

The St Michael Steiner School Newsletter



February 2023

Dates for your diary

FEBRUARY 2023

Thursday 9th

Break for Half Term

7.30pm – Cl. 12 Play: The God of Carnage, at school

Friday 10th

INSET DAY (no school)

Parents' Conference (see details on p. 5)

4.30pm – Cl. 12 Play: The God of Carnage, at school

Saturday 11th

Parents' Conference (see details on p. 5)

Monday 20th

Back to School

MARCH 2023

Saturday 4th

Annual General Meeting

Friday 17th

Observation Day (no school)

Friday 31st

End of Term

Class 12 presents

Yasmina Reza's
The God of Carnage
trans. by Christopher Hampton

at The St Michael Steiner School

Thu 9 Feb, 7.30pm

Fri 10 Feb, 4.30pm

Admission free (donations gratefully received)

Content warning: strong language



If you want to know more about our Class 12 play, or more about the cast members themselves, take a look at their [interview video](#).

They will be performing in our transformed stretch tent theatre, at school, **for two days only**, and we would love to see you there. (See poster on previous page for details.)

We are very pleased to announce that Class 9 student, Lila Harrison, was recently **shortlisted in the senior category of the ISA Poetry Competition 2022**. Here is her entry.

I Never Knew

On dark and dreary winter eves,
We sit around our broken dreams.
Piecing together the shattered lies,
That so often plague our eyes.
I noticed sadness in your face,
A disturbance that I could not place,
So I went to you, and spoke to you;
You told me things I never knew.
Things about you, dark and deep,
Within your heart, yourself did keep.
Like raindrops on a summer's day,
That make the joyful fade away.
You pick me up when I am down,
Then smile at me and turn things 'round.
I grin despite the growing pain,

And carry on with life again.
I need a friend who's always there,
Somebody to love and care,
Like I did you when you were blue:
You told me things I never knew.
People hurt and people cry,
People grieve and people die,
But we wander on like passing leaves,
Forgotten by the winter breeze.
The crystal-clear December mornings,
Where secrets skulk and cry in mourning,
I think about the sordid earth,
And horrors whispered to its turf.
You told me all and told me true,
Things I wish I never knew.

On February 10 and 11 we will be holding our **Parents' Conference** (see programme below).

We will start at 10.00 am at the church hall, where the children have their Eurythmy lessons, and will return to school for the remainder of the day.

On Friday you also have the opportunity to stay on and watch the Class 12 play at 16.30.

There are still places available but the final deadline for registration is TODAY (Monday 6th February). If you wish to register please pay £10 per day for lunch (£20 for both days) with your donation into the school account.

Please email elenikarakonstanti@stmichaelsteiner.com if you have any questions.

Friday 10th Feb	The St Michael Steiner School Parents Conference
10.00 - 11.00	Eurythmy with Michéle Hunter (at Church Hall, TW13 5EE)
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee break (at school)
11.30 - 12.00	"The Value of Craft in Education" lecture by Kilian Voss
12.00 - 13.00	Clay modelling with Kilian Voss
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 15.00	Rhythmical games, singing and recitation with Pan-Liang Ho, Eva Fortini and Serene Ho
15.00 - 16.00	Projective Geometry with Roy Allen
16.30 - 17.30	Class 12 Play
Saturday 11th Feb	The St Michael Steiner School Parents Conference
10.00 - 11.00	Movement (at Church Hall, TW13 5EE)
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 - 12.00	"Teaching through art: What does it mean?" lecture by Amanda Bell
12.00 - 13.00	Drawing with Lola Gill-Navarro
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 15.00	Form Drawing and Geometry with Stuart Purdy
15.00 - 16.00	Developing language skills with Eleni Karakonstanti and Stella Ottewill

STEAM in kindergarten

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths. It may seem that the children in our kindergartens are too young to be formally introduced to school subjects like Engineering, Technology and even Science. Yet, in my most recent PGCE session on STEAM, we deepened our understanding of the fundamental skills that our children are developing while in kindergarten. These skills are the foundations for their ability to embrace and enjoy STEAM subjects when in school.

Let's start with Science. While the scientific process from exploration through hypothesis testing, analysis and interpretation of results and their communications to the wider public is too abstract to comprehend for our young children, they do and see science in action when involved in gardening throughout the year (harvesting, digging, weeding, tending, sowing, transplanting, watering, composting), when engaged in processes like the different states of water (e.g., liquid and solid), the cycle of food (from growth, through snack preparation and consumption), the cycle of the seasons, and during their daily opportunities for exploring the natural world.

While Technology is often associated with computerised technology, it actually implies the "machines" that we use for specific tasks. Our children use a vast range of these machines, including saws, spades, forks, secateurs, coffee grinders, wheat mills, carders, drum carders, scales, cups, wheelbarrows, needles, hammers, drills and screwdrivers.

Engineering is about designing, building and using machines, about making things that work, or making things that work better. Our children make dens, houses with cloths, and small houses for the creatures that live in or visit our garden.

One of the hallmarks of our curriculum is Art. Our children have plenty of opportunities to express their creativity and imagination through drawing, painting and the different crafts linked to the seasons or the many festivals we celebrate. While doing these, they observe, learn about the properties of materials, engage with tools, come up with new ideas and develop their craftsmanship.

Finally, Maths, to which I refer you to my previous contribution dedicated to Maths in kindergarten in the October 2022 Newsletter. Briefly here, the children's mathematical experiences are related to practical and real-life activities. As an experienced early years teacher has recently reminded me, our children are introduced to measures through an understanding of their bodies. Expressions like a "pinch" of salt, a "handful" of raisins, an "armful" of sheep wool, or a "sprinkle" of flour are examples of gestures related to measures using our hands and arms.

The children do all of the above when they play, help the staff, contribute to the kindergarten life or are involved in crafts, while we respect their still developing thinking skills. The range of the foundational skills the children develop is impressive and vast. To name but a few: they experiment, explore, observe, create, predict, problem-solve, conclude, collaborate, persevere, manipulate and evaluate. These are skills related both to doing and thinking. Our role as teachers is to provide the many opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, that enable the children to develop these skills through imitation, with competence and autonomy, while being bathed in the warmth and connectedness of our relational approach that make them feel secure and safe. While listening to the STEAM presentation, I felt how fortunate the children in our kindergartens are to be allowed and encouraged to be both scientific and artistic, tapping on their intrinsic motivation and their interests.

Silvia Lauzzana



COMMUNITY PAGES



Please note that the school does not endorse or recommend, either in general or in particular, anything offered in the community pages and parents are advised to check the qualifications of practitioners or people offering services here.

I, Matthew Ratcliffe, eurythmy pianist at the school, am also music director at St. George's Church, where many music lessons take place and where we have celebrated several school Christmas festivals. Our enthusiastic parish choir, who perform a vital role in the Eucharist on Sunday mornings and at special services for festivals and other church occasions, are looking for more singers. All singers are amateur and there is no audition process. The choir is a really friendly, supportive group of people and we would be most happy to welcome you on board. Music-reading skills, although obviously advantageous, are not obligatory—many existing choir members do not read music and I always aim to bear this in mind. You will be welcomed and supported by the whole choir. Rehearsals are at 7:30pm on Friday evenings at the church. If you feel called to contribute to the life of the church in this way do get in touch—email matthewratcliffemusic@yahoo.co.uk or call/WhatsApp/text me on 07504 687235. I look forward to welcoming you to a rehearsal!

7th Youth Eurythmy Festival

Eurythmy is a potent pedagogical tool in the Waldorf curriculum and it requires a great deal of skill to teach this subject, for it is first and foremost an art form. What the eurythmy teachers bring to the children is the practical potential to integrate all of their learning into body, soul and spirit in the most concrete way, and to bring this into a flowering through the symbiotic creation of choreography and gesture.

This statement may sound diametrically opposed to how eurythmy is seen by many, who may find it challenging to penetrate through to its essence and it is indeed very easy to get mired in the difficulties of classroom management and discipline—as with many other artistic disciplines such as singing or orchestra. Losing sight of the pure joy, beauty of movement and expression that is so inherent in eurythmy can happen all too quickly, but this need not be so!

At times an outside focus such as the **Youth Eurythmy Festival**, may well act as an antidote to all that is hum-drum and routine, and give purpose and an appropriate framework to eurythmy, which is after all a performing art. We would never consider rehearsing for a play with a class, without actually performing at the end of it! When the children can experience the artistic in eurythmy and its performance aspect, they usually rise to the challenge with great energy, loving the preparation towards being able to share their work in a new environment, of being seen, and of seeing what their peers do. They love witnessing what they can remember doing when they were younger, they look up in admiration to the accomplishments older children have risen to, and they look with totally different eyes at what eurythmy students or fully trained eurythmists can bring to performance. This has been borne out throughout the years we have carried the festival initiative and it has strengthened our resolve to continue with this impulse, despite the challenges faced throughout the years.

Leading up to this year's YEF, it has proved difficult to find a suitable free date at the Marylebone Theatre despite our best efforts, we are therefore especially pleased to be holding the festival at the Peredur Centre this year, hosted by Peredur Eurythmy. We are aware how much harder the location of this venue makes it for certain schools to join us, and are particularly heartened by all the ones who are able to make it and who have confirmed their participation. We are excited and pleased to say that there will again be a vibrant festival and are looking forward to it enormously! The date and time to put in your diary is May 5th at 2.30pm. It will be a special occasion. If you would like to join us, we strongly recommend booking a seat to avoid disappointment. Please email youtheurhythmyuk@gmail.com for reservations. The suggested donation to cover costs is £8.00 (children £2.00). Cash only at the door.


Sigune Brinch, for YEF



**YOUTH EURYTHMY
FESTIVAL 7
MAY 5th 2023
2.30pm
PEREDUR CENTRE
EAST GRINSTEAD**

**suggested donation £8 +
(cash only at the door)
to book seats email:
youtheurhythmyuk@gmail.com**





Wellbeing Is The New Currency Festival Is Back

London 2023

Kempton Park
Racecourse
17 - 18 June 2023


See Website
For Details

100 exhibitors
50+ Talks &
Experiences

Get Your Wellbeing
On Over One
Wonderful Weekend

Proudly Presented by:
Wonderful World of
Wellbeing

The weekend
includes



100+ Exhibitors - Holistic therapy - Products & Services
50+ Talks & Live Experiences
Zones: Be Inspired - Be Moved - Be Mindful - Therapies Galore
- WWoW 4 Kids - Entertainment & More

www.wonderfulworldofwellbeing.com

Do you have something you would like included in the Community
Pages of the newsletter?
Send it to Stella (stellaottewill@stmichaelsteiner.com).