

Waldorf100 – a Celebration of Waldorf Education

We have come a long way from the inauguration of the first Waldorf School in September 1919. Today, there are 1.100 Waldorf Schools and more than 2000 Waldorf Kindergartens in 80 countries. This is a good reason to celebrate the upcoming Jubilee with a fabulous party – and this should be well prepared. Under the umbrella of “Waldorf 100,” numerous global and community building projects are now starting. Henning Kullak-Ublick, coordinator of “Waldorf 100”, will tell us more about it in an interview.

Dear Henning, Thank you for taking your time to answer a few questions. Could you roughly outline what Waldorf 100 stands for and what the idea behind it is?

Henning Kullak-Ublick (HKU): Waldorf100 is the global idea to actively include the more than 1.100 Waldorf Schools and even more Waldorf Kindergartens in the preparations for the centenary of this educational impulse and for a big communal celebration. The aim is to have simultaneous celebrations on all continents, in all countries, and of course in as many institutions as possible. The idea first appeared in 2014 at a meeting of the International Conference of the Waldorf movement in Israel and is now spreading over the whole world. We would like to use the anniversary as an opportunity to once again go to the sources of this pedagogy and to develop them with the possibilities and the knowledge of our time to face our current needs and challenges.

We propose three things: First, we would like all teachers to commit to a careful reading of the basic texts of Waldorf Education; second, to give even more attention than they already do to the so called “child observations”, that is the dialog of pedagogical development for each child. Third, we would like all Waldorf institutions around the globe to keep bees. This is a path leading from study to encounter



From 1984 to 2010, Henning Kullak-Ublick was a class teacher at the “Freie Waldorfschule Flensburg”. He is a board member of the German Federation of Waldorf Schools as well as a board member of The *Friends of Waldorf Education* and the International Conference of Waldorf Schools – Hague Circle.

WALDORF
100

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TO CHANGE
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about the Waldorf100 Initiative
go to
WWW.WALDORF-100.ORG

Joining Forces – project Bees & Trees
THE RETURN OF THE BEE

When the bees are doing well, so are the humans. Bees are the core theme of Waldorf 100. We have set ourselves the goal of turning all Waldorf institutions into Bee oases by 2019.

Learn more:
www.waldorf-100.org/project/bees-trees



to fact, where all these elements mutually reinforce each other. All of those who have committed themselves so far are excited about it.

Is it all about looking back or is it something else?

HKU: Looking back is important only out of respect for the millions of parents, teachers, and students who have spread this pedagogical impulse across the world in spite of sometimes extremely difficult conditions. But it is also important because many of these people passed away and they can help us from beyond the threshold. It is an important part of a proper collaboration not to forget each other.

But most importantly we have to find future impulses, which lie undiscovered in our pedagogy and which are much more important than the structures we have already found. Rudolf Steiner used to emphasize that the most important curriculum was to gaze upon and always renew one's view of the child.

By its self-concept, Waldorf education can never be static. „Copy & Paste“ will undermine the movement in the long run. For this reason, the motto of Waldorf100 is „Learn to change the world“ – and this always begins with yourself.

Are there certain traits or qualities defining the Waldorf movement to which the celebrations refer?

HKU: This is an interesting question, which has a lot to do with the founding impulse of the first Waldorf School. The workers of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory had heard from Rudolf Steiner how the economic and the spiritual life, as well as the legal sphere, could be re-structured after the catastrophic war, so that these realms would finally interact instead of dominating each other. He argued for associative fraternity in economic life, putting the needs of man and nature first, instead of making profit a top priority; he also argued for equality in the legal sphere, and for liberty in cultural life, which means that it is not defined by economic or political influences. This includes of course

the schools. These tobacco workers initiated the founding of the first Waldorf School because they wanted an alternative school for their children. Today, if you look at the Waldorf Schools and Kindergartens around the world, you can see that the uniting impulse that led to founding the schools and kindergartens was the wish to let children grow up in a liberal atmosphere in order for them to become free people. And they always “belong” to those who are acting within them in positions of responsibility. That is democracy in action. And the large network of mutual assistance among the Waldorf institutions follows the ideal of fraternity. The *Friends of Waldorf Education* play an important role here, because they connect people. But the most important thing that connects all Waldorf Initiatives is the attention on the developing child and the developing human being, in combination with the never-ending striving for a real knowledge of the human being and of the world, inspiring all educational action. This is the common ethos.

One might think that there is still a lot of time until 2019. What will be the way to get there?

HKU: It is actually just around the corner. Therefore, the heart of our website consists of an interactive world map, where all the budding initiatives can be made visible. There are also many projects that we organize for the schools, such as music compositions, theater plays, the “postcard exchange” from all the schools to all the schools, a marathon around the world, movie projects, and much more. And of course the bees, if they are doing well, so are the humans. And in the end a festival will be the highlight.

When will the festival take place, and what will happen on that day?

HKU: Around the globe, the festival will take place on September 19th 2019 with several central and many smaller events. We would like to connect the big events across the continents, focusing on the people, regardless of all political, geographical, cultural, social or ethnic boundaries. We have already

rented the Tempodrom in Berlin and we hope to create a very artful event, which quintessentially speaks of the human being and also brings joy to the main actors, namely the children.

Is there a thing or an aspect that you particularly like personally?

HKU: I particularly like that this will only work if everybody enjoys making this project a success.

How can I participate and contribute something to the process?

HKU: Everyone can think about whether and what he or she wants to contribute locally. It can be something very small, but it can also be coordinated by the entire school. The more ideas, the better. So do not tell others what they should do, but get yourself going. That is the motto. We will present all of these ideas under the umbrella of „Waldorf100“. If I were a class teacher right now, I would tell the children about the children elsewhere in this world and then discuss how we would like to contribute. I am very sure many ideas would pop up. And when the parents get wind of it, they are also in, and then it spreads to the entire school community. So let's go!

Interview: Jaspar Röh