

SAN FRANCISCO WALDORF SCHOOL

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Eurythmy Troup to Tour China

The San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe, now in its 16th year, will travel to Beijing and Chengdu, China, this year following their San Francisco performances. The program that they will perform both in San Francisco and abroad is designed by Artistic Director Astrid Thiersch to feature Chinese themes. It includes a tale from the Zhuang people, "The Wonderful Brocade," Chinese poetry, a verse from the "Dao De Jing," humorous pieces, music by Beethoven and Chopin, and more. This year's special guest artists for the San Francisco performances will present a demonstration of the arts of Eight Step Mantis Kung Fu and Shyun Tai Chi. The program is appropriate for all ages.

The Troupe was founded by eurythmy teacher Astrid Thiersch in 1995. This year's Troupe is composed of twenty-five San Francisco Waldorf High School students in tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. The Troupe has acquired a fine reputation through its annual performances in San Francisco and on tour. The Troupe's touring history includes: performing at the "Faust" Youth Conference in Dornach, Switzerland, and at the "Hito" Sun Conference in Stuttgart, Germany, both in August of 1999; performing at an international conference in Fair Oaks in August of 2000; performing at international eurythmy conferences in Switzerland in 2001 and 2003; touring to New York in 2002, and to Texas in 2004; a return tour to Germany in 2005; and tours to Japan in 2006, Italy in 2007, Egypt in 2008, India in 2009 and France in 2010!



The 2nd Annual Spirit Week at the high school took place January 18-21



Grade 5-8 Music Recital at grade school. More on page 2.

Board to Present Strategic Plan at Town Hall Thursday, February 10

All members of the San Francisco Waldorf School community are encouraged to join us for our annual Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, February 10, from 7-9pm at the grade school. Following a social gathering, SFWS's Board of Trustees, College of teachers and Administration will present SFWS Strategic Plan 2020: Envisioning Our Future. The Strategic Plan is the culmination of a multi year process of community reflection that led to broad visions and goals for the school to undertake over the next 10 years. Details of the plan, as well as general questions concerning the overall state of the school, will fill out the agenda.

Come see and hear a vision of SFWS circa 2020!

Schedule for the evening

- 7-7:30 Social/Refreshments - hosted by the Board of Trustees
- 7:30-8:15 SP Presentation/State of the School
- 8:15-9:00 Q and A

Interview with Michael Gowe, President of the Board of Trustees

Michael Gowe has been President of San Francisco Waldorf School's Board of Trustees for the last two years. Tad Kinney, a parent of students in grade 4 and 5 and one of our volunteer Advancement Liaisons, sat down with Michael recently to find out a little more about Michael and the work of the Board.

Michael Gowe is a Deputy Attorney General for the State of California and before that he was an employment lawyer in private practice. His wife, Sachi Gowe, is a teacher at Morning Glory and is in her third year of the Waldorf

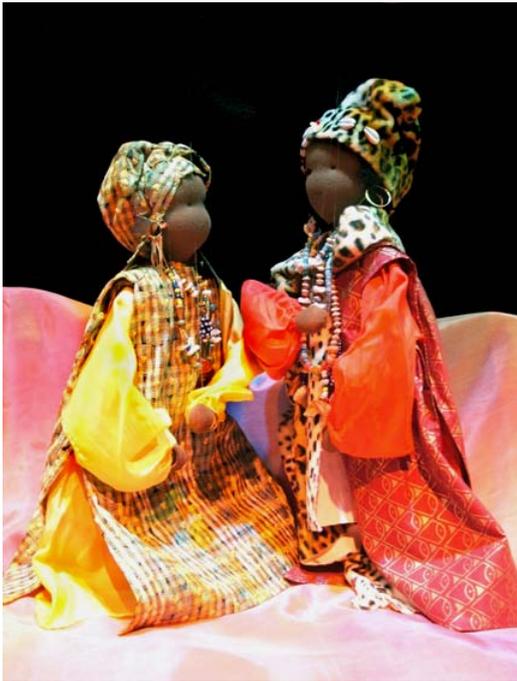
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PERFORMING ARTS



The Moss Green Princess, Feb. 13

The Magic Lantern Traveling Marionette Theatre will revive their production of *The Moss Green Princess*, as Swazi tale of transformation, on Sunday, February 13. The puppeteers come from our Early Childhood teachers and a few friends who have joined them over the years. Their productions consist of spectacular, lovingly handcrafted marionette puppets expertly manipulated by a team of puppeteers who remain visible throughout the show. The group meets weekly to rehearse and/or create puppets, props and scenic elements. The Marionette Theater recently travelled to Sacramento to present one of their productions to an Early Childhood conference there. The performance was extremely well received by over 200 transfixed adults. Although the stories and presentations are designed specifically for children ages 4 to 9 years old, it is not uncommon to see older students and parents perched on a chair in the back.

High School to Present Musical Comedy *Anything Goes*

The biennial musical production by our high school students will be the classic 1930's comedy, *Anything Goes*. It is best known for its wonderful songs, written by the great Cole Porter. They include such classics as "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top" and "It's De-Lovely," as well as the title song. The cast of 31 enthusiastic high school students will perform six shows in the grade school Main Hall. The dates are April 28, 29, 30 and May 1. Be sure to mark your calendars!

Meet Our Faculty: Astrid Thiersch

Astrid Thiersch joined the faculty in 1991 as a eurythmy teacher for kindergarten through eighth grade, and began her work with the high school when it first opened in 1997. The Youth Eurythmy Troupe began as an alumni program in 1995, and over time became part of the high school curriculum. The Troupe has its 15th annual San Francisco public performances coming up February 14 and 15 at the JCC, and will tour to China.

Astrid has been involved with Waldorf education her entire life. Her grandparents on both sides were pioneers in the medical and educational fields within anthroposophy. She attended the Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany, from kindergarten through 13th grade. After school, she joined the Eurythmy training in Stuttgart where she studied with Else Klink, a master eurythmist. After completing the training, Astrid began teaching in the Eurythmeum and performing internationally with Klink's professional stage ensemble. Else Klink had a visionary view of the impact that eurythmy could have as a performing art, and created vast new programs, which were met with large and captivated audiences around the world.

On one of the trips to the United States, Astrid first met Henry and Vergilia Dakin, the founders and benefactors of San Francisco Waldorf School. A few years later, Astrid decided that she wanted to visit the United States on sabbatical; she had carried Henry's card with her for several years, which resulted in an invitation to stay at the Dakins' home in San Francisco, where she learned English with the help of their daughter Adriana, a student at SFWS. She interviewed at several West Coast schools and went to Summerfield Waldorf School to teach Eurythmy to all grades, including the beginning high school. There, Astrid began her first youth performing troupe.

After Summerfield, Astrid joined the faculty at San Francisco Waldorf School. When

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Grade School Music Recital a Success

Grade School Music Teacher Lisa Sargent created a new forum this year for students in grade 5 - 8 who are willing and ready to perform on their orchestra instruments solo or in small ensembles. A wonderful array of instruments, ensembles and styles of music were on display to a very receptive crowd of family and friends in the grade school Main Hall on January 19. This was a wonderful addition to our annual grade school Spring Orchestra Concert which will bring us a taste of the work that goes on in the class orchestras (grades 4-8) on April 13 of this year.

See you there!



San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe presents a Eurythmy Performance
Astrid Thiersch, Artistic Director

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Monday, February 14, 2011 at 7:00 pm

Tuesday, February 15, 2011 at 4:00 pm

Kanbar Hall, Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, 3200 California Street

tickets: BrownPaperTickets.com

and San Francisco Waldorf Grade/High School offices

adults \$20 advance/\$25 door

children \$12 advance/\$15 door

for more information visit www.sfwaldorfhighschool.com

Program previews the Troupe's tour to China in February 2011

San Francisco Waldorf High School . 415-431-2736 . www.sfwaldorfhighschool.org



Astrid Thiersch at left with the 2010-2011 San Francisco Youth Eurythmy Troupe

About Eurythmy

The beginning of the twentieth century brought a revolution in the fine arts. Artists, whose work now define modernism, experimented with new forms of architecture, painting, sculpture, music and dance, seeking a deeper meaning in their media and a more vital connection to the human being. Eurythmy was born in this climate when Rudolf Steiner was asked in 1912 if a new impulse could be given to the art of movement.

Steiner explored the world of human speech and music, seeking archetypal forms and movements belonging to the sounds themselves. Sound is always formative, but its world of forces is usually invisible. In eurythmy, the aim is to “speak” and to “sing” through movements and gestures that reveal to the eye what language and music sound to the ear: it is often referred to as “visible speech” and “visible music”.

In speech eurythmy, performed to a poem or prose passage, the eurythmist uses gestures specific to the sound of each vowel and consonant, choosing sounds characteristic of the spoken text, and interpreting them in an artistic way to enhance the meaning. In tone eurythmy, specific gestures represent individual tones and intervals of the musical composition, revealing melody and harmony. Both speech and tone eurythmy are performed with choreography created for the specific piece.

Steiner chose a name for this art from the Greek, meaning harmonious rhythmical movement. As its health-giving properties became known, eurythmy was adapted for therapeutic and pedagogical uses. Artistic or stage eurythmy has moved audiences worldwide, with its blend of colorful flowing movement and profound expression. Neither improvisational nor interpretive, this unique art form reveals what is innate in sound, creating a space alive with the forces that shape us as human beings and the world around us.

In the required eurythmy classes, taught twice weekly, the students practice elements of eurythmy and are introduced to the art of combining them with choreographic forms, in large and small groups, to express poetry, dramatic texts, and music pieces. An elective course, the Eurythmy Performing Troupe, meets three times weekly (and often after school), preparing a major annual artistic performance, which is presented to the public in San Francisco, and in other venues on tour. Artistic expression is a heightened focus of this course, as well as aspects of performance including solo and small group work, costuming and lighting. Eurythmy has a wonderfully beneficial effect on the students’ flexibility of movement and of thinking, and promotes harmony of feeling and a positive group dynamic.

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asked what she wished for SFWS, she gave three (as in a fairy tale): first, that the faculty and staff will continue to work strongly out of Rudolf Steiner’s vision for Waldorf education; second, that the school will find donors to help with the further growth of the school; and finally, that the school stays connected to Waldorf education as a world movement. Through its international tours, the Eurythmy Troupe gives the students a unique opportunity to engage with people in other places and cultures. Eurythmy requires that the students find themselves internally and socially, and develop a sense of balance in the chaos of our time. Through both the art and the outreach, our youth become stronger and ready to engage the global society into which they will graduate.

January Block Rotation Across the Grades

Kindergarten Story	Winter Stories		
Grade 1	Math - the four processes	Grade 7	Algebra / The Golden Mean
Grade 2	Language Arts - fables	Grade 8	American History/ Chemistry
Grade 3	Math	Grade 9	Embryology / Thermodynamics
Grade 4	Math	Grade 10	Cultural Studies: Africa / The Classical World
Grade 5	History / Myth	Grade 11	Cultural Studies: Latin America / Projective Geometry
Grade 6	Geometry	Grade 12	Organic Chemistry / Optics



It's Basketball Season!

Don't forget to come out and cheer on our basketball teams. Both high school girls and boys basketball wrap-up regular season play in mid-February as does boys middle school basketball.

High school schedules and stats can be found online through our high school website:

www.sfwaldorfhighschool.org/newsandevents/athletics/

Up-to-date grade school schedules are available through the CYO league website: athletics.ccyo.org/

As always, you can call the sports hot lines after 12 noon any day for information about that day's events:

Grade School Sports Hotline:

415-213-6196

High School Sports Hotline:

415-213-6197



4th Grade Sends Gift to Kenya

In November I had the pleasure of visiting the fourth grade and sharing some special reading together from "Rukia Goes to School," a book I authored and which is beautifully illustrated by a former Waldorf student, Ilana Stein. The book is about a Kenyan Waldorf school, Rudolf Steiner School Mbagathi, and our fourth graders could easily identify with many of the scenes in the story, although there are stark differences in food, houses, and lifestyles. As the time for our reading session ended, the children eagerly filled out library cards and took the books home to finish.

Before I left, I was presented with a wonderful gift of \$100 to take to Rudolf Steiner School Mbagathi where I will be visiting and mentoring in January and February. There is quite a story behind the money.

Last spring when the class was returning from the park, Ms. Resnick spotted what looked like a dollar bill on the sidewalk, but to everyone's amazement, it was a one hundred dollar bill! With no proper owner to be found, the class discussed what to do with the money, and they came up with the idea of making a gift to the Waldorf school in Kenya. After thanking them for their generous gesture, I told the children I would make sure that the money was spent on something everyone at the Kenyan school could enjoy. A hundred dollars goes a long way in East Africa.

Thank you to the fourth grade for their special gift, and thank you to everyone who has donated pencils and crayons for our sister school in East Africa.

~Susan Cook



Below: Susan Cook addressing assembly in Kenya; at right: Grade 4.



Editors Note: Susan Cook, a founding parent and long time faculty member at SFWS, is currently in Kenya working with the teachers and students at the Mbagathi School. In the photo at left, Susan speaks to the students at a school assembly about our national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Later that day, she had the opportunity to go into more details with the 8th grade students about the Civil Rights movement in the United States.

Look for a display about our sister school in Kenya as well as an opportunity to support their program at the Spring Benefit on March 19.

YOU CAN STILL GIVE TO THE 2010-2011 ANNUAL FUND.

Even if you missed the deadline for a 2010 tax year deduction, you can still give a fully deductible donation (2011 tax-year) now.

Contact advancement@sfwaldorf.org

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Teacher Training. They have twin boys in Second Grade and a younger one at Morning Glory. Four years ago he approached Joan Calderera (Head of Administration at the time) about doing pro bono legal work for the school; after a few months of legal advice, Michael was asked to join the board. Since joining the board, Michael has felt privileged to have a firsthand glimpse of the hard work by faculty, staff and parents in orchestrating all the varied aspects of this wonderful education. One of the perks of joining the board has been the opportunity to collaborate with so many different people who

make the school great at all of its levels: nursery, grade school, and high school.

The board currently has fourteen voting members, with the College of Teachers having two of those positions. The primary function of the board is to make financial and legal decisions for the school. It arrives at these decisions with input from the College of Teachers, the administration and anyone else with a perspective; in other words, it is not a rigid hierarchy. All board meetings are open to the public and all parents are encouraged to attend.

When asked what the biggest decisions have been in the last few years, Michael noted that initiating and completing the Strategic Plan (approved on December 13, 2010) led the list. Getting the entire community to participate in the process and then synthesizing the broad perspectives was challenging. The community learned a lot from the undertaking and we now have an outline of where we want to go—together. Having a nursery program, a grade school, and a high school presents a wide diversity of needs and perspectives. The strategic plan is intended to help facilitate the process of addressing all of these needs and hopes in a cohesive manner.

Another important function of the board is setting the annual tuition and the school budgets. This is always a difficult task, but has been especially challenging the last two years. The decision to raise tuition for this the current year (2010-2011), in very difficult financial conditions, was not easy. Ultimately, the board felt that it was necessary for the health of the school as a whole.

When asked where the school could improve, Michael responded that, in general, the school needed to tell its story more clearly and more often. While hesitant to characterize this as a need for more marketing, he agreed that the school needed to generate more of an “appreciation” for what it was doing. This is not just a development/fund raising effort; it includes “community building,” especially between the separate campuses.

Moving forward, the challenge will be to keep all of the various components of SFWS heading in the same direction. With the expanding high school and early childhood programming, there is a larger structure evolving and, even if we had only one campus, the increasing numbers of students, teachers, and staff guarantee more complexity. Staying true to “Waldorf values” while managing this increasing complexity is the task at hand. And, thankfully, due to the hard work of Michael, the rest of the board, and the community as a whole, we now have a plan.

San Francisco Waldorf School presents:

World Café

Shaping our community through food, conversation, and story.

Friday, February 4, 2011 from 6:30pm to 9:30pm

at San Francisco Waldorf High School

Evening Schedule:

6:30 - 7:30 Arrive and enjoy hosted dinner and music together

7:30 - 9:30 The World Café

RSVP to events@sfwaldorf.org



UNA NOCHE EN PRIMAVERA

Spring Night 2011 Benefit Auction Party

Celebrate the Beginning of Spring

Save the Date:

Saturday, March 19, 6:00 – 10:30 PM

at the Golden Gate Club in the Presidio

Look for your invitation in the mail soon!!

Donation forms are available in school offices or
make your donation of goods or service
online at www.sfwaldorf.org/SpringNight

Grade School: 2938 Washington Street, SF, CA 94115; tel. (415) 931-2750; info@sfwaldorf.org

High School: 470 West Portal Avenue, SF, CA 94127; tel. (415) 431-2736; highschool@sfwaldorf.org

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