

An interview with Henning Kullak-Ublick, member of the Waldorf 2019 e.V. board and responsible for the project Waldorf 100, in order to mobilize all Waldorf Schools worldwide creating their own projects or participating in existing projects related to this celebration like these: <http://www.waldorf-100.org/en/project/>
(The interview was made by a journalist from the Colégio Waldorf Micael de São Paulo)

1. What was the repercussion of the Waldorf 100 movement, especially about the film Learn to Change the World, inside and outside Waldorf initiatives?

Henning Kullak-Ublick: One of the core intentions of the film was to give the many people working in the Waldorf School movement around the world a strong impression of the internationality and vitality of our worldwide pedagogical approach. It was meant to help the individual schools, the regions and the continents to strengthen and deepen their connections across all borders, be they of geographic, political, social, or cultural nature. This goal has certainly been achieved.

The feedback is extremely positive. The film has been translated into English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Chinese simple and Chinese traditional and as of today has been watched by more than 200.000 people. Currently, we are working on the French and Finnish translation and there will be more such as Italian. We receive requests from all over the world for further translations almost daily.

Another task was to reach out to people beyond our Waldorf Schools, and again, we are receiving many enthusiastic responses, because people feel that there is a mutual ethos which is being expressed by all these different people, which touches some of the most demanding challenges of our time in a way that gives hope and perspective to the young generation.

The repercussion now depends on the initiatives of the single schools, kindergartens and associated institutions. How will they work on community-building activities – large and small, complex and simple, instructive and entertaining, as diverse as the world in which we live? You can already find a lot of interesting projects on our [Waldorf 100 world map](#), and we hope there will be much more within the next two years until our centennial.

2. How many people work directly on the Waldorf 100 movement and where are they from? Is the group linked to any particular school or institution?

Henning Kullak-Ublick: The Waldorf 100 initiative arose in fall 2014 at a conference of the International Forum for Steiner/Waldorf Education (IF), which was then held in Israel. In the meantime, many associated and partner institutions have endorsed the idea. The members of the International Forum join together from 35 countries of all continents and meet twice a year. Waldorf 100 is based on an association which is formed from the members of the IF, national Waldorf associations and some other associations such as the Friends of Steiner Waldorf education, the General Anthroposophical Society, IASWECE and others.

The Waldorf 100-office is based in Hamburg, Germany, and is in close contact with the German and international school movement.

3. How has been the adhesion of Waldorf initiatives around the world to the projects proposed by the movement (Metamorphoses, Postcard Exchange, Marathon, The Return of the Bees, Drama)?

Henning Kullak-Ublick: There is a tremendous interest in the core projects with varying states of implementation in the different countries or individual schools.

The postcard-exchange has been started, and the packages with 1,200 labeled postcards should have arrived at each school of the „Waldorf World List“ (maintained by the IF and the „Friends“) by now. The idea is that all students – of all ages! – join in designing the cards artistically and individually, and that the school administration sends them out to the world. Schools which can by no means afford the postal charges can apply for help at a fund which is provided for by schools with more financial resources.

The composition project “Metamorphoses” is under the artistic management of Prof. Elmar Lampson, President of the Hamburg University of Music and Drama, who coordinates the project with 7 conservatories in different parts of the world. Students from composing classes will soon be asked to start composing. A jury will select fifteen pieces which are being made available to the schools by the middle of 2018. We are really looking forward to receive unique results.

The Marathon project turns out quite difficult to organize. As of now, we are still in a preliminary stage, because there are numerous things which have to be considered in order to make it work on a worldwide scale. Some regions in Germany are already working out a route from school to school, others are thinking about a symbolic run. The members of IF will find ways to precede in their countries.

The Bees and Trees project is loved by almost everyone! Many Waldorf schools and kindergartens all over the world are already providing safe homelands for the bees. Many interesting hints can be found in [our flyer](#), which includes a brief „bee-curriculum“ from early childhood to high school classes, recommended literature, and links to training sites for bee-keeping. We are updating the information on our website as they come in.

4. Do you believe that the skepticism that some education experts had about Waldorf pedagogy is less nowadays? Why?

Henning Kullak-Ublick: Development always includes skeptical inquiries, criticism and inconvenient questioning. So there is nothing to worry about, as long as one takes the serious questions seriously and works on finding the right answers – substantially and verbally. Having said this, there is, of course, some unfair or outright false judging around, which is usually based on prejudices rather than on thorough information. But we have a strong sense that there is a shift of paradigm in the pedagogical discussion again, which is triggered by the increasing standardization and rigidity of education around the world. This leads many people to think about what the real needs of the children and adolescents are in an increasingly complicated world. And with this, there is a growing interest in the specific approach of Waldorf pedagogy, which has proved its ability to create spaces in which the students can develop their individual,

social and creative skills without fear or misled ambitions.

Recent brain research turns out to be one of our strongest allies, because it empirically proves the efficiency of many methods which have been developed through Waldorf pedagogy.

5. What is the biggest legacy of the Waldorf movement in the last 100 years and which legacy the movement could leave for the next century?

Henning Kullak-Ublick: During its first century of existence, Waldorf education has formed a global network stretching from Berlin to Beijing, from Alaska in the far north to Auckland in the far Antipodes and every inhabited landmass in between. Each of the 1,100 schools and 1,700 kindergartens were started by initiatives of local citizens with the purpose of helping children unfold as free and responsible individuals, thereby bringing a participatory and democratic element into the practice of civil society. Last but not least, Waldorf/Steiner Schools and kindergartens support one another in their work, and in this way, practice a form of brother- and sisterhood on a global scale. The ideas of the threefold social organism may be difficult to practice in any single school, but they prove their efficacy through their application by means of this school network. This is possible because Waldorf education does not lay down a fixed curriculum but instead arises from an understanding of the nature of the human being and which depends upon the teachers' own striving to educate themselves. In this sense, Waldorf education is an ongoing work-in-progress that appears in a great many different guises yet to be more fully recognized. And since Waldorf education is a grassroots movement arising out of individual initiatives and approaches, we are hoping the network will grow continuously to reach more children in the world.

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