinrib Greenfield, Liza Rudd, Carol Bärtges and Julie Hayes for advice and counsel going forward.

With COVID, the Zoom technology had become something I was familiar with, and so I floated the idea of a virtual reunion. It was well received.

It's not easy to find people you haven't connected with in 47 years, but with my team of investigators, Andre Bondi, Christopher Franceschelli, and Larry Bauer, we found everyone from the class of 1973. Unfortunately, 2 of our classmates had passed since graduation, Martin Sanderson, and Hank Walsh, they are both terribly missed.

And so, the big event took place on Sunday, April 26, 2020. It was truly remarkable and very moving. Ahead of the Zoom meeting, Julie, Christopher Franceschelli and I (Chris

and Julie did most of the work), compiled a web booklet with each participant's autobiography over the last 47 years, in order to share a little bit about one another before the actual event. Renee Cossutta Zoomed in from Malta where she is teaching; Jane and I were on the west coast, the others in NY and CT. Only 4 of our classmates were unable to attend.

At the beginning of the Zoom, each person said a few words, whether it be a reintroduction, or something they had wanted to say over the years, to the group. We also had a sharing section for those that had something they wanted to say or do for the group. The last section of the reunion was Q&A, which was informative and fun. At the beginning of this article is a screen shot of our Zoom call. Since the reunion, many of us that had not been in touch since Steiner, have been emailing, Zooming, and calling one another. It feels good to be reconnected again. Maybe it's because we are getting older, maybe it's the pandemic, maybe it's the state of our own country and the world at large, and maybe, just maybe, it's because at the end of the day, we truly are (and have been), connected to one another, and that will last forever.

I wish you all health and happiness.

LIFE'S JOURNEY

BY CLIFFORD VENHO '08

Checking in with the Steiner alumni.

Having recently celebrated our two-year wedding anniversary, we have been thinking a lot about that beautiful autumn day in 2018. Alexandra Spadea, a good friend and beloved teacher at Rudolf Steiner School, planned our reception at the Threefold Cafe in Spring Valley, NY. Her artistry and creativity were a true gift and an inspiration to all. We are grateful to Alex and all our friends from the Steiner School, including Maya Morales Osuga '97, who sang at the ceremony, and Victoria Sander '97, who was one of our witnesses, for making it a day we will cherish for the rest of our lives.

The past few years have brought many rich and rewarding experiences, including travel, performances, publications, and teaching. Earlier this year, just before the worldwide lockdown, we toured with the Eurythmy Spring Valley Ensemble in England, Scotland, Germany,



Photographer: Celeste Eizaguirre

Clifford Venho '08 & Ivi Esquerre '97 on their wedding day.

and Switzerland. It was an amazing adventure that brought us to many Waldorf and Camphill communities and that highlighted the extraordinarily global nature of our work.

In addition to our tours and performances, Ivi was busy teaching music theory, History Through Music, and eurythmy at Eurythmy Spring Valley, as well as private violin lessons. In her music history course (part I), she explored the development of music from antiquity through Beethoven—a well-known subject in the Waldorf High School. Both her exposure to music and history at Rudolf Steiner School and her later collaboration with former Steiner history teacher Jann Gates at the Santa Fe Waldorf High School laid a wonderful foundation for her current work and research.

Meanwhile, Cliff was busy teaching poetics and eurythmy at Eurythmy Spring Valley and also actively working as

a translator, writer, and poet. He has translated four of Rudolf Steiner's books to date, published as part of the Chadwick Library Edition of Steiner's written works, and is currently working on a couple more. His poetry and prose have appeared in various literary journals, including *The Westchester Review*, *Modern Literature*, and *The Decadent Review*. His poem "For a Moment" was shortlisted for the 2020 Arts Competition at *La Piccioletta Barca Magazine*. His love of language goes back to those early days in the colorful classrooms of the Lower School, where he and his classmates listened to remarkable myths, stories, and poems from all over the world.



In recent news, we moved to Harlemville, NY in September and are currently living near "the farm," where we both spent time on class trips during our years at Steiner. A little symbolic anecdote might be appropriate here. Upon reuniting after many years away from the Steiner School, we realized that we each owned a wooden angel painted by the late Colony Elliott Santangelo, an important member of the school community. We still carry these angels with us as a reminder of life's journey, which is always unexpected and always full of blessings.

We continue to marvel at the unparalleled love and interest shown to us by our teachers and the deep friendships and human connections that were formed during our time at the Steiner School. These relationships and connections continue to be an important part of our lives and to accompany us throughout our unfolding path together.

ROVINJ

by Clifford Venho

The silver sea reaches to the sky's edge
melting in the wildfire of sunset.
From this tower you can see
the whole of it undulating—
a body of silver covered in flame.
And there in its waves
a white shape like a boat
drifts toward the land.

Is this what the people saw
when the coffin of St. Euphemia
arrived on this rocky shore?
And what the boy saw
who hearing her call
coaxed his two little cows
into heaving her marble coffin
from the water and carrying it
up the steep hill to this place
in the heart of the cape?

This tower has been built for her
and for the boy with a heart of gold
and the strength of an ox,
who salvaged her from the sea
as she burned like a pearl of fire.

Published in *The Westchester Review*, Fall 2020

EVENTS REIMAGINED

A LETTER FROM ROBYN WATTS, STEINER PARENT

The Rose Ceremony. The Holiday Concert. The Spring Eurythmy Assembly. All the musical recitals. The Class Play. And, of course, the Moving Up Ceremony and Graduation.

8th Graders on a class trip



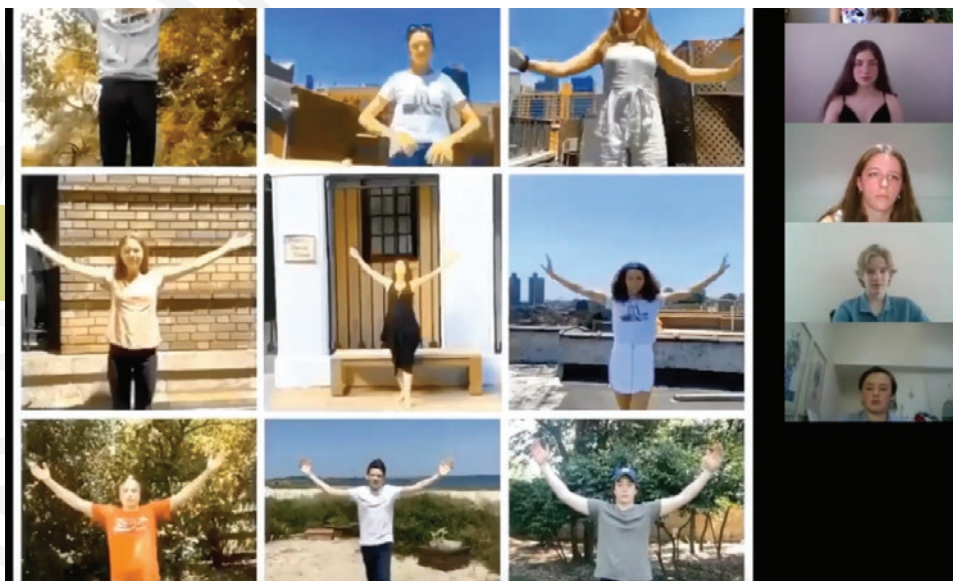
8th Grade Moving Up Ceremony

We have all missed these in-person events this past year of the pandemic. As parents, it's these events that are our connection point to the school, and as they accumulate over the years, they serve as part of our memories of our children's childhood. We have had to mourn for the loss of these memories during the pandemic. I know because over the years, I've had 4 kids at the school who currently range from 3rd grade all the way up to college. The first Rose Ceremony I ever saw was in 2003 when my son was in the nursery. The ceremony and the symbolism resonated deeply and still does.

Last spring, our school and the entire world, scrambled to make order out of the new chaos. My son's 8th grade class (Miss Price's class) had their final play to perform and moving up ceremony to celebrate — but how could they do it? It felt like the class had already been through so much. They started out in first grade with Hurricane Sandy; in 4th grade, Miss Price's apartment building blew up in a gas leak, and then in 7th grade, Miss Price went back to Australia to renew her Visa and got caught up in the U.S. immigration bureaucracy and couldn't return for almost half a year. Other teachers filled in somehow - we didn't know about Zoom then — just two years ago. And now, a pandemic. We asked ourselves: How could we give this class that had been together for 8 intense years, a proper Steiner send off?

And to tell you the truth — it wasn't only about the students — the parents also needed a way to acknowledge the past years, say good bye to Miss Price who was moving back to Australia, say good bye to those students and families moving to other schools and other cities, and essentially, say good bye to their children's young childhood.

We rallied all the talents of the kids and parents, along with new technology and some old technology. The play became a radio play. And the Moving Up



*Eurythmy performance
for the 8th grade
moving up ceremony*

Ceremony became a Zoom ceremony.

Over the many years I've been at the school, we've gone from worrying about children watching tv in 2003 to worrying about so much more — now the tv and so many more distractions are all in the small phone in your hand 24/7. Over that time, the Waldorf lecturers at the school would say: it's not about the technology per se and Rudolf Steiner meant his philosophy to one of the future. If the core components of the philosophy are properly incorporated — Steiner meant it to address any future challenges. Now, I can see that this is so deeply true.

I could never have imagined how Steiner's philosophy would be able to meet this very moment. For the graduation, the parents gathered up every photo, video and sound recording from the past 8 years, from the Rose Ceremony to Michaelmas and Santa Lucia and Hawthorne Valley farm up to the Nativity Play. Next, the students and parents all recorded themselves telling stories from over the years. Parent Speaker Raphael Peacock and Miss Price gave recorded speeches from their homes. The amazing Art Garfunkel and his son Beau (in the class) and James (now an adult but also a graduate of Steiner) recorded themselves singing "At the Zoo" from their apartment; Grammy Award winning singer Kurt Elling and his daughter Luiza sang a song on a special app that synced their singing; thanks to Ms. Spadea each student in the entire class did their own name in Eurhythm from their apartment or home or wherever they were living

in May, and then it was uploaded all together into a single performance using another app. My college age son who was going to film school integrated it all into a seamless movie. With trial and error, we realized that a completely recorded or completely live Zoom would not work (what many know now) and integrated the pre-recorded parts with Miss Price and two students (Rhaya and Oliver) live hosting the event. Behind the scenes of it all, was the virtual host, Steiner's IT administrator Larisa Berson. We were all so nervous on the day of! While we are all used to this now - at the time (last May), it felt like an unknown scramble to somehow create meaning in a very Steiner-esque way.

And it worked! Like so many of past live Steiner events, it was beautiful and sublime, full of music, eurhythm, and memories of so many moments of the years. We felt connected, we celebrated the kids and their achievements and all of the hard work over the years of Miss Price and the other teachers. An added bonus of the format was that relatives and friends could watch live from elsewhere — in fact, anywhere in the world — personally, I had friends and relatives watching from Australia and Germany. The class also had many grandparents, who during the pandemic were isolated and couldn't venture out, watching and celebrating along with us. We heard that the 8th grade Moving Up ceremony inspired the 12th grade to also create a similar on-line graduation ceremony. I was able to watch the 12th grade ceremony from outside the city, and in Steiner fashion, it was a truly lovely send off to the seniors.



JUMPING ROPE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

TEXT & PAINTINGS BY MADDIE ASSARSSON, RUDOLF STEINER KINDERGARTEN ASSISTANT

As spring blooms around us we are reminded of when we skipped, galloped, and ran as fast as we could to our meadow in the park. When we got there, we opened our backpacks, took out our jump ropes, and got to jumping.

Jumping rope is a much beloved activity for young children, and one that has been passed down over centuries. Valued as much for its simplicity as it is for its difficulty, jumping rope appears in its many forms in the histories of cultures all over the world. But why do we do it in our kindergartens? We can imagine that for the young child who has first mastered crawling, sitting, walking, running, and skipping, jumping presents an exciting and challenging new skill. Jumping strengthens the muscles in the legs, matures the sense of self-movement, and requires great stamina. In the Early Childhood classrooms, kindergarteners may first practice jumping rope with the rope on the ground so that they can master the act of jumping in place, with both legs together.

“Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn.”

—O. FRED DONALDSON

To defy and overcome the force of gravity conveys a feeling of freedom. Children are inspired by watching their friends who have already acquired the skill of jumping and will practice until they find their own rhythm.

Jumping rope is not only a joyful way to exercise the physical body- it also provides us with opportunities to introduce verses and rhymes to which the children move. Movement and language are practiced in unison and some verses even encourage the children to count or recite the alphabet.

Here are two of our favorite verses in the Kindergarten:

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

*Strawberry shortcake, cream on top,
Tell me the name of your sweetheart,*

Is is A, B, C,...

BUBBLE GUM

*Bubble gum, bubble gum, in a dish
How many pieces do you wish?*

1, 2, 3,...



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Estate of Gertrude Johanna Peter

In accordance with Mrs. Peter's last wishes, this fund was established to support scholarships for students who demonstrate both financial need and strong scholastic aptitude.

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The Faculty Development Fund provides financial support for the enrichment of our educators. Teachers frequently attend seminars like the annual AWSNA Conference, seek enrichment at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, and take courses at the Sunbridge Institute. Experiences like these rejuvenate and inspire our teachers while providing opportunities to connect with the

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Named in memory of parent Kacey Cisyk Rakowicz, mother of Eddie Rakowicz '09 and an outstanding vocalist who cared deeply about music education, this fund is dedicated toward the enrichment of the music program.

Luciano and Olena Galanti

Laura Nadel Art and Music
The Laura Nadel Art & Music Fund established in memory of Laura Nadel, class of 1983, this

permanently endowed fund meets the most pressing priorities within the music and arts program, and fosters arts education at Rudolf Steiner School.

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Since the 1980s, the May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation has been a generous supporter of Rudolf Steiner School tuition assistance program.

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This fund was established in 1998 by a gift from the New York Rotary Foundation to fund scholarships for deserving students with financial need.

Steiner Resilience Fund
These funds helped preserve the fabric of our community through additional tuition assistance for many families who otherwise would not have been able to be with us today, while also providing funds to invest in school reopening needs. We are grateful to those who gave financially as well as many in-kind donations that allowed us to reopen school safely, prioritizing the health of our community.

Anonymous (5)
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Soybel Family Fund in Honor of Trude Haake
This permanently endowed fund supports aspects of Rudolf Steiner School Language Program, including, but not limited to, class trips, classroom supplies, and scholarship to study abroad.

Luciano and Olena Galanti

COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS TO THE STEINER ANNUAL FUND

In Honor of Cybelle Afable:
 Belinda Agar

In Honor of David Ascher:
 Richard Ascher

In Honor of Renate Soybel:
 Taylor Hanex

IN MEMORIAM GIFTS TO THE STEINER ANNUAL FUND

In Memory of Paul Lyons '76:
 Nick Lyons

In Memory of Ruth Mosse:
 Marion Monteleone

In Memory of our son Thomas William Soybel and his beloved class teacher Harry Kretz:
 Renate Soybel

We have made every effort to be as accurate as possible in compiling our lists of donors. If your name has been listed incorrectly or has been omitted, please call Felicia Fischetti at 212-535-2130 ext. 223 and accept our most sincere apologies.

THE FOUNDERS CIRCLE

HONORING THE PAST, BUILDING A FUTURE

Named in honor of the intrepid individuals who established the first Waldorf School in North America. The Founders Circle welcomes all those who wish to follow in the footsteps of these great visionaries by making a legacy gift to the school.

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*Deceased

If you have already named Rudolf Steiner School in your estate planning and your name does not appear above, or if you wish to learn more about leaving a legacy gift, please contact Gabriela Cordo at gcordo@steiner.edu



WAYS TO GIVE

All contributions to our annual appeal are tax deductible.

GIFTS OF CASH

Checks are the most popular way to make a gift. Please make checks payable to Rudolf Steiner School, Inc.

GIFTS OF SECURITIES

The school maintains a brokerage account to accept gifts of stock. If your broker or bank holds your stock, it can be transferred directly to Rudolf Steiner School. Instructions for transferring stocks to the school may be obtained from the Philanthropy or Business Office.

MATCHING GIFTS

Many companies match the philanthropic contributions of their employees. Donors should obtain Matching Gift Request forms from their company's Human Resource Department. If you are unsure if your company participates, ask your Human Resource Department or Rudolf Steiner School Philanthropy Office.

BEQUESTS

Naming the school as a beneficiary in your will is a generous way to remember Rudolf Steiner School while reducing your estate tax. Donors can choose to leave a percentage of their estate or a fixed amount.

CONTACT OUR PHILANTHROPY TEAM
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