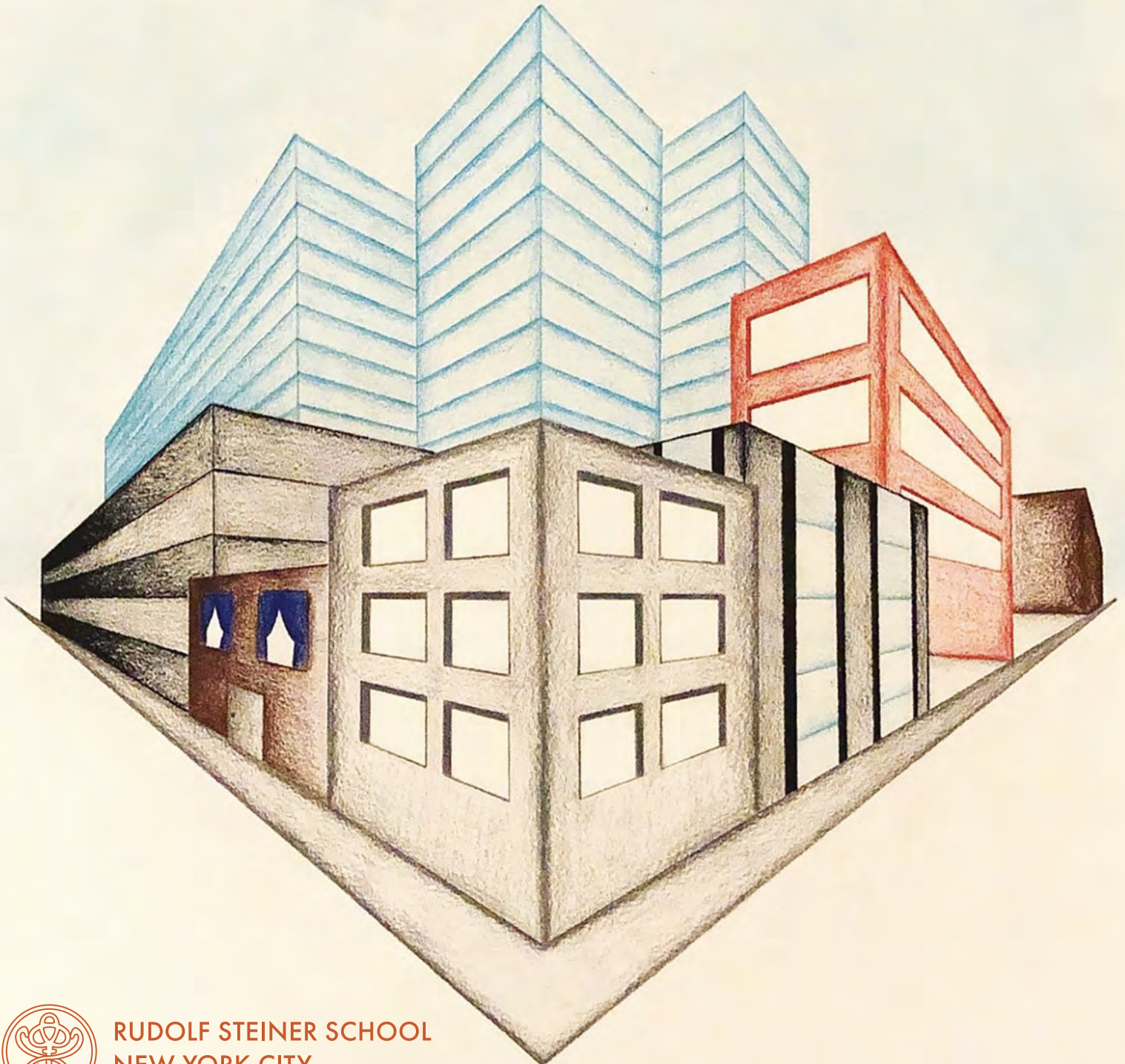


# THE SPIRAL

2023 ISSUE

A PUBLICATION OF NEW YORK'S RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL



RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL  
NEW YORK CITY





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Valentina Piazza '27

**COPY EDITOR**  
Rebecca Sinski

**DESIGN**  
Eric Perry

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
Christopher Duggan  
Cristian Piazza

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Marc Libow

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# A YEAR OF SELF-REFLECTION AND GRATITUDE

## A LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR



Gabriela Cordo,  
School Administrator



Terri Adler, Chair



Tushar Shah, Treasurer

The 2022-2023 school year was one of self-reflection and steady focused work in preparation for our dual decennial accreditation that took place in the spring. This work included the compilation of a self-study report resulting from the collaborative work of the Board of Trustees, the College of Teachers, the Leadership Council, and our Faculty and Staff.

In April 2023, we welcomed the accreditation visiting committee, comprised of representative members of the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), who spent three days on campus meeting with various constituencies of our school community. The visiting team members were pleased with their experience of our school, remarking how beautiful a school we have and, at the same time, echoed the areas of further work that we have identified in our self-study report. Some of these include enrollment growth, continued work on diversity and belonging, learning support, professional development, and community engagement, as well as alumni network expansion. The experience was rewarding and has delineated the path forward for our strategic planning work.

This year was also marked by a successful annual campaign through which we raised close to \$1 million dollars thanks to many in our community who continue to support the mission of our school through their generous contributions. It is a delight to witness the active engagement of Steiner parents, alumni, and colleagues.

I close my reflections with a special note of thanks to Tushar Shah, our Treasurer, and Terri Adler, our Board Chair, who concluded their tenure in their respective positions on June 30, 2023. Both have played an integral role supporting the school and my work since I joined Rudolf Steiner School in July 2018. Terri Adler will continue to serve as trustee for another year, as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, with her term coming to an end on June 30, 2024.

I am honored to be part of this community and deeply grateful for the level of engagement, dedication, generosity, care, and support that we have for one another.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Gabriela".

Gabriela Cordo

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# A BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE YEAR

## A LETTER FROM THE COLLEGE CHAIR



Wendy Kelly, Chair

### 2022-2023 COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

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Jeffrey Spade

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\*Denotes member of the 2022-2023  
Leadership Council

This year saw us gratefully beyond the crisis management mode of the pandemic, through a time of reflection, and into the forward thinking of strategic planning. Our AWSNA-NYSAIS re-accreditation self-study and full team site visit provided a timely vehicle for this important work. The College of Teachers was intimately involved in this process and will continue to be as we carry out the resulting recommendations from both accrediting bodies. We were both proud of the way we were able to show the Waldorf curriculum and our school mission in action and gratified to hear our self-assessments and goals echoed and supported. We have been doing good work, but we recognize multiple areas where we intend to strengthen and improve. In the pedagogical realm, which is the realm of the College of Teachers, these include (but are not limited to) diversity in its varied areas, learning support, technology support and instruction for the older students, and community engagement.

Our school has once again become alive with activities for students, parents, teachers, and the wider community. With this, the College of Teachers has worked to re-establish extra-curricular activities and has an eye toward including additional offerings. A recent Board-initiated parent survey has provided us with an updated and helpful account of activity interest, and we have already taken steps to incorporate these for the upcoming school year.

As the pedagogical arm of the school, the College of Teachers has continued to work in support of faculty development, from conducting weekly Faculty

Seminar meetings for new colleagues and providing in-house mentorship for new teachers, to facilitating outside feedback and evaluations for teachers and supporting ongoing development, training, and enrichment courses for all faculty. This year the Faculty Development Committee facilitated more than fifteen teacher evaluations across the early childhood, elementary, and upper school areas and funded (in large part through the *Teaching as a Work of Heart* initiative) over thirty teacher workshops, trainings, and conferences. We are committed to helping our faculty become the best teachers they can be and to bring the Waldorf curriculum in the most informed and intentional way possible.

It has been a busy and productive year, and I have learned a great deal during this time of leadership, inspired by the commitment and integrity of the Leadership Council members as well as by that of the Board of Trustees. We look forward to welcoming our recently hired Upper and Lower School Chairs in their new roles at the school, both of whom will be joining the College of Teachers in the fall. I will be handing over the role of College Chair to other very capable colleagues, and I look forward to turning my focus toward taking on a new class, while also continuing my work as a member of the College of Teachers.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Kelly".

Wendy Kelly  
For the College of Teachers

# EIGHTH GRADE SERVICE-LEARNING CLASS TRIP

## A LETTER FROM WENDY KELLY

This year for the eighth grade class trip, we had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Colorado and northern New Mexico for a service learning and cultural exchange experience in the Navaho/Diné Nation. Having been to the Deer Hill Expeditions campus for a summer teacher intensive several years before, I had always held in the back of my mind how much I would love to take a future class to experience the beauty of the Colorado and New Mexico landscape and the chance to live and work side by side with indigenous people under the guidance of the Deer Hill staff.

After enduring extended weather delays at the airport for several hours, the still enthusiastic eighth grade class finally boarded the airplane for our flight to Denver, followed by our connecting flight to the four corners region of Mancos. Once we arrived and settled into our temporary cabins, we began preparations for our journey to the reservation where we would be setting up camp and working with our host family. Before this, however, we enjoyed a day trip to Mesa Verde National Park, driving through and walking along the canyon cliffs and viewing the ancient and wondrous cliff dwellings from afar.

Packed into two passenger vans with a trailer of food, water, cookware, work tools, and camping gear, we headed to the home of Navaho-Diné elders, Gwen and Ferlin, who are both long-time educators on the reservation. The first visitors to their homestead for the season, we set to work immediately cleaning and clearing the area, moving furniture, arranging our outdoor kitchen, and pitching our tents. We were soon met, not only by our hosts' extended family members, but their sweet dog and puppy who captured everyone's hearts throughout our time there.

Each day on the reservation, the students worked in groups to prepare the corn fields, weed the yard, move building material, remove and replace fencing, chop wood, prepare meals, and attend to any other needed tasks. This hard work was interspersed with breaks to play volleyball or basketball, or to play with the puppy. Each evening, we gathered with our hosts, either in their home or inside their



hogan to share experiences, hear stories and songs, and learn about the beliefs and traditions of the Diné people.

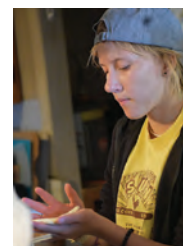
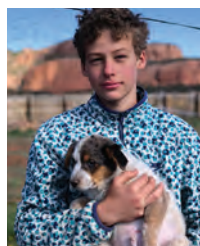
The eighth graders were struck by the dusty starkness of the reservation lands set against the stunning backdrop of mountains and mesas. They saw and experienced the hard work, simplicity, and community efforts of our host family and their vast extended family. Gwen and Ferlin were pleasantly surprised at the level of work and helpfulness of this city-dwelling class and welcomed the students' questions about their way of life. The students themselves felt accomplished and proud of all that they were able to do together. We were told by our host family that we were now extended family members and were welcome to come back any time. Indeed, Gwen and Ferlin expressed the desire for all of us to go back and let everyone know that they, their culture, their way of life still exists, that they are proud of who they are, and they intend to endure into the future.

Back at the Deer Hill base camp, the students were led in a closing ceremony that took place inside a heated sauna. Here, each student shared comments of gratitude for the opportunity of this unique and memorable experience, for the hard and meaningful work they were guided to do, and for the special time they were able to have with one another. One eighth grade student reflected, "When you visit the Navaho people, you will learn that there are not four directions, but seven: East, South, West, North, Above, Below, and Center...Center, your own being and place in the world, represents community, friends, and family...If you are your own direction, you can never get lost. You will never be lost if you are with friends and family." This class trip was a profound and unforgettable experience for us all.





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# EMBRACING THE FUTURE

## SENIOR ADDRESS FROM LANCELOT MARCEL MARCANO AT THE ROSE CEREMONY

Seniors, this journey of ours started twelve years ago, leading up to today where we are about to finish this chapter of our lives and turn the page to the next. And yes, although it's sad we are all going our separate ways it is also quite beautiful at the same time.

We are slowly figuring out who we want to be in the future, and this is not easy, but it is also so overly exciting. The future will, for sure, have obstacles we are going to need to overcome but we as a class have created over the past years a strong backbone within ourselves that no matter what life throws our way, we will overcome it.

We are embarking on a journey like no other, and for the first time, we truly have the ability to choose what we want to do with our lives. Naturally, and hopefully we are going to make ignorant decisions along the way, but we are also going to make memories that will last us a lifetime.

One valuable lesson I learned during my time here is that there is always more than what's on the surface. From our Main Lessons with Ms. Bärtges where we talked about the Microcosm in the Macrocosm, to the Origins of Life Main Lesson with Dr. Martin, where we learned about not only the origins of life but how life was created; learning in the process how lucky we are to be here. The process in which life was created is something very special.

This life has a funny way of making you realize something only after the fact. As seniors we have cared for and accompanied our first graders. Seven of us have gone full circle. twelve years ago, we were the ones walking down the aisle and sending our seniors off into the world with a rose; only now will we be the ones receiving the rose and the ones being sent off.

First graders, you've started off the year with your class teacher Ms.

*"One valuable lesson I learned during my time here is that there is always more than what's on the surface."*

Finch a loving and kind individual who is determined to guide you step by step throughout the next eight years of your lives until high school, teaching and shaping you into the great individuals you are already. My first-grade teacher was Ms. Kelly, and there are no words to describe how caring and dedicated she was as a teacher — something I have never forgotten.

With that in mind, I wanted to give you first graders some advice for the future. Advice I wished I was given twelve years ago. Although it might seem like twelfth grade is going to

take a long time to get there this is not necessarily the case. Imagine yourselves as eggs; you have just cracked out of your shell, opening your eyes to the new world.

Everything around you is new and different; you are learning something new every day. Sometimes you are going to have to try something for the first time like jumping over the fence at the park with no hands, which can seem scary the first time you do it. I know the first time I did it I tripped over my feet, breaking my glasses. It was the fence's fault. Nevertheless, remember first graders: a bird can never learn to fly if it does not take the first step in flapping its wings.

Embrace all the wonderful emotions you will go through, and memories that come along with growing up. Take risks: it makes looking back worth all the hard work you put into getting where you want to be.

Middle school to high school is a BIG change. One day, you go from being the kings and queens of the lower school to becoming the babies of the high school. It can be intimidating at first, but you get used to it.

At a young age I was diagnosed with a learning disability. Having a learning disability throughout my years at school has not been easy. The stress of having to count the people ahead of me so I could practice the reading passage a couple times so I would not mess up in front of my friends was something I hated but had to do. This was not easy during middle



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digital version.



school and especially not easy in high school. When it became apparent that I was falling behind I had to really work hard to stay at par with my peers. I made many sacrifices and spent countless hours with tutors making progress every day. The reason I am telling you this is because I had many opportunities to give up; all my friends would go to the park after school to play sports with each other while I had to go home and study; and believe me there was nothing I would have rather done than play with my friends all those years ago.

Think of it this way: life is like a bow and arrow, life might pull you back, but when it is done pulling you back it will release you forward and all the bad and negative will be behind you.

Time went by too quickly, and hopefully this will not be the case for the rising freshman. I will say though: enjoy high school. Before you know it, one of you will be speaking up here in four years, going down memory lane and giving advice to the rising freshman. And believe me: it is hard to sum up all the memories and advice you have been given throughout the years within five to six minutes.

As I stand here today, I want to finish off my speech with some advice for the class of 2023 and something to look forward to.

Although we are going into uncharted waters, knowing little to nothing about what the future has in store for us, it is important to remember that others have gone into those uncharted

waters and emerged stronger. I encourage us all to embrace the unknown and enjoy the next years of college; these will truly be the last years of being a kid. Make those memories we have always wanted to have, make not only your younger self proud but also your future self proud for having not missed the opportunities and wonderful experiences that lie ahead of all of us. Let us all have wonderful stories to tell each other ten years from now at our 2033 reunion.

And finally, seniors, I leave you with



this to look forward to within the near future; if you want to throw your teachers off balance by the end of this ceremony after we have been given our diplomas, we will technically be considered alumni meaning we can finally call our teachers by their first names; so Carol, Marisha, John, Jordan, Alex, Ilan, Mr. Marsh, and for all of the other teachers who's first names I still need to learn: a heartfelt 'thank you' for the last four years.

Thank you, and congratulations again to the class of 2023.

# THE PENTATHLON & THE CURRICULUM

BY JAMIE EWING & CHIKAKO MIYOSHI

In the embrace of May, a season of renewed life and the sprouting of spring emerges the Pentathlon—an artful reinterpretation of an ancient Greek athletic spectacle. This ceremonial endeavor holds special significance as a rite of passage for fortunate eleven-year-olds attending our school.

At the juncture of eleven years old lies a profound milestone in human development—a final exhalation of true childhood before the impending onset of puberty, poised to reshape a child’s existence and herald transformative changes.

Within the realm of Waldorf education, fifth-grade students engage in the Pentathlon, a competition rooted in traditional Greek disciplines. Their collective pursuit involves not only excelling in feats like the longest long jump, swiftest running, mightiest wrestling, highest and farthest javelin throws, and most powerful discus tosses but also executing these actions with a sense of elegance and harmonious form. This ultimate aspect pays homage to the magnificence and potential inherent in all human physicality. The dedication poured into training for the annual Pentathlon unveils tangible skills, marrying prowess with grace and symmetry.

The Pentathlon does not solely encompass physical prowess; it also encompasses artistic finesse in the realms of song, music, and recitation. The children craft heartfelt odes to their chosen deity, beseeching aid for their endeavors on this occasion or celebrating a personal source of joy.

Through the Pentathlon experience, a cherished memory takes root in childhood, resonating profoundly into adulthood. It nourishes these young individuals, fostering a deep affection for themselves and their fellow participants—an enduring reminder of the joys of childhood.

## PENTATHLON

*The ancient Greek had a rich and beautiful culture; therefore, the athletes perform with beauty and graceful as their best.*

*In Pentathlon, the athletes were judged on how they behave, prepare, and perform with reverence and not only on how they compete physical skills.*

*Noncompetitive environment will end by the end of fifth grade in this glorious celebration.*

—Chikako Miyoshi









# HISTORY THROUGH MUSIC | ELEVENTH GRADE MAIN LESSON

## A LETTER FROM ALEX YAGUPSKI

*"History through Music? Don't you mean History of Music?"*

Without fail, this is the first reaction I get whenever I mention I teach this Main Lesson, and I must confess, I, too, blurted this out when I first found out I'd be teaching it. Something about *through* is so startling here as to provoke a response. And yet, it's not really such an outlier. The high school boasts many such *History through* blocks: *History through Drama*; *History through Poetry*; *History through Art*. This is by design, and among its intentions, *through* is there precisely to shake us out of complacency and have us grapple with it in our work.

Music is often among the signposts that identify particular moments and eras of our lives. Take, for instance, the classic *Rapper's Delight*. It hit the scene late in the summer of 1979. At its mere mention, I can't help but hearken back to my high school days when it dominated the airwaves . . . *I said a-hip, a-hop* . . . Specific moments and circumstances become distinct. Half-remembered lyrics coalesce into coherence. Faces of classmates come into focus, especially of those who knew every word and could recite the long version seemingly without coming up for air. It's likely that if you also grew up during that time, you'll also experience a jaunt down memory lane with all the attendant nostalgia. In the mix there will also be the now-collective recognition of this as the watershed hit that ushered hip-hop into the mainstream. All these observations, individual and societal, are valid, and they imbue *Rapper's Delight* with meaning both personal and cultural.

We should take care to recognize that our responses here are essentially of memory-as-markers, neatly packaged with tidy boundaries. As adults with decades behind us, we like to orient our past with specific, well-defined signposts, and despite their emotional impact, they basically act as coordinates: Xmarks-the-spot, notes in the margins, highlights on the landscape.

But they are *not* the evolving landscape itself. We easily forget that we lived through these events; that, as adolescents, we watched them unfold. And, then as now, music changed constantly around us even as it spoke to



us. We witnessed firsthand today's inspired hits become yesterday's fashions, and our music mirrored the world around us: in flux, changing around us, changing with us.

Another anecdote, if you would. I was recently making dinner for my family, throwing together a dish that had been a staple of my foregone bachelor days. In a nod to that era, I put on music I used to listen to at the time, music I haven't heard in decades. Within seconds, I was predictably brought back to the ground-level apartment of my twenties. The air floating heavily in a badly ventilated kitchen. The sticky humidity locked into the cabinets' bargain paint job. The haze of bad lighting bouncing off cheap formica tops. More abstractly, worries, concerns and to-do lists that, in retrospect, seem rather quaint and innocent. Without doubt, a deeply personal and





be that students have a hard time connecting with music not their own if they aren't given some experience of the changing forces around it, if we don't show the necessity of its evolution as a response to its often turbulent backdrop? But placing music in its environment, tracing its transformation in tandem with society's, seeing it as a product of or reaction to the cultural forces around it, that makes both music and history come to life. This is how students relate to the music they claim as their own, and if what we have to offer is to resonate with them, this must be foremost in our minds.

The French composer Claude Debussy famously stated, "Music is the silence between the notes." We should recognize that our students also live "between the notes," and, thus, our work with them ought to focus on journey as well as destination, especially as it relates here. So how to work between the signposts?



meaningful reaction, at least to me. But an unflinchingly static one, without any sense of becoming, without any *through*, if you will.

A life-in-the-making is filled with surprises, with unanticipated outcomes, with unexpected events. As adults, our hindsight recalibrates these into a coherent, inevitable narrative. And while they take on significance for us, knowing where we're headed means we can't view these without spoilers, as it were. We already know the joke's punch line, and so we forget our anticipation at its setup and outcome as we heard it the first time.

But a young person is just starting to build a past, and I think this is the heart of the matter: *through* is meant to remind us that, foremost, a young person experiences life as a dynamic process, that it unfolds before them, that it is in the process of becoming. Events are part of an ever-changing present rather than fixed markers of past experiences.

Seen in that light, it becomes clear that, however significant these moments might be, focusing on them alone has as much bearing on a student as dry program notes or memorizing dates. How surprised can we

Among the goals of this class is to cultivate students' listening. So often their appraisals lie in the polarity of like and dislike, with all its attendant judgments. It's helpful to lead them, instead, toward features such as form, instrumentation, and texture, features that lend themselves to scrutiny somewhat more objective. This is not to suggest a complete clinical detachment, but a little goes a long way. It bears mention that the American Milton Babbitt, a composer who wrote some of the thorniest music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, found it quite baffling that concert audiences were primarily concerned with liking or not liking the music performed. He would counter that, were they to attend a lecture on, say, advanced biology, the post-event chatter might instead focus on what had made sense, rather than what had been liked. While this does beg the question, there is some truth here, and, often, a listener with a set taste, wide, eclectic or not, will mistake it for objective expertise and extrapolate from there. None more so than the adolescent, for whom music is a proxy for their very identity.



## HISTORY THROUGH MUSIC | ELEVENTH GRADE MAIN LESSON (continued)

As orientation, then, the Main Lesson usually begins by listening to and discussing music indigenous to places far away, places such as the Northern Territory of Australia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Pampas and Sierras of Latin America, the Republic of Tuva. Usually, students will lack context or experience with this music, but they soon see that they can comment objectively on what they hear. As the course of history takes over the narrative, discussions take on an ease, depth and versatility born of this earlier exercise.

Now, to bring this mindset to our daily singing. During the first half hour of every lesson, the class sings through a variety of repertoire, some traditional, some folk-based, and some centuries-old. The latter, particularly, exposes students to music they rarely confront, and it is often the most challenging to put together. Like all creative endeavors, beginnings can make or break an undertaking. In music this is especially so. Decoding the symbols on the page, putting sounds together into something meaningful, uncovering the piece's logic: all these feel like we're flying the airplane even as we try to build it.

As a teacher, guiding students through this is among the hardest work as

students flounder about, reaching for sounds half-heard. This is *through* at its purest, as students try to form what seems disparate into a coherent whole, and without the right touch, even "fun" pieces can stall, ending up as works started but not finished. And it's also notable how, once the whole is achieved, the difficulties of putting things together are promptly forgotten.

Hopefully, students will turn the insights gained in cultivating their hearing toward creating and engaging with music, and, in the longer term, develop some self-awareness regarding process and how to direct it mindfully. By the end of the Main Lesson, students will have some sense that they have grappled with this on quite a deep level, and, as alums, they will often appreciatively mention some of our repertoire with fond nostalgia.

Finally, each student gives an individual presentation. In the past, these have taken several forms, but, most recently, they have centered around presenting some aspect of the folk or indigenous music of their culture. For me, this is a highlight of the course as everyone always learns something new, and it's deeply moving to observe students proudly reveal details of their ethnic background that they otherwise rarely advertise.



Over the years, *through* has given me far more pause, as an instructor, than either *history* or *music*. The latter are sharply defined; *through* is far more diaphanous. Yet, it is this *through* that gently tugs us toward rich tapestries of the artistic milieu, societal pressures and historical inevitabilities that gave birth to the works we study. I believe that *through* is meant to reflect this type of experience spread over recorded history.

Even in their own brief lives, students experience music—and their lives—along these lines, as a medium in flux. They've seen it evolve over their lifetime to become part of their here and now. They understand it to be a fruit of their time and their environment. Given this, how can we expect them to have a rapport with music not of their own if it is presented as static and fixed? Rather, they should be challenged to discover that music, like all art, is both contextualized from its environment and that it, itself, contextualizes its environment. I think *through* is there to point us toward these ideas, ideas meaningful to young people as they seek to become adults.

When I recently taught this Main Lesson, a visiting parent who had sat in on a class mentioned afterward, "I wasn't sure if this was a music or history lesson."

That's exactly right.





# FAREWELL DENISE CRANE

## A LETTER FROM ALEX SPADEA

When a beloved long-term colleague such as Ms. Denise Crane decides that the time has come to move on in pursuit of other passions and adventures it is very much a bitter-sweet moment, one that makes us reflect on the years past...

Denise started teaching Eurythmy at our school 20 years ago, at first in a part-time position which, as is often the case, grew quickly into a full-time position involving many other tasks and commitments that make school happen, such as serving on the College of Teachers and the festival committee, to name but a few. Her realm of teaching was mainly in the Early Childhood classrooms and grades one through six.

Ms. Crane brought to our school her deep love and dedication to Eurythmy and Waldorf pedagogy. As a mother of three children who all “grew up Waldorf,” she brought her personal insights and experiences of children advancing through the various phases of childhood to her work, always seeking new ways to support her students through her well-prepared and fun eurythmy lessons.

Growing up in New York, not far from where she later studied eurythmy, Denise and her twin sister moved to California where they went to college and started their respective families. It was in those California years, while raising their children, that destiny led Ms. Crane and her husband Will to discover Waldorf education and Anthroposophy which became a guiding path for their own inner development and raising their children. When Mr. Crane eventually accepted a teaching position at the Green Meadow Waldorf School (not far from where Denise grew up), the family of five moved to the east coast and soon Denise decided to enroll in the eurythmy training.

The two of us met in the early 90’s when I arrived as a transfer student from Dornach, Switzerland, and was fortunate enough to have landed in her class. That was the beginning of a long friendship with many good laughs, intense training and practice, many conversations about eurythmy, music and poetry, pedagogy, raising children, flowers and vegetables, fun together on the dancefloor,



and so much more! It has been such a delight being colleagues here at Steiner, and I thank her profoundly for nudging me 14 years ago to join the Steiner faculty.

Every year when I receive the seventh grade students at the upper school, I marvel at how well prepared the students are in their eurythmy skills, how strong their gestures, sense for geometry in space, and joy in eurythmy.

Ms. Crane also was a master of all sorts of eurythmy games, which the children still ask for when they come into the upper school!

Denise was a colleague who one could always count on to jump in for whatever is needed. Thank you for your years of service and the beautiful memories.



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## A SACRED SOMETHING

### A LETTER FROM DR. CAROLINE MARTIN

Steiner's junior and senior high school students in this year's Biochemistry Elective course undertook a trimester dedicated to the practice of animal dissection. After a historical prelude – learning of how Michelangelo would steal by candlelight into the 'dead room' of an infirmary to examine the anatomy of a corpse, or pondering the medical implications of the centuries-long hiatus in the systematic practice of cadaver dissection that occurred between the third century B.C. and the Renaissance, a gap which can be argued to have thwarted the march of modern medicine – the students took up their scalpels and discovered for themselves just why the practice of animal dissection is steeped in historical, religious, spiritual, and medical significance.

My own high school experience has guided me. While I studied many different subjects then, and with a little mental exertion could probably list any and all of these, if I had to prepare a lesson on any particular one, I would need to first refresh my memory. One striking exception to this requirement, however, would be the dissection work that I carried out, about which I remember so vividly the details and the many complexities that it is as if the work had been conducted only this morning. Every filamentous, tactile, and odoriferous detail of every stage of what was involved is easily brought to the forefront of my mind

without a droplet of intervening mist. I remember at the outset my biology teacher's gentle but firm demeanor and the atmosphere of awe that pervaded the laboratory. I remember how earnest she was, and the feeling of trust that welled up inside me and the other students. Could we also have been afraid? I believe so, a little. I dissected two eyeballs (one cow, one pig, neither species made known to me) and the following week a rat, *Rattus norvegicus*. I must have learned many features of complex anatomy during preparatory sessions on the chalkboard: the physics of lenses, the ecology and reproductive wizardry of rats, the mechanics of the mammalian heart, the function of the diaphragm, and more, the finer details of all of which having been gently sequestered over decades into deep recesses of my mind. But the relationship formed between the very specimens and my hands, through which my eyes and other senses and thoughts were guided as I cautiously nipped and clipped my way through connective tissue that had evolved over eons, is forever forged along some of my clearest mental pathways. I can still feel, and with ocular clarity "see," each incision that I made then on those three specimens in high school. I cannot exaggerate the extent to which this is not the case for the vast majority of the other learning I undertook as a student, theoretical or practical. There is a sacred something about the deliberate



practice of entering the space of a once-living animal that is indescribably indelible.

I wanted this unforgettable experience for the junior and seniors at Steiner, but dissection is a difficult topic to raise, with the many concerns over animal welfare and arguments for virtual, computer-generated simulations difficult to refute. Mr. Zef Egan, our part-time life sciences teacher, with whom I share the teaching load of the biochemistry elective, was firmly on board, arguing that we should bring the students to respect the educational value of dissection while maintaining their respect for animal welfare, and for the same reasons we received the full backing from the high school science department. Mr. Jorge Martinez, the seventh grade class teacher, inspired us with recollections of awe and wonder from his own high school dissection experience and he offered many crucial historical facts that helped to frame our supporting lessons. What I wished to bring to the students, through personal narrative, was how to look to oneself during times of crisis. I shared that my fear of heights once had me shaking perilously on a high scaffold at an atmospheric monitoring site, so much so that I couldn't, under my own will, descend without the physical help of others. I revealed that it took many attempts to overcome my phobia of heights, all of which required the practice of self-reliance on a deeply meditative level. I counselled the students that not merely dexterity and curiosity would be needed for animal dissection, but a rallying of their will forces to a honed degree of self-mastery, as many cues for aversion, such as repugnance and even distress, would not be easily triumphed over.

The morning came for the dissection of the cow's eye, a fascinating organ of sight with an even more fascinating evolutionary history. The eye comes housed in layers of fatty tissue that insulate and cushion the organ and the students' first task was to remove the eye proper from this casing. This work took time and dedication, at first daunting one or two students, but eventually leading every one of them along a quiet and focused path of discovery. Each student handled the operation

differently, but the awe and wonder that pervaded the laboratory was unmistakable. My wish had come true before they had even entered the eye, with the discovery of the substantiveness of the optic nerve affirming, in one act of dissection, weeks of lessons on visual processing. Nothing could have brought me more joy than when a student, upon extracting the lens, asked, "Did the cow grow this?" And then one after another, each student, as they incised the eye, discovered the iris, the cornea, the sclera, and more, eventually disclosing for themselves the merest of tissues, the miraculous retina held flimsily between forefinger and thumb. And finally, comprehending the gravity of their undertaking, they beheld with wonder the iridescent kaleidoscope of the tapetum lucidum, the enhanced reflector at the back of the eyes of nocturnal mammals.



The challenge presented by *Rattus norvegicus* was greater than that demanded by the eye. This notorious animal, that for many when scurrying around the subway stations and parks elicits repugnance, when submitted on a dissection tray appeared human-like and deserving of the utmost compassion and care. Many students remarked on the attitude of the rat's hands, how similar to ours they were when held in the attitude of final repose. How the students made these connections I do not know, but I just as assuredly made them myself, and we all felt the intangible connection to this other lifeform. Throughout the dissection of the rat, there were many similar moments when substantive connections were formed, such as when we were presented with the unmistakable likenesses of our digestive and breathing systems, and the students all expressed afterwards a newfound respect for the common rat.

I found the animal dissection course to be enlightening. The careful way in which the science department members and other faculty came together to bring this experience to the students was collaboration at its most effective. Witnessing the students' overcoming of the many challenges was rewarding in and of itself, but deeper satisfaction arises from knowing that they take enduring lessons of self-resolve and self-mastery along with them.

# CLASS NOTES

1960s



## Pamela Giles '68

I am still proud to have been a member of the dynamic, innovative Class of 1968. We are still a connected class cheering each other on! Despite my intentions at age eighteen when I graduated from high school, I have devoted my professional life to Waldorf education as a class teacher and mentor. One my current great joys is coming to Steiner and working with a new generation of enthusiastic class teachers. Who could have predicted?

1980s

## Alexandra Riccio '88

I recently moved back to Saratoga springs, NY and continue to practice integrative medicine. My son, Max now attends Savannah College of Art and Design. My whole family continues to enjoy the great outdoors and going to Steiner reunions.

## Bega Metzner '89

Where I live: Moab, UT

What I do: Moab to Monument Valley Film Commission Director since 2016.

What the job entails: Facilitating any type of media productions coming to my region.

What's cool about it: It's the longest ongoing film commission in the world celebrating its 75th anniversary this year!

Also: On the board of AFCI

(Association of Film Commissioners International) representing over 300 film commissions across the globe.

Other life stuff: Proudly raising an incredible son (Silver) who will be turning eighteen this July and heading off to college.

Putting my Waldorf education to use: took a shot at knitting again this past winter... Knit one, purl one... (Almost) like riding a bike...

Made a winter hat for my kiddo with some last-minute mad knitting skills from my niece Kestrel who helped finish it off (she attended Hawthorne Valley until a couple years ago).



1990s

## Yureesh Hooker & Oona Barry '90

Checking in with our old Steiner Peoples! After decades, both of us reconnected in 2017 and got married on December 1, 2022! After many years between us, living separate lives in Cali, we moved back home to NYC. We have since settled in Irvington, NY (NYC rents are a little... well, you know). It's been quite a while since either of us has reconnected with Steiner, other than walking past the buildings to reminisce. But when an old friend like Alex Kadvan reaches out, we answer the call. Both of us hope that everyone is well, happy to see that we still have some old 'homies' here, and that Rudolf Steiner School is still doing its work! I am the owner and CEO of YureeshStyle, which specializes in global education in Business Development, executive coaching, and so much more. [www.yureeshstyle.com](http://www.yureeshstyle.com)



## Stephen Francis '90

I married a New Orleans girl 25 years ago in May, and the inevitable result of doing that is that you wind up living in New Orleans, where I moved in 2009. Jennifer and I have three daughters, two of whom are currently attending LSU Honors College, with the third to graduate from high school next year. I am an assistant general counsel at Entergy Corporation, and Jennifer is a nurse practitioner at the cardiac electrophysiology clinic at Oschner. I keep in regular touch with classmates Alex Kadvan, Joseph Adago, Marc Nioche, Luke O'Malley and James Budde. I recently used my Steiner woodworking skills to build a backyard tiki bar, and enjoy life in New Orleans with its many excuses to use my old handwork skills to make all manner of costumes. Give me a shout if you find yourself coming to New Orleans!







### Luke O'Malley '90

In the 22-23 school year I saw the release of the first project that I worked on for Apple: Logic Pro for iPad. In 2020, I was compelled by the Covid pandemic to move from NYC to Hamburg, Germany with my wife and (then) seven-year-old son. For years, my musician friends had told me that I should be working on the Logic Pro application and in 2021, a friend introduced me to a few members of the Apple Music Apps team which was based in Hamburg; I was hired by them shortly thereafter.

### Aaron Mazer '90

I have been running my own real estate investment and development firm, Mazer Asset Group, for the last six years. I focus on distressed multi-family properties in the boroughs, primarily Brooklyn and Queens. After finding success in NYC, I recently expanded my business to Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee and Texas where I acquire abandoned homes in hard-hit economic areas and rehab them with the hopes of being able to offer affordable housing to families that would otherwise never be able to own. I live on Long Island and spend my free time with my children Jaclyn (15) and Ryan (12), who has Autism. I volunteer my time and efforts learning and sharing as much as I can with parents that struggle with being a special needs family.



## 1990s

### Mark Nioche '90

I attended RPI, graduated in 1994, and returned to NYC to start my career in the financial industry and currently work at JP Morgan Chase. I enjoy going back to the Fall Fair when I can to catch up with other alumni. I live with my wife and two children, one in high school and one in college. We enjoy traveling when we have the opportunity.



### Daniel Slotwiner '91

He studied Political Science at the University of Chicago and Columbia University before embarking on a career in advertising. Daniel (who still has terrible handwriting) keeps in close touch with a few classmates (Jeremiah Redstone and Chad Gex in particular) and lives in Brooklyn with his wonderful wife Shefali and children, Saanika (a high school freshman at Andover) and Micah (a fifth grader at Berkeley Carroll). A highlight of the past few years was taking a "gap year" as a family to travel in Asia and South America (and running into Alex Kadvan '90 for dinner in Singapore along the way).



## 2010s

### Lily Geiger '14

Lily Geiger started Figlia, a non-alcoholic Aperitivo, in 2020 after a lifetime of watching her father battle with alcoholism and eventually losing him to the disease. Prior to launching Figlia, Lily was born and raised in New York City and spent the start of her career in Los Angeles, where she worked in brand marketing for brands such as Beautycounter, APL, Heyday, Summer Fridays and more.










▼  
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UPDATES FOR THE  
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THE SPIRAL TO THE  
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OFFICE.**

Email us at [info@steiner.edu](mailto:info@steiner.edu)

# BUDGET RESULTS

2022-2023 (Audited Figures)

	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL	
<b>INCOME</b>			
Gross Tuition and Fees	\$13,426,271		
Tuition Assistance	(\$4,913,288)		
Net Tuition and Fees	\$8,512,983	87%	
Additional Program & Miscellaneous Income	\$277,338	3%	
Net Fundraising	\$985,461	10%	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$9,775,782</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Salaries & Benefits	\$7,489,926	75%	
Program Expense	\$1,336,040	13%	
Facility Expense	\$671,643	7%	
Administrative Expense	\$531,037	5%	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$10,028,646</b>	<b>100%</b>	
Net Operating Excess (Deficit) before depreciation	(\$252,864)		
Capital Improvements	(\$647,150)		
One-time Endowment Draw #2	\$1,000,000		
<b>NET CASH</b>	<b>\$99,986</b>		



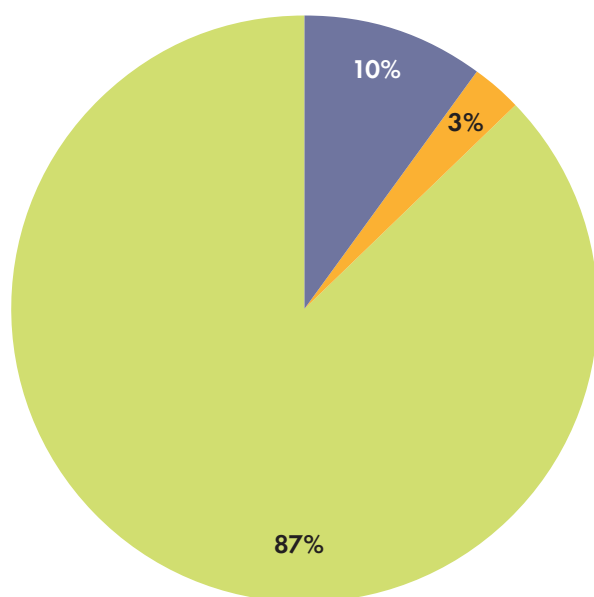
## SUMMARY OF FUNDRAISING

\* Reflects funds received and booked July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

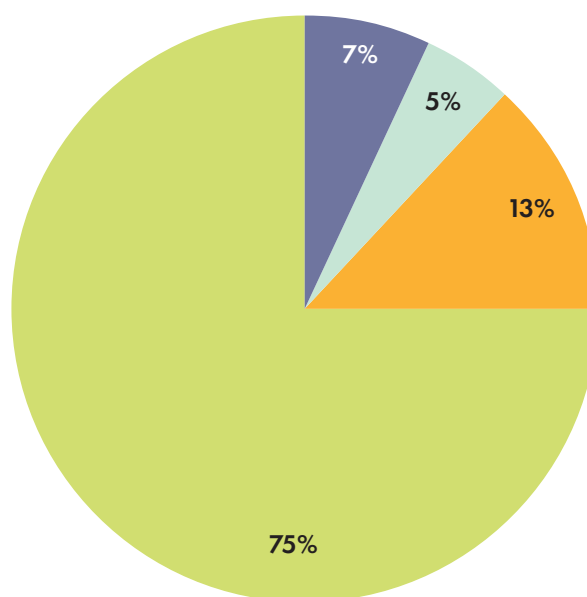
### ANNUAL GIVING

Steiner Resilience Fund	\$188,168
Steiner Annual Fund	\$500,268
Steiner Fall Fair (Net)	\$55,222
Steiner Gala (Net)	\$54,933
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	\$50,000
Faculty Development Fund	\$31,566
Miscellaneous Scholarship Funds	\$5,304
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL GIVING TO CURRENT OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$985,461</b>

### INCOME



### EXPENDITURES



# THE WHOLE AND THE PARTS

## GRADUATION ADDRESS BY CEREESE QUSBA '23

Faculty and staff, family and friends, fellow-schoolmates and twelfth grade classmates:

I don't know why, but some memories just stick with you. I have a clear picture from kindergarten of finding an acorn in the park on my walk home from school. I was enthralled by its smooth round face, pointed bottom, and perfect textured hat. That evening, I carefully set the acorn on my nightstand and before going to bed, I stared in awe at my treasure as it smiled back at me. The next morning, I was eager to show my friends and teacher what I had found and, looking up at my kindergarten teacher, I asked "Where did my acorn come from?" She told me that it had fallen from a tree and that one day this tiny acorn could grow into a strong oak tree. I remember being filled with wonder that something this small could become something so big.

The acorn stayed with me throughout my studies at Steiner. In second grade, we drew the basic form of the tree using the papa bear edge of our block crayons for the trunk and mama bear to indicate the branches. In fifth grade, we learned about the life cycle of the oak tree, and I discovered that the acorn is both seed and fruit. In eighth grade, we studied the chemical process of photosynthesis—that energy from the sun is transformed into sugar which allows the oak to grow its seeds. In eleventh grade Romantic Poetry, I wrote a piece about the symbiotic relationship between the oak tree and the squirrel that was inspired by the nature poet, William Blake.

And now—as a senior—I have learned perhaps the most valuable lesson about the acorn. It is both ordinary and extraordinary. Looking back on my time at Steiner, I can now see the oak tree in its entirety. The seed: my curiosity. The roots: my values. The trunk: my academic studies. The branches: my limitless exploration in multiple disciplines. All together bursting into a complex crown of knowledge. Now, I can see the whole oak tree but I haven't lost sight of the acorn.

I've developed the capacity to both see the whole and appreciate the part. In elementary school, the Main Lesson books we created were bound volumes of all the academics we learned that year. Each page, front and back, filled with writing,

drawings and diagrams. Every Waldorf student knows that feeling of devoting hours and hours to a main lesson book page and then the devastating sensation when you realize one side of your perfect Main Lesson page is upside down. Your heart sinks. As I was thinking about what I wanted to say today, I laid out all of my main lesson books, first through twelfth grade. As I flipped through my old elementary books, I found at least one upside down page in just about every one of my books.

What I couldn't do back then was see the whole book.

Cereese Qusba



I could only see the single page I was working on and not how it fit in with the entire Main Lesson book. But I've learned over the years how to keep a sense of the whole without losing the importance of the part, as William Blake described it: "To see the world in a grain of sand."

It doesn't take much to see how challenging the world has become. And it might feel like "the weight of the world" is





on us and in some ways, it is. Our generation is faced with massive issues like the environmental crisis, social inequality and preserving democracy. Yes, we will do our part to solve these inherited problems and that can feel overwhelming. As Waldorf students, we have cultivated our imaginations and this will, no doubt, serve us to find solutions to difficult problems. And that's exactly when we can be inspired and lifted by the small flashes of wonder in our lives.

As we Seniors move on to our next chapter, let's cherish the gifts that derive from our Waldorf education. For me, the most significant lesson I've learned is finding the extraordinary within the ordinary. That child-like sense of wonder--the same one I had when I found my enchanted acorn back in kindergarten. It is the unprejudiced disposition of a child to view the world with curiosity and openness. Think of our first graders who, wide-eyed and eager, look at us with awe. From their perspective, we are adults who know everything. It's funny because we should be striving to retain the child-like wonder that is innate in them. What they don't realize is that we're taking inspiration from them and they're helping us remember what's important and how much we still have to learn.

Today we've made it to a major milestone—graduating from high school. Our lives will be filled with grand achievements, momentous ceremonies, and big successes but also painful moments and challenges. These are important and should be celebrated and acknowledged. But in between those milestones are everyday moments and seemingly ordinary objects and familiar interactions that all have the potential to be truly extraordinary. There is great wonder that lies in our day-to-day life and that will never cease. Fellow seniors, as you walk through life, look down every once in a while, and find your acorn. Cherish the gift of your wonder. Thank you!





## CARPE DIEM

### AN ADDRESS FROM RALLOU HAMSHAW

Dear students, parents, faculty, colleagues and friends — greetings and welcome to these Commencement exercises for the Class of 2023!

Dear seniors, surely the future holds promise and encouragement when family and acquaintances converge and assemble in celebration of your graduation from Rudolf Steiner School. No doubt this day has seemed unattainable at times, distant and years away, but here you are, all in one piece, and ready for a new beginning no longer out of reach, but fully within your grasp. Regardless of when you started at Steiner, be it in preschool, lower school, or upper school, you have now formed a

warm, amiable camaraderie as a class, so clearly visible in your recent and delightful production of “Grease.” Indeed, this special end-of-the-year event, plus your spectacular class trip, seem to have reinforced your bond as peers. To our community, you have projected friendliness, creativity, frequent artistry, and a disarming way of taking most things in stride.

In April, directly after spring break, the seniors attended a banquet. Their host was a group of unruly, rebellious artists whose years of stunning productivity spanned a time in Modern European Art, roughly from 1840 to 1930. The modest dining hall for this gathering was none other

than the third floor rear classroom of the Upper School building; in fact, it served as the meeting place for the final Main Lesson our seniors would experience during their high school careers. Sampling the different dishes served up during this feast, metaphorically speaking of course, turned out to be a challenging event, and as the study of art history can sometimes be, it proved to be a lot of hard work as well. Since those five weeks of Main Lesson time spent with the class, I have been thinking about the transformation students experience when understandable reluctance to process yet more academic work at the end of the school year turns into perseverance. *Perseverance*



over reluctance, engagement over reticence. It took a while, but the seniors stretched, rose to the occasion, and took their rightful seats at the table of art history. Thus began a journey characterized by the exploration of a series of art movements, primarily in France, that were born out of a spirit of revolt, and defined by pioneering visual language. It was an era of fearless artistic enterprise—call it an unrestrained plunge into modernism.

Boundaries of all kinds were shattered. Subjectivity and the artist's emotions and intuition were prioritized and raised above the objective depiction of the physical world. Color became subject matter in its own right, form opened up and abandoned its margins—foregoing all detail and often reducing itself to its bare essentials. Brushwork, no longer in service of theme, dominated the surfaces of canvases, and objects were painted from multiple angles all at once on a two-dimensional plane—imagine that—instead of from one fixed viewpoint.

Well, by the time dessert was served at this infamous gathering, the students, I believe, had had their fill of radical new ideas in the changing world of visual art, but one concept still remained: the notion that *art no longer needed to be made at all* was introduced to the class; instead, something called the “ready-made” replaced the “art of the hand” with the “art of the mind.” The artist need only identify a random object, display it in an exhibition space, and call it “art.”

In America, the public had not yet woken up to the true meaning of “avant-garde.” The Armory Show of 1913 in New York City altered that sleepy state forever by showcasing for the first time the works of Gauguin, Matisse, Picasso, the late works

of Cezanne, pictures by visionary and theoretical Dada and Surrealist artists just to name a few, and the austere paintings of Mondrian who banished representation altogether, rejecting all sensuous qualities of texture and surface, and regarded this purposeful restrictedness as a mystical pursuit of the Absolute and his own theosophical beliefs. At first a leap of faith when viewing these works, the New York public grew to appreciate



this collection of unconventional artistic bounty—as did our seniors with their good-natured willingness to travel back to a time in Europe when audacious artists broke from closely held traditions of the past, when one movement after the other replaced what came before it in quick succession, and when the dreams and personal ideas of artists formed a modernist canon, in this case visual, never seen before.

The Upper School art studio, a very particular room in the school, is the primary domain where I have interacted with you over the past four

years. In the case of some of you, our connection goes all the way back to seventh grade. In the visual arts, as in any art form, originality of vision, or depth and scope of personal expression, can launch an artist into notoriety at any time. Not all change comes about in a dramatic way, however, nor is awareness always awakened by a passionate cry or political statement. Whether the artist depicts troubling, timely subject matter in a forceful style, or explores the properties of color and form with a quiet voice and little fanfare—he, she, or they have the potential to change our perceptions of the world in very singular ways. Frequently referred to as the two Titans of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art, Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse had diametrically opposing views about what painting should be:

“Painting is not done to decorate apartments,” Picasso said, “it is an instrument of war against brutality and darkness.”

For Matisse, however, art was an “emotional utopia.”

“What I dream of,” he tells us, “is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of disturbing subject matter—like a comforting influence, a mental balm, something like a good armchair in which one rests from physical fatigue.”

Clearly, the creative act relies on no predictable formula to help establish its identity or spark its vitality.

At a time when funding for the arts in schools everywhere has been slashed, unceremoniously cut from their budgets—this school, our school, Rudolf Steiner School—has continued its commitment to uphold the inclusion of all the arts, visual, musical, and dramatic, in our rich curriculum because we know the value of doing

## AN ADDRESS FROM RALLOU HAMSHAW (continued)

so. We see the results in our students and their work every day—how the intellect and soul life of young people are enhanced and nourished by artistic experience and training. We see this reality exemplified in the main lesson books of our students across the grades, in their class plays, their intricate projects in handwork, practical arts, and woodwork, in the excellence presented at the varied assemblies that entertain and move us at special moments during the year, and the work that emerges from the Upper School art studio.

Our intention is not to make professional artists of our students, nor are we an art school. And while some may choose to become musicians, writers, performers, painters or architects, our dedication and educational goals for offering the arts is broad in its mission, nuanced, and dimensional. One Waldorf School puts it this way:

“Insights from neuroscience suggest that arts education can play an important role in how children learn. Art education encourages students to collaborate, ask questions, and instills a strong sense of imagination. It also encourages students to approach their work in a systematic, disciplined way.”

As one art teacher in this school, I have never failed to be impressed by the accomplished work our students produce each school year, by their high standards for their own artistic excellence, and—in the upper grades—a remarkable, mature capacity for self-criticism. And I refer not only to the seniors up here on the podium, a good handful of whom produced a set of revealing oil paintings in their elective class this year, but to all of our students in the audience as well. Very well done!

Seniors, within minutes you will become alumni of Rudolf Steiner School. Truth be told, there is no one thought or set of words that can successfully convey the good wishes I am sending your way as you take your leave of the community that has offered you support, appreciation for your individual gifts, healthy challenges, and hopefully some inspiration too. Last night at The Verse Giving, an intimate ceremony held on your behalf, you received a verse by Rudolf Steiner which I hope will sustain you into the future, especially when you reflect back on your time spent in this school. For my part, in closing, I will say simply this:



“Carpe Diem” from the Latin meaning “Seize the Day.” Carpe Diem: a much referred to phrase but always an impactful one. And what a time to do it. It will take courage in today’s world to “seize the day” and yes, plenty of perseverance too. So—if not right now—I do hope that all of you will find a way soon enough to grab those important, possibly life-changing moments right in front of you with joy and a sense of adventure. I believe you will. Congratulations to all of you! Thank you!



# CARRYING STEINER VALUES

## A LETTER FROM LEAH BRAITHWAITE, COLLEGE GUIDANCE

The universal enrollment deadline for colleges on May first has come and gone, and high school seniors from all around the world have made the exciting decision on where they will attend college in the fall. This celebratory day full of hopes and plans for the future, or at the very least the next four years, feels worlds away from the fall season college application process, which to some students is a quite grueling and stressful process full of pending deadlines.

Most college applications become available to complete beginning in August, with the first round of deadlines for Early Action or Early Decision happening as early as November first. With applications opening even before the start of the school year, rising seniors work diligently over the summer to prepare their applications, refining essays, perfecting audition videos, artistic portfolios, and standardized tests to demonstrate their strengths, interests, and desires to be admitted to the schools of their choice.

When beginning my role as Director of College Guidance at Steiner last June 2022 there was much more to do to prepare the seniors for college application season. My decade-long career in college admission at universities across New York City meant that I knew exactly what colleges are looking for in their applicants and

how to best time and prepare each application for submission. Before I could share that information with the Class of 2023 I had to first learn their names, as well as their interests, their personalities and quirks, then their college lists, information about each school, and why that particular senior had hopes of attending the schools on their list. I had to do all of this while also



Leah Braithwaite,  
Director of College Guidance

being a guiding force through an unknown territory. We all were learning something new and embarking on a brand new journey, together. This application process was met with its own unique challenges as always, ranging from navigating application portals that would often crash due to overloads in the server, to simply understanding and preparing individual application materials

that are different and unique for each college. This process for our students was difficult because it was new and because I too was also new to them and they weren't sure if I knew that all of this was normal, which it is, and happens every year for every senior around the world completing college applications. My advice to the seniors is always, "the college application process is preparing you for life and all of its unknown outcomes." Gaining their trust in my abilities to guide them through this process was challenging, but once decisions started to be released in December and through March the tides turned and our journey together into the unknown became more clear and less fraught with uncertainty. We

even started to have fun and enjoy the process.

Once all decisions were in, out of the 238 applications submitted by Steiner Seniors, 145 acceptances were received as well as 23 waitlist decisions. This means overall Steiner has a 60% acceptance rate and a 10% waitlist rate with the universities applied to in 2023, demonstrating how impressive our students are and the quality of their education compared to their applicant counterparts. Out of the 45 schools that visited Steiner in the fall to share information about their university and to meet our dynamic class, students submitted 30 applications and received acceptances into 27 of the 30. This number translates to a 90% acceptance rate amongst the schools that visit us. Steiner students have the power to show universities their intellect and talent during a simple 20 minute interaction with the person that will be reviewing their application and determining their future enrollment.

All in all, our seniors will be studying as far south as Florida, as far north as Massachusetts, as far west as California and Oregon, and even across oceans in Dublin and Paris and studying majors in the Humanities, STEM, and the Arts. All of them hope to choose career paths that will help them to make the world a better, safer, more healthy place. They all will carry their Steiner values with them across space and time and call on them to help guide the way when the journey becomes unknown. My hope is they will all look back on this time of uncertainty, sleepless nights, and anxiety and know they can handle anything that comes their way.

# STEINER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## EXTENDING A HELPING HAND TO OTHERS

It has been quite an impressive year in terms of community engagement for our school.

Central to Waldorf's educational principles is the belief that children should be cognizant of and dedicated to their community, embracing its challenges and concerns as an ongoing commitment. It not only broadens their perspective but also instills a sense of responsibility towards creating a more harmonious and equitable society.

Nurturing a meaningful bond among our students serves as the cornerstone of this journey. Right from the early grades, we actively encourage them to engage in activities that foster connections with their peers across different levels. They gradually expand to external initiatives with a significant influence on the wider community.

We are happy to present some highlights from the activities that unfolded throughout the 2022-2023 academic year:

**Reading Buddies:** Grade Eight and Grade Two students embarked on an enchanting journey through literature. This encounter not only nurtured their shared love for written narratives but also forged a strong bond between them.

**First Knitting Lesson:** Grade Five students showcased their knitting skills as they assumed the role of dedicated, patient instructors, guiding the first graders through their initial foray into this craft.

**Lunch Servers:** The empathy of Grade Six students shone brightly as they took on the responsibility of organizing and serving lunch to their younger peers

*"A healthy social life is found only, when 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."*

— RUDOLF STEINER

in Grades One and Two, fostering an exemplifying sense of camaraderie.

**Pumpkin Carving:** Our Seniors delved into the whimsical world of pumpkin carving alongside their Grade One partners, igniting the autumn spirit. As they shared ideas and laughter, the air was filled with an atmosphere of joy and collaboration.

**Community Service to the Elderly:** Grade Nine and Ten students graced the residents with a heartfelt singing performance at the Mary Manning Walsh Nursing Home. Similarly, Grade Four students extended their vocal talents to the members of the Lennox Hill Neighborhood House community. They forged a joyous connection with the residents, who sang along with them and shared anecdotes from their own youth.

Grade Eight went on a transformative journey during a spring clean-up initiative on a **Navajo Nation homeland**, organized in collaboration

with Deer Hill Expeditions. Through their efforts, they found satisfaction in hard work and gained valuable insights into the challenges faced by this resilient native community.

Grade Eleven spent a week co-working at **Kimberton Camphill Village**, a remarkable community where over 40 neuro-typical and neuro-diverse adults live, work and are taken care of from an anthroposophical perspective. The students engaged in various areas, including the garden, bakery, and farm, and worked alongside the residents. This immersive experience unveiled the significance of resilience and perseverance in leading fulfilling lives, even amidst the most challenging circumstances.

Grade Twelve went on its final **class trip to Puerto Rico**, participating in a purposeful community service initiative in collaboration with the organization Global Works. The students united with local villagers in their ongoing endeavor to repair the lingering effects of Hurricane Maria.

These are merely a few instances among a multitude of empowering and impactful activities that took place over the past year. The satisfaction of collaboration is only surpassed by the deeply gratifying sense of accomplishment.

It is by extending a helping hand to others, that students encounter a privileged avenue for self-discovery, recognizing their own individuality while also understanding the invaluable role they play within the collective and in society at large.









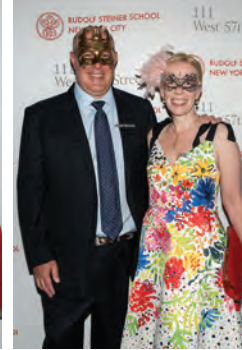
## 2023 STEINER MASQUERADE GALA

### A Mid-Steiner Night's Dream

On Friday, May 12, 2023 the Steiner community celebrated and fundraised for a Radiant Future together. This year's venue was the incomparable Steinway Hall on West 57th Street, a New York City landmark, and former showroom for Steinway & Sons piano company. All money raised supports The Steiner Annual Fund. The Steiner Annual Fund helps support curriculum-inspired projects.









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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

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*These funds help preserve the fabric of our diverse community by supporting our diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging efforts through tuition assistance to families in need, and the ongoing professional development of our talented and beloved teachers.*

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#### **Sobel Family Fund in Honor of Trude Haake**

*This fund supports aspects of Rudolf Steiner School Language Program, including, but not limited to, class trips, classroom supplies, and scholarships to study abroad.*

Anonymous (1)  
Carol A. Bartges  
Luciano and Olena Galanti



# 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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*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, [gcordo@steiner.edu](mailto:gcordo@steiner.edu).*

# WAYS TO GIVE

## 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.



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