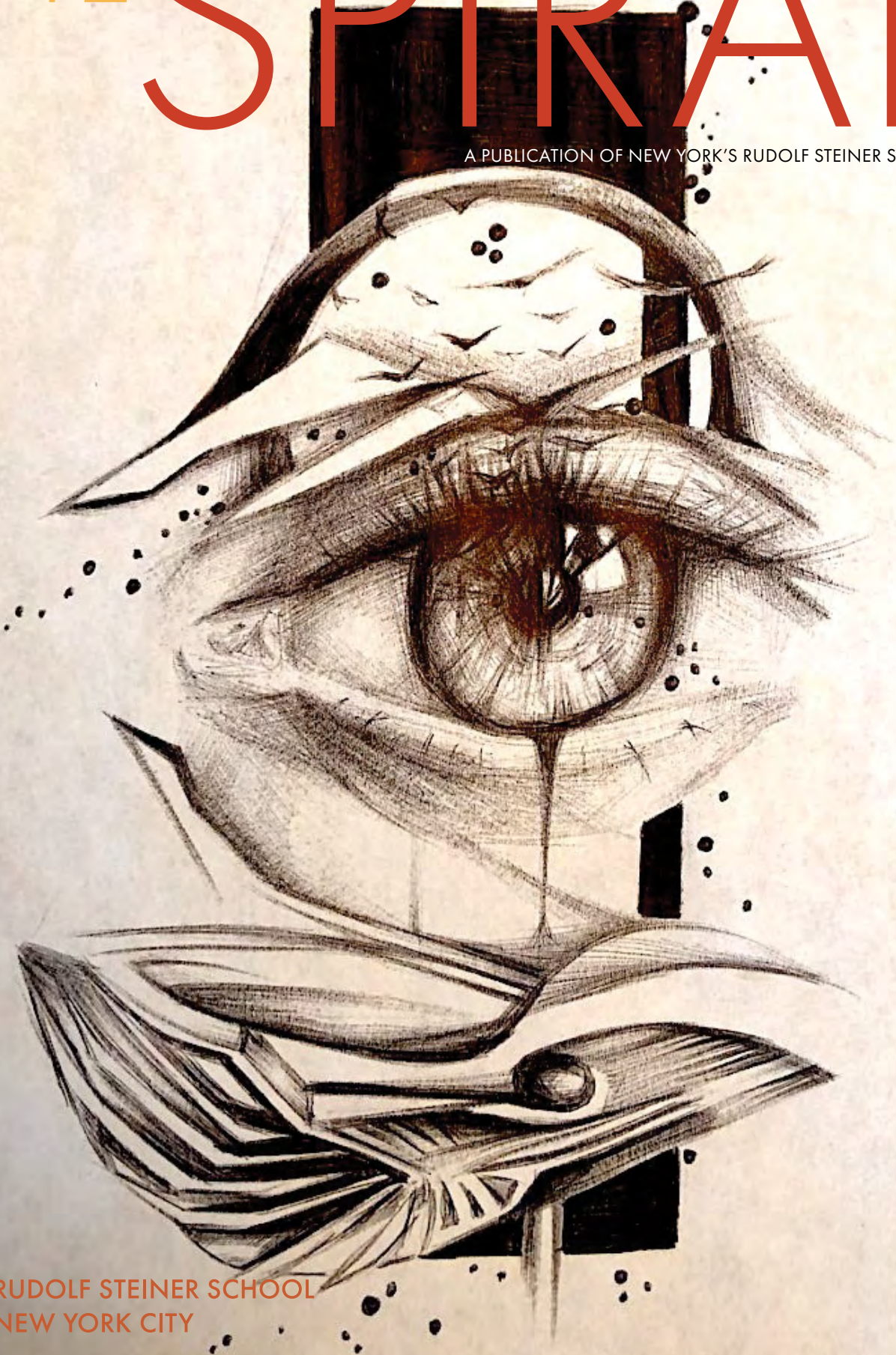


THE SPIRAL

2022 ISSUE

A PUBLICATION OF NEW YORK'S RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL



RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL
NEW YORK CITY



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THE RELEVANCE OF HUMAN CONNECTION

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2021-2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Terri Adler, Chair

As we reflect on the 2021-2022 school year, one thing that has become apparent is how deeply important real human connection is for our emotional and physical well-being as well as the development and nurturing of our children. Moving out of the deep anxieties of COVID into an “everybody can work-from-home and wear pajamas all day long” world certainly had its appeal. However, even the most introverted person realized that we thrive, grow, love, and learn when we step out of our own bubble and embrace and give to the world around us.



Tushar Shah, Treasurer

Coming out of 2020-2021 the school faced many headwinds including lower enrollment, a budget deficit, and the need to rebuild programs that were unable to be sustained during the heights of COVID. At the same time, the city that we all love was facing (and continues to face) its own budget deficit, inflation, and secular shift in its previous unchallenged ability to draw talent and be a livable metropolis.

However, we are often our best selves when facing adversity – we rise to the occasion. Our school rose to the occasion. Through the hard work and efforts of our administration and faculty, we have been working to increase our enrollment, improve our facilities (as demonstrated by the Dining Hall renovations that occurred largely during the 2021-2022 school year), and build back our music and athletic programs. Our children have gotten back to the day-to-day business of being children and learning through a varied and unique curriculum – one that does not teach to a test but teaches to the whole child and to the love of learning.

Our school still faces challenges from the social, emotional, and fiscal impact that COVID wrought. However, those challenges have brought new ideas and opportunities that can and will improve the school. And as we move into 2022-2023 and our accreditation review, what better time than now to self-reflect on how we can improve and better ourselves after all the tumult of the past two years!

You may be asking yourself: how can parents help? There are always ways to give by volunteering for various groups such as Parent Council, the Fall Fair, or other community building events. In addition, we ask that each family show its support for our school by making a donation that fits within each family’s financial ability. If each family gives to our school, it increases the likelihood that Steiner can obtain outside grants by showing 100% parent support.

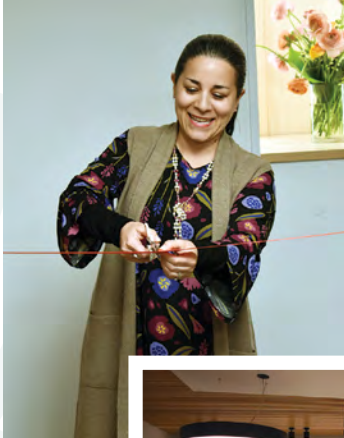
Ultimately, as a community we can fortify the foundation laid over the last ninety years of our great educational institution and build into the future!

Terri Adler, Chair

Tushar Shah, Treasurer

FROM IMAGINATION TO MANIFESTATION

A LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR



What an incredibly inspiring and fruitful year this has been! A year during which we were able to begin regathering in many of our spaces.

The 2020-2021 year was a period of communal effort and steady commitment to Fund the Future of our beloved school with the renovation of our Lower School cellar at the center of our Steiner Annual Fund campaign. The 2021-2022 year was one of harvesting of our collective investment, with the renovation completed in April 2022 to everyone's delight.

Still bound by certain health and safety restrictions, in late April of 2022 we hosted an intimate ribbon-cutting ceremony with all colleagues to formally inaugurate our new Dining Hall.

Soon after the Kitchen Team was preparing lunch from our very own newly renovated space and we started inviting students in Grades 4-12 in a gradual and caring manner, one grade at a time. We have renamed the cafeteria our Dining Hall to denote a re-imagined way of sharing our daily lunch through a family-style experience.

We hosted our inaugural tour on Friday, May 20 at 8:30 AM with a delicious breakfast and the opportunity to hear directly from the architectural masterminds behind the project – Elena and Kevin Cannon of Cannon Architecture Studio, active parents in our Steiner community.

Children, faculty and staff alike have been enjoying the space since its inauguration and we look forward to many more opportunities for social gathering in the year to come.

Our deepest gratitude to all who through their generous contributions made it possible for our community to enjoy this beautiful, renewed place.

In partnership,

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

Gabriela Cordo, School Administrator



ABOUT LEARNING AND GROWING

A SPEECH BY TYE RIKMAN

The school year begins and concludes with the Rose Ceremony, giving a “full circle” experience through the welcoming and farewell roses exchanged between the First and Twelfth Graders. The Rose Ceremony marks a significant moment in time for our incoming and graduating students.



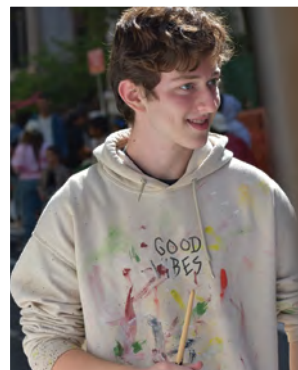
Tye's speech during the Rose Ceremony

I'm going to be totally honest for a moment. When I was asked to write this, I was honored and completely overwhelmed. I have never written a speech before, so I had no clue where I was going to go with this. But when I sat down to write, I realized that, actually, we never really know what's going to happen next. Whether you work at Steiner or study here—if you are going into first grade or starting your senior year—we have all experienced transition.

I started at Steiner in ninth grade and at first it was terrifying. I walked into the common room, full of unfamiliar faces, and all I could think was, “Oh god, I don't know anyone here. Who are these people? I'm really sweaty, but I put on deodorant, right?” But that's what life is all about—knowing that even if something is scary, you are still doing the right thing by trusting your gut and taking the risks that feel right for you. And at Steiner, you are encouraged to do that no matter how old you are. If that risk is making a new club, go for it. You might write a poem that you are uncomfortable with at first, then find out that your teacher wants to put it in *The Key*. If the risk is writing a speech and standing in front of more people than you have ever stood in front of before, take a deep breath and be confident that you can do it.

We learn the most about ourselves when we take those leaps into the unknown. We surprise ourselves.

One of the scariest things is to be ourselves around other people, especially when we are in a new environment. Often we are afraid that we will be judged, especially in our teenage years. But at Steiner, I can guarantee you that the students are far more interested in the real you than whatever mask you put up. In the winter of tenth grade, when my class was putting on *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, I was so



nervous during rehearsals—sweating once again—but this time dressed as a pilgrim farmer. I was struggling with my own self-consciousness and having a hard time getting into the character of John Proctor. One day, after we had finished a scene and were waiting outside the assembly room, a classmate said to me “You know, you should really just get into it, no one cares. You've got nothing to fear, no one's going to judge or anything.” So, I took her advice and just leaned into it. And it worked. I was in the play, in the scene; and even better, I was enjoying it. I became a better actor, plus I

learned that my class really doesn't care if I make a mistake, or if I am dressed as a sweaty pilgrim farmer for that matter.

All these things I've just described to you, do you know what they are? They are experiences of growth. And that is what Steiner is about, and what schools in general are about. You learn and through that learning you grow. Education is learning to embrace the uncertain and enjoy the beauty of transition. So, if you are overwhelmed and hesitant, just keep going and don't be afraid to not know what you're doing. You'll learn. That's what you're here for.



SPRING TEA PARTY

A yearly spring celebration for the younger members of our community. Once spring has sprung with fresh flowers and colors, we gather for a special afternoon full of storytelling, sandwiches, tea, and joy.



WHY WE CELEBRATE MICHAELMAS

AN ADDRESS FROM CAROL BÄRTGES '73 TO GRADES ONE THROUGH TWELVE

“The dragon is not an external reality, but rather lives within all humankind.”

— DAVID MITCHELL



Carol Bärtges, Humanities Teacher & Alumna '73

In Waldorf schools we celebrate many wonderful festivals throughout the year. One of them is Michaelmas, which takes place on September 29. Michaelmas is a festival of community, and that is why we are all gathered together here in Central Park on this beautiful autumn day. Michael is an archangel mentioned in many traditions. As we know, he is depicted as a valiant and noble conqueror of the dragon—that evil being whose forces threaten to overwhelm humanity. Just at this poignant time of year when summer’s lease is over, we have the Michaelmas festival in September: the image of Michael is one of hope and courage that helps us remember that when we unite together, we can overcome things that we cannot possibly do on our own.

At this time of year, we rejoice in the earth’s generosity. The branches of the apple and pear trees have been bent for weeks, almost to the ground, the fruit dropping off the branches at the merest shake. In my garden upstate, the leaves of the pumpkins are withered and brown, but the pumpkins are turning bright orange. Everything is ripening, coming to its fullest expression before nature goes to sleep for the winter.

We are always reluctant to lose the light and heat of summer; reluctant to see the plants go to sleep. But nature brings us a wonderful truth. Even as the days grow shorter and the air begins to cool, we can now resolve to carry summer’s warmth within us—we can trust that there is life even when we cannot see it. If all of us share this inner warmth with one another, together we overcome the dragons of uncertainty and fear that perpetually strive to overtake us. The image of Michael and the dragon is a reminder that inner warmth and love for one another is not dependent on a season but is always in us.







FALL STREET FAIR

Saturday, October 2, 2021

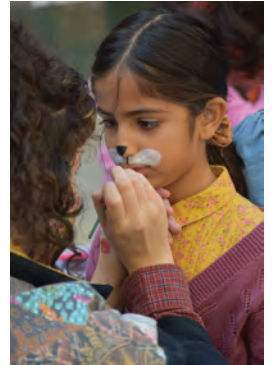
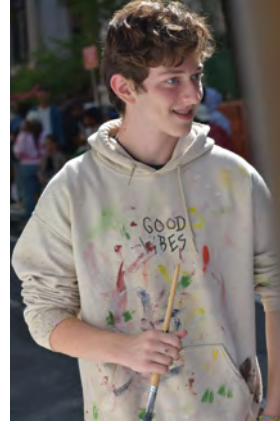
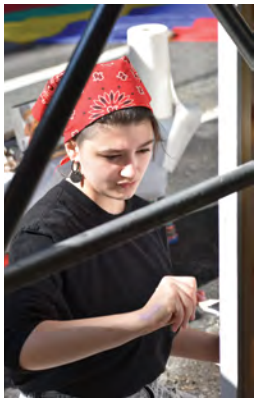
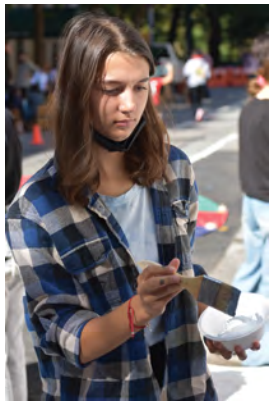
New circumstances ask for new ideas. During the fall of 2021, indoor events were still a rarity. So, we kept the spirit of our traditional Fall Fair and changed the location. We closed 78th Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues and spent the day outdoors, extending our Fair to our Upper East Side neighbors. We combined some traditional Fall Fair activities with new ones and celebrated our resilient community.





FALL STREET FAIR (continued)







PARENT CHILD WORK DURING COVID

A LETTER FROM ADELE GRANT



Adele Grant

It was the summer of 2021 and we had weathered COVID for almost two years. Mask wearing was the norm, and you never knew when you might get that email about an exposure and would need to quarantine. I was about to restart the Parent Child Program after a two-year hiatus, but I didn't know if anyone would come. As the summer was coming to a close, the first inquiries started to trickle in. Yet unlike in years past, the parents' questions centered around masks, vaccines, and safety protocols. It was clear that these families with little ones born in the thick of COVID were very anxious about being indoors yet were also craving social contact for themselves and their children. I knew that the bulk of my

work would be to let them talk through their concerns and find a way to let go of their anxiety so that they and their children would feel comfortable being in a classroom again.

As classes started that fall, I frequently heard from parents how this was the first time ever that their child was around other children and other adults. These children were having a very different early childhood experience compared to those of the past. They didn't spend their days strolling about the city, visiting grocery stores, coffee shops or playgrounds. There were no opportunities to observe the myriad of social exchanges we took for granted before quarantines and masks. These

children were so attached to their caretakers that it was going to take more time for them to feel they were ready to venture beyond their parents' laps. This was going to be a very different year.

The focus of my classes became community building and providing a simple consistent class rhythm, which is so important in Waldorf Early Childhood. When there is a predictable class rhythm, the children are more relaxed, more secure, and less anxious, because they know that the adults they love and trust are guiding the flow of the day. Even if there were COVID

scars or other outside stressors, the consistency and sameness of the class week after week anchored them. They knew they would arrive to the smell of bread baking, that their teacher would welcome them by washing their hands with warm soapy water, that they would then play, and that when they heard the clean-up song it would almost be time to devour the warm bread with honey butter and tea, sometimes having second or third helpings. All this provided the holding these children were needing so very much.

As for the parents, they quickly realized that what they were needing

most was social connection. Over the course of the year, the families were invited to attend the schoolwide lantern walk, the fall fair, the early childhood puppet show, the book club, and finally, the end of year parent child picnic. They were quickly woven into the fabric of our school. Despite all the fears and obstacles, the families and I—with the support of the school nurses and administration—found a way to be together and to provide the youngest children of our school a safe space to be with others. All things considered, I couldn't have imagined the year being any better.



CELEBRATING OUR RETURN TO THE FARM

A LETTER FROM GIANNINA ZLATAR

Fifty years ago, on July 31, 1972, an intense seven-year search by the Rudolf Steiner Educational and Farming Association came to an end. The Association, a group led by teachers of the Rudolf Steiner School, purchased the Hawthorne Valley Farm—a 338-acre dairy farm in Harlemville, NY—fulfilling their dream of offering city children the experience of life on a farm. Right away, our school began a beloved tradition: the yearly visit to the farm, which originally was a ten-day sojourn. What started out as the Rudolf Steiner Farm School is now the Visiting Students Program (VSP), which serves 1,200 students from Waldorf and non-Waldorf schools every year and is part of the fully biodynamic Hawthorne Valley Farm.

The annual farm trip continues to be a highlight for every class in our school. Beginning in third grade, classes spend five days at the farm each year experiencing age-appropriate activities that reflect our Waldorf curriculum. To reinforce the third-grade farm block, every third grade becomes acquainted with the farm and its animals in a visit that typically happens in the spring. They sow seeds in the garden, muck the stables, and help bring the cows from pasture in the afternoon. They make bread and butter and participate in the preparation of their meals. In the fourth grade, the same group of children returns to the farm in the fall to harvest what they planted in the spring. Their trip typically coincides with Halloween, allowing them to enjoy local festivities. The fifth-grade program incorporates botany, and in the sixth grade, the students learn how to orient themselves with only a map and a compass, and conclude their week with an exhilarating challenge: blindfolded, they are dropped off at a secret location. To find their way back to the farmhouse, they are only equipped with a topographical map of the area and a compass.

Following sixth grade, there is a three-year hiatus, after which students return to their dear farm, to reacquaint themselves with once-familiar activities now from the vantagepoint of a tenth grader.





In contact with animal life and nature

During 2020 and 2021, due to the state of world affairs, our students missed this highlight of our school program. Trips were suspended until the spring of 2022, when we were able to resume the yearly tradition of visiting the Hawthorne Valley Farm. Thirty-five excited fourth and fifth graders were finally able to travel to Upstate New York and spend five days at the farm for the very first time. Enthusiastic and willing, they worked in the garden, cleaned the stables, fed the animals, prepared meals, waited on tables, and played outdoors together to their hearts' content. It was a very successful week, and the students returned home already looking forward to their next stay.

For New York City children, the farm visit constitutes an essential respite from our fast-paced city life. Meeting the farm animals is always transformative. Moved beyond expectation, they feel a true kinship with our fellow brothers and sisters in the animal kingdom. Classes often experience the birth of a calf, a litter of piglets, or perhaps a lamb. Getting up at 5:45 AM to feed the animals is, for many children, the best moment of their week. Even mucking out the barn elicits positive reactions: "It is so satisfying to see a clean barn!" There is no bad weather at the farm. The farm is beautiful and rewarding even when it rains. I remember a third grade, years ago, who was dealt four days of rain out of five. The sun only came out the day we were returning home. Nevertheless, in these students' perception their first stay at the farm was perfect—they loved every wet moment of the week.

Students look forward to every meal at the farm. From creamy oatmeal for breakfast to vegetable soups at suppertime and special treats like pancakes or apple cobbler at the end of the week, every dish is prepared with care and the highest quality ingredients. Organic, biodynamic, locally grown, and Hawthorne Valley Farm-sourced produce constitute the foundation of hearty vegetarian meals. Usually, the students participate in making one of their daily meals and often make the bread and butter they eat. At the end of the week, it is not uncommon to hear how they have learned to love salad or not missed meat at all!

Sharing 24-hours with classmates and teachers offers unique bonding opportunities that deepen friendships and allow each to appreciate the other from a new perspective. Students return having a strong sense of belonging to their



CELEBRATING OUR RETURN TO THE FARM (continued)

class, and teachers have the priceless opportunity to observe their students in a different context.

As I write, my class of now sixth graders just returned from the farm. It was a week that surpassed all expectations. Every night we gathered to close the day. In their pajamas, ready to go to bed, the children shared noteworthy moments and impressions. Midweek, I asked them to write a note to their parents, which I later sent home. Here are some of the messages gathered:

“Dear Mama and Dada, Here on the farm there is not much time to miss you. My favorite animal so far is Vesper, a very furry sheep!”

“Hey Mother & Papa, I AM HAVING A GREAT TIME. I LOVE IT HERE, and the food is YUMMY. I don’t really miss you; sorry. But I love you ALWAYS....The class and I are really bonding.”

“I miss all of you guys so much. I’m having so much fun! I got to do morning feeding – I fed the horses, sheep, and hens and roosters. I also got to cook dinner.”

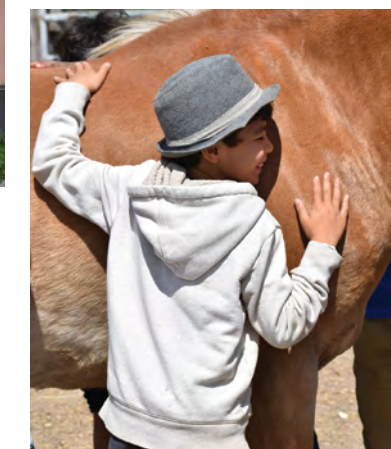
“I am having a great time at the farm. There was a baby calf born while we were arriving, and the farm got a new sheep. Today I worked with the horses, learned how to whittle, and did afternoon animal feeding. I can’t wait to tell you all about it...”

The children say it all. In today’s world, more than ever it is essential

to foster in our children heartfelt gratitude, genuine respect, and sincere awe for the natural world—for in the future, much will depend on the care and appreciation human beings have for the environment. The yearly visit to the farm does exactly this.








We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the visionaries who, fifty years ago, purchased the Hawthorne Valley Farm. In 1948, Karl Ege, one of the last teachers to be appointed by Rudolf Steiner to the original Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany, joined Rudolf Steiner School in New York City as mentor and faculty member, and remained at our school for eighteen years. It was his work with urban students that convinced him that an experience of the land, of farming, and of nature should be an integral part of our city children’s education. Karl Ege together with Henry Barnes, Arvia MacKaye Ege, and Harry Kretz are among the pioneers whose efforts brought into being the Rudolf Steiner Farm School, offering city students the opportunity to learn where their food comes from and engage in practical learning on a farm. One hundred years ago, in a lecture given in 1922, Rudolf Steiner stated that “a person who has not learned to distinguish an ear of rye from an ear of wheat is not a complete human being... The children themselves should be taken out and wherever possible, be brought to understand the plant world in its actual connection to the earth, with the rays of sun, with life itself.” Our school is very fortunate to have cultivated a fifty-year relationship with the Hawthorne Valley Farm and the Visiting Students Program.





BUDGET RESULTS

2021-2022 (Audited Figures)

	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL	
INCOME			
Gross Tuition and Fees	\$12,426,792		
Tuition Assistance	(\$4,851,962)		
Net Tuition and Fees	\$7,574,830	89.0%	
Additional Program & Miscellaneous Income	\$403,817	4.7%	
Net Fundraising	\$532,560	6.3%	
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,511,207	100%	
EXPENDITURES			
Salaries & Benefits	\$6,662,193	73.2%	
Program Expense	\$1,435,178	15.8%	
Facility Expense	\$453,227	5.0%	
Administrative Expense	\$544,682	6.0%	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$9,095,280	100%	
Net Operating Excess (Deficit) before depreciation	(\$584,073)		
Capital Improvements	(\$223,000)		
PPP Loan #2 Forgiveness	\$1,258,986		
One-time Endowment Draw	\$1,000,000		
NET CASH	\$1,451,913		

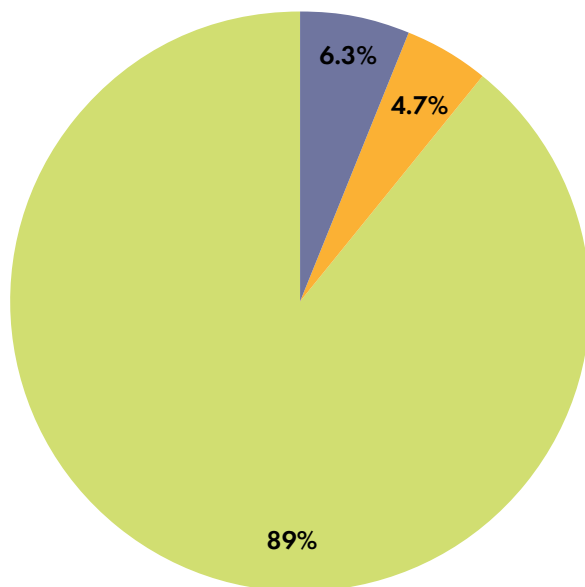
SUMMARY OF FUNDRAISING

* Reflects funds received and booked July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

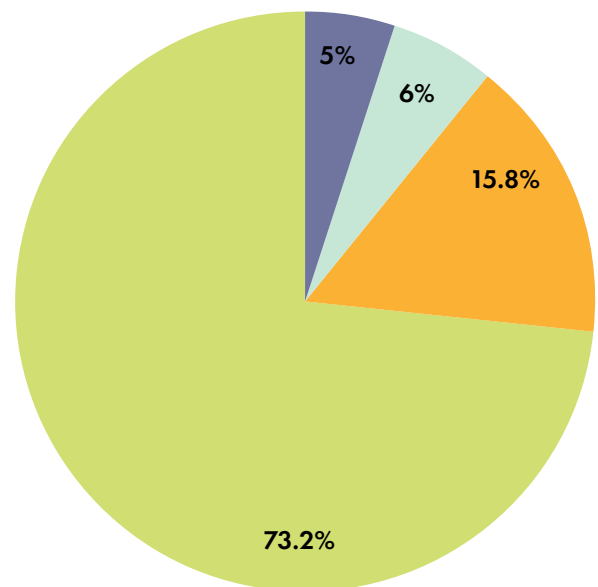
ANNUAL GIVING

Steiner Resilience Fund	\$77,755
Steiner Annual Fund	\$286,934
Steiner Fall Fair & Gala (Net)	\$114,994
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	\$50,000
Miscellaneous Funds	\$2,877
Steiner Resilience Fund	\$74,399
TOTAL ANNUAL GIVING TO CURRENT OPERATIONS	\$532,560

INCOME



EXPENDITURES



CLASS NOTES

1950s

Charlotte Dukich '59

I am from the class of 1959, the first HS graduation. I'm living in TN now near Chattanooga. I am still able to mentor teachers working at Waldorf schools as EC teachers.

1960s

Corinne Moor Spingarn '64

A busy life here on the Bay Area island of Alameda, California where we live.



Left: December 2021: At a performance by Pacific Edge Voices in San Francisco, the chorus my husband Steve Bicknese has sung with for forty two years! Right: April 2022: With my dragon boat team.



Above: April 2022: That's me in the front with the hat on. We're paddling on the Oakland/Alameda estuary. Below: June 2022: Yukking it up with my hula sisters after doing a performance video.



1970s

Stefanie Sochiet '74 and Antonella Sturniolo '15

I am still working with the Parks Department which began under Mayor Bloomberg. I'm in charge of 17 young 2-5 year old children's programming in continuance of The St. Vartan Preschool Play School, which was developed for parents and their children to grow and learn together. Antonella graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. She then received her Master's degree in Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. While there, she was elected to be the Vice President of the Global Health Society of JHSPH. She also wrote the weekly article for the Bloomberg American Health Initiative published every Friday morning. Now Antonella is Director of a Woman's Reproductive Health Program in Mexico City of DKT International.

1980s

Ben Mattlin '80

I'm now a full-time contributing writer/editor to Financial Advisor magazine and my latest book, *Disability Pride: Dispatches from a Post-ADA World*, is out November 15, 2022 from Beacon Press.

Nancy Thompson '80



The cow barn where Danny and I (left) always got up at the crack of dawn to feed the animals. Right: The kids Ch'aska, Callum, Ayars



Left: November 2021 Main House Daniel Farber '80, and Nancy Thomson '80, sitting. Our blended family behind us from left to right, Callum Farber, Ayars Thomson Lamar, and Ch'aska Farber (sitting). Right: Main house 1976. Standing: Fentress Gardner, one of the founders of the Hawthorne Valley Farm program. Sitting: Daniel Farber, 1980. I snapped that photo.

2000s

Emily Elliot '03

I live in Portland Oregon with my husband and two daughters. I am a clinical social worker in a psychiatric hospital. My brother (Bobby Elliot '07) also lives here and works as a high school English teacher. He and his wife have a 2 year old son. I make regular visits to NYC to spend time with my mom but have been in Oregon for the past 10 years!

Maisie Weir '06

I live with my husband, married in 2020, in Jersey City where we own a house and have a terribly mean adopted old Chihuahua. I work for a healthcare fintech company called Zelis where I run a sales team. Worked my way up from sales associate to running a team in 5 years. It's super interesting, but no one understands it! I travel a lot for work which is a ton of fun, seeing lots of new places and meeting a lot of different people. My husband works for a tech startup in the city. Still talk to Megan all the time, and some of my closest friends are the Steiner peeps I grew up with!

Jeffrey Shayne '09

I am an event coordinator. I just bought an apartment. I collect and sometimes write reviews for headphones. I make electronic music for fun. I co-authored a children's book about the pandemic. And I still can't play the recorder (ja ja)!

2010s - 2020s

Austin Zola '14

As a financial analyst, Austin recently gave notice to the Miami hedge fund in order to follow his heart, and true interests. Now he has created www.thirtyonecollection.com. He is in full stride with work in NYC, Miami, London, LA and Zurich. Three Thirty One Collection has been inspired by the enthusiasm his mother Tina had for art, and embodies a feeling of style, and love for the Arts for the novice and expert collectors.

Isabelle Zola '16

Although based in Miami, Austin often visits NYC for Isabelle's expertise in marketing. Besides her full-time real estate job, Isabelle is currently developing her own swimsuit line-watch out!

Elijah Zola '20

Both Austin Zola and Isabelle graduated Elon University, where their younger brother Elijah is now attending, studying economics. We often reminisce about our wonderful times at the Steiner school, which has given us all a solid foundation of creativity and thought. The Zolas send warm wishes and regards to all at Steiner.

The Zolas



A.J Adkins '17

I am doing well. I'm at Washington University in St. Louis doing a Ph.D in imaging science. My research is in the field of nanophotonics. Before this I was at Steiner for one year plus for an "internship" and taught calculus and computer programming, an extremely rewarding experience.

SUBMIT YOUR UPDATES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF *THE SPIRAL* TO THE PHILANTHROPY OFFICE. Email us at info@steiner.edu

A HUMAN RHAPSODY AT NYPHIL

A PIECE COMPOSED BY ALEX ROTHSCHILD '23



On stage with the Philharmonic

In June of 2022, Alexander Rothschild Douaihy '23, had his composition *A Human Rhapsody* performed by the New York Philharmonic in Central Park for thousands of people.

He wrote the piece when he was 15, while part of the NY Philharmonic's Very Young Composers Program. Asked to create something about social change, he intended *Human Rhapsody* to be a "vessel for positivity and hope." The beginning of the piece is sweeping and atmospheric, then becomes tense and uplifting, rife with excitement, when a surprising riff on the bongos brings it to a snappy and exuberant conclusion.

Shortly after going to his first Philharmonic concert as a young boy, thanks to a subscription for box

seats gifted to him by his grandfather, Alex discovered his musical calling. He and his mother became regular attendees at the concerts, and he began listening to classical music at home, growing obsessed with Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony and playing it repeatedly from beginning to end. He started playing piano and violin himself and began to learn composition by attending classes with the VYCP. One of the potential benefits of the Program is having one's work played by professional musicians, including Philharmonic musicians, and, on occasion, the full orchestra, although "nothing is guaranteed" Alex says. Alex learns mostly through listening to all kinds of music, not just classical, and is beginning as well to produce pop tracks with fellow musician

friends. He also spent a summer at Berklee College of Music to study film scoring, and is an ardent fan of John Williams, who wrote the score for *Jaws* and *E.T.* among other iconic movies.

"When people get together to listen to something, they have an experience they never would have had otherwise," Alex says, and he loves being the one to write the music that is bringing them together. When asked about some of his favorite music, he mentions Chopin's *Étude Op. 10, No. 4 (Torrent)*, which he has performed at Steiner. "My mother says I always go for the fast, dramatic stuff," he says, conceding that he likes complicated exercises, and a certain amount of aggression.

EIGHTH GRADE MOVING UP CEREMONY

AN ADDRESS FROM KAARIN VON HERRLICH

Thank you for this opportunity to share some thoughts. It's been a difficult few years for me. I think many people can say that. And I am so grateful for the support from this school and all the many people who dedicate their lives to making it such a magical place.

I found Waldorf education by accident. A friend suggested a parent child class. It was simple. The food was healthy, the activities sweet. There was singing, music and warmth. I soon discovered there was so much more. I discovered that Waldorf education provides exactly the foundation that each child needs, and that I had been hoping to provide for my child. It's not a religious foundation but it is a spiritual foundation. One that reveres each individual in its orbit. That actively acknowledges each child as a whole being, with a soul-life and a purpose. I am so grateful to have found this world, its reverence for the earth, for the imagination, for art, and for the soul. I'm blown away by how this foundational Waldorf experience enriches a child's sense of self and sense of connection to life and its mysteries. When my daughter was 6, she said to me: "My body is my body, but my soul is me." I knew then, and I continue to believe, that she is going to be okay in this world. She has the map.

In addition to this crucial foundational knowledge, Waldorf education instills in a child a love of learning that will last a lifetime. I'm amazed by the complexity of the academic life here at

Steiner. By the excellence each teacher brings to a subject. By the love and care that permeates the classroom. This caring environment extends beyond the classroom: to the front desk, the lunch room, the volleyball court and the soccer field, to the park, the city, and all the way to Utah, it turns out.

And the guardian of this class—this group of young people who showed up eight years ago in pigtails, on scooters—is not only a master teacher, but a respectful, dedicated person, full of a passion for art and learning. And a true commitment to making the world a better place. I'm grateful for this. But maybe even more so, I am grateful for his absolute consistency, his sage advice, and his humor. I am grateful for his friendship.

I think I can speak for everyone here when I say I am truly thankful to be a part of the Steiner community, and I hope to be able to give back in the ways that I can. I think this may be

what Steiner meant when describing a healthy social life, where "in the mirror of each soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when, in the whole community, the virtue of each one is living." We can find ourselves within the whole, and the whole lives in each of us. It just takes trust. This is the light we need to get through dark hours. This is the road map. The path forward. Thank you, Tim, for holding the torch. Setting an example. For showing our children how to embark on this journey with curiosity, discipline, and joy.



Kaarin Von Herrlich (left) and Terri Adler (right)



The class of 2026

FAREWELL MARTA ALMIRALL

A LETTER FROM JULIA SERGEYEVA

At the end of the last school year, after 24 years of teaching Spanish in the Upper School, our dear colleague and friend, Señora Marta Almirall, decided to retire and open a new chapter in her life.

In her youth, Marta taught in her native city of Barcelona, Spain and realized that teaching was her true vocation. In September 1998, Marta started teaching Spanish at Rudolf Steiner School in New York in the newly created Spanish language department of our school. Since then, three world languages, German, French, and Spanish, have been offered to our students, starting in eighth grade.

Marta is a talented and hard-working teacher who was always prepared for her classes, and she taught with exceptional energy and warmth. However, it was her genuine kindness and care of her students both inside and outside of class and her steady guidance of her personal advisees that distinguished Marta's style and made her so special. She loved to be in class surrounded by her students and to share with them the rich culture, traditions, music, and literature of Spain and Latin America. Generations of students will remember their Spanish classes dedicated to the reading and discussions of "Blood Wedding" by Spanish writer, Federico Garcia Lorca, that Marta taught with such passion. I will also remember Marta's last class that I was invited to attend. She decided to show the students the Spanish movie *Carmen*, based on the book by Prosper Merimee. In this particular film, the characters were famous flamenco dancers. What a wonderful atmosphere of Spanish music and culture, along with the students' enthusiasm, that filled the classroom that day!

Marta had a long history in our school. Both her children, Nikko and Ana, graduated from Steiner. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Marta was always ready to lend a hand to her colleagues in both buildings whenever her help was needed. She attended student performances of all the grades, willing to see their different casts. Marta's quiet presence and her easy-going sense of humor were a pleasure to be

Flowers in gratitude after her last lesson



around. Before her retirement, Marta already knew and looked forward with great anticipation to what she would do after she left Steiner: volunteering in hospital neonatal units, studying, and traveling. She has already started doing all these activities this fall.

I am sure our school community will join me in sending our very best wishes to Marta for much success and fulfillment with all her new beginnings and future endeavors.

Bon vent, Marta!

FAREWELL GERI PERKAL

A LETTER FROM RALLOU HAMSHAW '65

As someone loosely connected to the greater art world (when I am not purposefully ignoring it altogether), I am more aware than ever of the importance of upholding professional standards in any workplace. And there has never been a more consummate professional working among us than Geri Perkal. New to Waldorf education, Geri was a quick learner about our values and system of teaching, especially in terms of the reasons for our very particular curriculum. Her last nine years at the school have brought exceptional clarity around the art—yes the art—of College Guidance in a small private school in Manhattan. Her integrity as a colleague and devotion to finding what she calls “the right fit” for every student who aspires to attend college was tireless and always accompanied by the sincere wish that our students realize their unique potential in this regard.

Among her list of accomplishments I admire most are Geri’s attention to detail, her knowledge of current trends in the ever-shifting field of college admissions, and her awareness of fixed requirements by the state and by individual institutions. She has tried to instill a respect for proper methods and follow-through in her students from the start of their commitment to explore their educational options and throughout the application process. After all, in most cases,

landing the college of one’s choice, or at least close to it, is one of the culminating achievements of a student’s high school years. Geri has worked hard to put our small school more fully on the map with colleges everywhere (more intensively on their radar, one could say).

Before COVID, this meant in-person visits to our school, college interviews, Zoom meetings with admissions representatives from different schools, and significant travel on Geri’s part to acquaint herself with these places, large and small, all over the country and even some overseas. Cultivating broad regional connections with colleges is a good thing, and we have Geri to thank for her determination to develop these links with educational institutions here at Steiner.

Geri’s crisp, no-nonsense, but caring approach with our students has been impressive. Never letting up on her obligation to keep students on track with their responsibilities during this often grueling process, it was gratifying to watch some of our seniors grow into more mature young adults over the course of their last year at the school. And we rejoiced with them when positive news from their colleges of choice began pouring in. Of course, for some, there were also disappointments, and their receipt of bad news could often be devastating. But our Director



of College Guidance dealt with these unhappy moments with equal calm, easing student frustration with positive and encouraging words.

So it goes without saying that Geri’s departure is a significant loss for our school and she will be missed. For all your work here, Geri, we thank you—and for everything you have done to keep the professional standards of our school at the highest level. We also very much appreciate your working diligently and generously these past few weeks with our new Director of College Guidance, Leah Braithwaite, and for introducing her to many aspects of her new job here. Leah, on that note, we warmly welcome you and are delighted and thankful that you have joined our community. We look forward to working with you.

In closing, Geri, and with sincere gratitude, we wish you the best of luck and much reward with your private practice next year. And as you go about this work with your usual expertise, I leave you with the last sentence of the much recited and famous Irish prayer, which says quite simply:

“May the road rise up to meet you.”



SPRING GALA

Together we funded a Radiant Future at our 2022 Spring Gala. On May 6, 2022 Farm to People, co-founded by Michael Ray Robinov (Steiner Lifer, '11), welcomed the Steiner community to their Brooklyn dual-purpose warehouse for our annual Spring Gala.







MAY DAY

Waldorf School communities worldwide gather on May Day to celebrate the return of spring by making flower crowns and dancing around the Maypole. This year was even more special, because we were able to gather and celebrate festivals as we used to. It is a lively and festive community celebration that involves music and dancing. Students of all ages and their families, teachers, administration, and new families were present.





A PATH OF DISCOVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

A GRADUATION ADDRESS BY MARGOT LANGMAN

Good afternoon and welcome to the families, friends, faculty, and staff who have contributed so much to this special day. My name is Margot Langman. On behalf of the class of 2022, I would like to thank you for all the support and guidance you have offered us through the years and for being with us today to share this milestone in our lives. I feel tremendous pride and gratitude to have the opportunity to speak to all of you today.

High school is the time when the metamorphosis from childhood to adulthood is most apparent. It is the time when we are most challenged to discover ourselves as individuals apart from our families while in the company of our peers. It's when we identify our strengths, clarify our values, and, if we're lucky, determine our purpose.

My own high school experience has been one of discovery and transformation. When I was 14, I was hit by a car. During the year following, most of my energy was focused on recovering physically, while attempting to keep up with the social and academic pressures of school. I can tell you that I experienced it as a huge challenge.

By the time I started high school, at 15, I was overcome with anxiety. I questioned everything about myself and my abilities and felt I was not good enough at anything. Though I had made considerable progress in rehabilitating my external, my internal self remained somewhat flawed. I still struggled to find

my identity and voice in a community, and I lacked self-confidence.

When I began attending Steiner at 16, my life began to change for the better. Gradually, I learned to feel comfortable being uncomfortable. As I pushed myself to try new things, share my ideas, and contribute, I began to define and connect with my true self.

In the curriculum, we have paid special attention to the act of metamorphosis, the relationship between the self and the world, and to seeing the microcosm in the macrocosm and vice versa. We have started each morning by reciting the Steiner morning verse together, looking into the world and ourselves, asking for learning and growing within our innermost being and with each main lesson block, we have carefully examined our individual connections with the world around us as we grow and learn.

I will always remember how the tenth-grade History Through Poetry main lesson influenced my world view. We were learning about the five capacities of the poet: wonder, inspiration, imagination, intuition, and love of language. I don't consider myself a poet, but as we explored these capacities, I recognized their value for anyone moving through the world and made the choice to intentionally carry them with me wherever I went.

The more I learned, the more I opened up and connected with others, rather



than just learning for the sake of getting good grades or doing well on tests. The creative aspect of the main lessons pushed me to experience core subjects in new ways, adding theoretical and practical aspects of working with my hands and visual components to the lessons.

My favorite main lesson, by far, was in eleventh grade. The Parzival main lesson both focused on the German epic and pushed us to examine our own life experiences, mistakes, and moments of growth as young people. Parzival's greatest mistake is being a "goose"—someone whose head is too far from his heart. He fails when he does not think to ask his uncle the most important question: "What ails you?" In studying Parzival, we learn the importance of simply asking others what ails them and what you can do to help. This truth helps us to understand how to leave our mark on the world in a meaningful way: by looking outward and focusing on what we can do for others.

There is a quote by Bengali polymath Rabindranath Tagore that reads, "The butterfly counts not months but moments and has time enough." A butterfly's life is only two weeks, so not a moment can be wasted. Just like butterflies, we seniors have also gone through a

metamorphosis, and we will also each soar onto our paths after today. As Tagore says, we should count time in moments and feel we have enough. It is okay to not know where to go next because it is far more meaningful to stay where we are, to breathe deeply into moments, and feel they are enough. One important moment can change a whole life's consciousness if we can tune into it and allow other concerns to disappear. When I look back, I am immediately taken to moments of being fully present with my classmates where we worked together as a cohesive unit, stepping out of our comfort zones, and functioning as an organism. Being able to perform a hallelujah together in eurythmy, sing together in choir, act in plays, and participate in music ensembles with my peers has bonded us in experiences where we each had to be vulnerable and give a piece of ourselves to affect the outcome of the group. The opportunity to take part in these activities has given me memories that are not only close to my heart, but deeply meaningful because I was able to be a part of and create something bigger than myself. As we feel pressure to achieve the most, excel the most, and race to be the best, it is crucial to remember that what is profoundly important, aside from our own accomplishments, is to focus on giving and what we can accomplish with our communities.

Looking at my classmates, I see 18 uniquely talented individuals that I am confident will make their mark on the world. You are artists, writers, and activists who have already created positive change in our school through discussion and action. In extracurricular clubs like Venus, SIDER, and GLOW, you have taken leadership roles, creating forums and safe spaces for the entire community to express itself. To thrive as a group in our small space, we have learned how to truly listen and forgive to overcome challenging moments experienced with each other and our teachers. As we go off into the world, I hope that we use these skills, our voices, and our inner light to brighten the dark places where we encounter injustice, inequality, violence, and hatred. These things are not strong if we choose to not give them power. Before we part ways, I have one request for my classmates: choose light. By this, I mean love one another and be positive; you never know what a difference a single, kind word can make in someone's life. The light we emit has the power to ripple like an echo; so please, do not be afraid to give and receive it.

Thank you.

"CAPS OFF" TO THE CLASS OF 2022!

College guidance and the admissions process was a hybrid model for the class of 2022, combining elements before COVID with elements adapted during COVID. Fortunately, more students could visit colleges in person, three students were accepted to their EDII colleges, and 145 applications were submitted with a 55% acceptance rate. June 17th officially marked the commencement for the Class of 2022 as each member embarks on the next chapter of their lives, building off of the foundation laid at Rudolf Steiner. The matriculations are aligned with each student's focus on the characteristics of colleges that were the right fit; urban to rural, small liberal arts colleges to large research universities, domestic to international, and colleges strong in a specific major.

It is with great pleasure that I present the Class of 2022:

Maya Aimen – University of Massachusetts
Philippe Alexandrov - Loyola Marymount University
Sophie Berg – University of Amsterdam
Noah Bergman – Cooper Union for the Advancement of
Science of Art
Aza Birdsall-Craycroft – Oberlin College
Gavin Escalona – Stony Brook University
Meghan Guach – Binghamton University
Astou Kane – University of Rochester
Omar Kolenovic – Marist College
Margot Langman – Georgetown University
Laura Madhu – Kenyon University
Adiitsai Nelson – Cornell University
Raaf Panepinto – School of Visual Arts
Juliette Richenthal – Union College
Tye Rikman – SUNY at Purchase College
Arwen Saenz – Pace University
Preston Silverman – St. John's University
Ian Skipsey – Rochester Institute of Technology
Cecelia Wilson – Fashion Institute of Technology

It had been an honor guiding and advising the class.

IN MEMORIAM: ANDREW HUBNER

LONGTIME STEINER PARENT

We regret to share with you the sad news of the passing of Steiner parent Andrew (“Drew”) Hubner. Drew is survived by his children Henry, Eleanor, and August; partner Kristin Mathis and son Santiago; his mother Jacqueline; elder brother David and wife Ruth; younger brother Steve and wife Lindsay; the mother of his children, Sarah Hayes; and many cherished godchildren, family, and friends.

Drew was a “writer’s writer” whose prose was so searing and tender it scorched your soul. His quest for good stories knew no temperance or end. He drove the back roads of our vast American landscape to gather material for his critically acclaimed first novel *American By Blood* (2000). Further travels to Kuwait and Kosovo resulted in *We Pierce* (2003), a story of Operation Desert Storm loosely based

on his relationship with big brother, Colonel Dave Hubner, US Army, Ret. His collection of short stories, *East of Bowery* (2012), drew inspiration from his youthful escapades on the Lower East Side.

Of all the many people Drew loved, his children Henry, LouLou, and August were his greatest treasures. He picked them up faithfully from school every day and spent countless hours playing games from “potato monster” to toy soldiers to baseball. In recent years, his life partner Kristin Mathis and son Santiago became an integral part of Drew’s motley crew.

To Drew’s family and to all his friends, we extend our deepest sympathy and condolences.



IN MEMORIAM: MARIA C. LINDER '56

A LETTER FROM RALLOU HAMSHAW '65

Maria C. Linder, a nationally recognized scientist and beloved sister of Renate Poliakine—retired and long-time colleague and art teacher at Rudolf Steiner School—passed away on September 25, 2022 in Los Angeles. Not only was Linder an exceptional scientist in her field, she was also a revered professor of chemistry and biochemistry at California State University at Fullerton, where she devotedly mentored scores of research students over her distinguished 45-year career.

During these years, Linder published more than 100 scholarly articles, many of which she produced with her students. She also garnered more than 12 million dollars in research grants and earned awards and praise for her research and teaching. Her greatest and most inspired accomplishment, however, was her nurturing and cultivation of generations of future biochemists.

Linder joined CSUF in 1977 following a teaching commitment at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She grew up in New York City, attended Rudolf Steiner School from grades one through eight, and completed her high school years at the High Mowing Waldorf School in New Hampshire. Linder earned her bachelor's degree from Vassar College and her doctorate from Harvard University. For many years, Linder directed the university's Howard Hughes Medical Institute Research Scholars Program, which endeavors to bring real-world research experiences to underrepresented undergraduate students. Among her other distinguished



Maria with sister Renate



awards through the years are: CSUF's Outstanding Professor Award, L. Donald Shields Excellence in Scholarship and Creativity Award, the California State University prestigious Wang Family Excellence Award, and the American Chemical Society Award for Research. Linder was also recognized as an American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow for her research and expertise on mammalian copper and iron metabolism.

Linder is preceded in death by her husband of more than forty years, Gordon Nielson, and is survived by stepson Eric, four grandchildren, her sister Renate, and niece Amanda. The Rudolf Steiner School community warmly extends its deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to the family of Maria Linder.

IN MEMORIAM: GABRIELA VAN AUKEN '09

A LETTER FROM TIM HOFFMANN

On Saturday, September 24, 2022, friends and family of Gabriela Van Auken gathered to celebrate what would have been her 32nd birthday. Gaby had a wide circle of friends, both from her time at Steiner, Vassar, and beyond. The various tributes to her painted a picture of a truly remarkable young woman. She was beautiful, intelligent, and she had a deep commitment to social justice.

Gaby came to Steiner in September 2001. I was her class teacher for four years from fifth through eighth grade. In my memory of Gaby, several images stand out. First of all, Gaby was always surrounded by friends. Classmates and teachers loved her enthusiasm, her wit, and her willingness to speak out. She was never shy to challenge authority, to question all forms of orthodoxy and generally to do what she could to make a fairer and more just world.

Gaby was always eager to learn. She worked hard in school; the essays from her time in our high school were exceptional.

And, I remember Gaby's voice. To hear her speak was to experience everything we love about teaching. Here was the mind of a young person with purpose and missions. She was a joy to teach. We all miss her terribly.

Of the many tributes paid to Gaby on September 24, it was her father's that stands out.

In loving memory,
Tim Hoffmann

These are the words of Bill Van Auken:

Nelly and I welcome you all and thank you for joining us this afternoon. I want to especially thank Gaby's friends and former classmates who have worked so hard to make this event happen. You all know we could never have pulled this off by ourselves.

This is Gaby's birthday. We have celebrated this day for 31 years, and this is the first time we have to do it without her. In a few days we will mark five months since she slipped away from us. So today is a day of both joy and sorrow. Joy for everything Gaby gave to us and to the world in those 31 years and sorrow that she is not here to see how much she was and is loved.

I cannot sum up Gaby's life in a few remarks. But I will say she was brilliant, beautiful, and nearly always the funniest person in the room. Looking around at the photos and the slide show you cannot escape the fact that she glowed.

She was also very brave. One of my early memories of her is as an infant slipping out of my arms in a swimming pool and slowly sinking to the bottom wearing an ear-to-ear grin as if it was the most wonderful experience her father could have ever given her. She remained a water baby her entire life. She loved swimming in the ocean, despite an inordinate fear of sharks from seeing the movie *Jaws* at a tender age.

A few years later, at the age of three, I recall her digging up long worms



from the small garden in front of our apartment building in Queens and running down the sidewalk waving them like a trophy and laughing, sending passersby darting to the other side of the street.

She was always proud of being a girl from Queens, and it was with some trepidation that she transferred to Rudolf Steiner School in Manhattan, where she made so many friends who are here today. One of her first days of classes was cut short by the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Towers, and she and Nelly had to walk home across the 59th Street Bridge, hitching a ride with a trucker.

A year-and-a-half later, as a 12-year-old, she was one of the half million who marched in Manhattan against the start of the wars that would continue for the rest of her lifetime.

As she grew into a young woman, Gaby, with relatively meager resources, managed to travel the world, from high school right through, seeing more of it

in her short life than her mother and I have. She backpacked through Central and South America and Southeast Asia, and traveled through Europe and the Middle East.

I have no intention of making this a political speech or trying to explain Gaby in the context of the broader forces that shaped her world and her generation. But you cannot tell Gaby's story or explain her life without talking about her politics. She was from an early age a convinced and vocal socialist and atheist and remained so throughout her life.

In her 12th grade yearbook at the Steiner School, they included a section on each student's contribution to the class and where they would be in 20 years. Many of the entries were light-hearted and satirical. But the entry for Gaby said her contribution to the class was a socialist perspective and that in 20 years she would be leading a revolution. Needless to say, this made her old man very proud.

Since Gaby has left us, her college classmates have told us what an impact she had on their lives in terms of the way they see the world and in developing their own hostility toward social inequality and injustice.

Gaby came out of Vassar College with an orientation towards the arts. She joined with friends in establishing a gallery in lower Manhattan, The Six-Month Space, which hosted a number of wonderful exhibitions and performances. Later, Gaby became the assistant and editor for Linda Nochlin, the well-known feminist art historian. She played a major role in the writing and publication of her final book, *Misère*, on the artistic representation of poverty in the 19th century, a subject



that Gaby knew a great deal about.

More and more however, Gaby came to the conclusion that most of what passed for the arts involved making and selling things for the wealthy, and that was not for her. She decided to make a radical turn, following in her mother's footsteps to become a nurse, a career where she felt she could do the most good for the most people.

Gaby completed an accelerated course to get her master's degree in nursing at Columbia University. She worked incredibly hard to achieve this under the difficult conditions of an uncontrolled pandemic, whose epicenter was our own neighborhood of Jackson Heights, and even as she struggled—and she struggled very bravely—with her own mental health problems.

Gaby loved mastering the science of nursing—for which Vassar had offered little preparation—and she loved even more working in the patient care units. She was always the most caring and empathetic nurse, gravitating to patients deemed by others as problematic because of mental or emotional challenges. And she gave them the human empathy and the comfort and care they needed. In short, Gaby was the nurse you would be lucky to have if, god forbid, you ended up in hospital.

Since April, we have received condolences from people who knew Gaby at different stages of her life, and from all over the world. One that deeply affected us came from Carolina Olivares, who produced the film *The Messengers* directed by the Colombian filmmaker Ivan Argote in which Gaby was an actor. She became close to Gaby as they worked together filming in Colombia and Spain.

She wrote the following:

"There is a part in the film, in which you explain with a lot of clarity that ever since you were little, you wanted to be a revolutionary woman, like Rosa Luxemburg ... I already felt like you had achieved your dream; you might not have been aware of it. I saw you like a revolutionary woman, who was at the same time fragile. A fragility that only made beautiful gestures, your generosity, your intellectual and political interests... While I write this I am listening to the song "Canción del boga ausente," that marvelous poem by Candelario Obeso that Ivan showed us... I can see you dancing African rhythms, gaitas, cumbia, chalupa, and mapalé.

WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU.

Rest in peace, dear angel. **YOU ARE NOW ETERNAL.**"

For Nelly and I, Gaby was, is and always will be our angel, and I know she will live on forever in the hearts and minds of all of us who love her.

There are a number of others who want to speak today and fill in the tremendous gaps I have left, so I'll end my remarks here. There will be laughter and tears, hopefully more laughing, I know that's what Gaby would want.

DONORS

Every donor at our school is important and every gift is significant. Donors listed in the following categories made unrestricted and/or restricted gifts to the school during the 2021–2022 school year in direct cash and securities. We extend our warmest gratitude to all our generous contributors.

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Jean-Hugues and Veronique Monier

Leaders Circle (\$10,000 - \$14,999)

Richard Neel '57
Michael '68 and Lynn Nemser
Rich Resnick and Whitney Burke
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Partners Circle (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

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