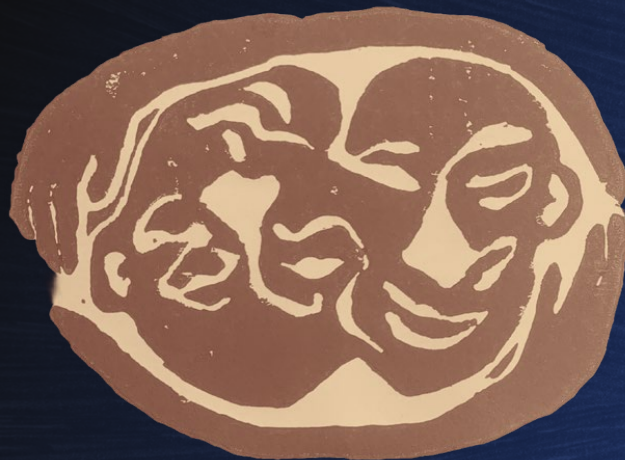


TAKING HEART

FINDING OUR WAY TOGETHER



WALDORF SV

Philosophische Sektion der Bundesschüler*innenvertretung



GOETHEANUM



Youth Section
at the Goetheanum

FRIENDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CONFERENCE 2024!

The International Students' Conference «*Taking Heart - Finding our way together*» took place in April of 2024 in Switzerland. As in the past, youth groups, students, families, teachers and supporters from around the world made it possible through years of work and preparation. It was hosted by the Youth Section, part of the independent college dedicated to contemplative knowledge which has its center at the Goetheanum, where the event took place. This college, which has departments dedicated to agriculture, to medicine and science, also has - wonder of wonders - a department dedicated to the spiritual striving of young people (in the age of 14 to 28). This department, or «Section», is tasked with supporting this spiritual striving in the right way. The special qualities of being young, the heartfelt questions, the hard challenges, the surges of enthusiasm and compassion, have a special place at these events and gatherings. An instinctive spirituality and wisdom can light up, especially through encounters, conversations, creativity and experiences where the great questions of life can be explored. Of course, creating opportunities for the fires of youth-filled wisdom and enthusiasm is important for the whole world and the future!

This conference was prepared in large part through the creativity, care and interest of a remarkable circle of such enthusiastic young people. How naturally this care and interest seemed to flow from the preparation into the culmination! The mild but bright qualities that lit up in the eyes of the first meetings were tended with loyalty,

and the small seeds grew into the event so that it was beautifully evident the flower came from the seed. Ideas of interdependence in agriculture, in economics, culture and politics were explored and discussed in meaningful ways, and everyone seemed to take heart throughout it all.

Looking back while also looking out into the great suffering and challenges many young people face today (through no fault of their own), it is easy to feel the duty and the inspiring call to try to create many more kindred opportunities. We are missing something! A global, intergenerational awareness of the importance of tending the deeper dimensions of being young! It is common to look at young adults as «target audiences» for the «attention economy» or «human resources» for a high-tech sector. After experiencing a project bright with the renewing, warm light of youth wisdom, like the ISC, it is easy to feel a plea rise up from within, for others, young and old, to take heart by clearing away more suffocating brambles of isolation and fear, of egotism and despair; to make spaces for the young, thinking heart and all the patterns it can help weave into the future.

In the following pages are gathered together images of some of the people and activities of the ISC that express something of the gathering and the energy and love that make it possible.

*Nathaniel Williams
The Goetheanum, Switzerland
June 2024*



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM 10,000 FEET | AN OVERVIEW

- 6 THE BIG PICTURE
- 8 AN IMPRESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
IN ILLUSTRATIONS
Illustrations by Noël Norbron

A GOLDEN THREAD | THE THEME

- 12 ABOUT THE THEME
Yuuki Fujisawa, Noël Norbron and Malin Thomas
- 15 THE QUESTIONS OF THE DAYS
Noël Norbron
- 16 TAKING HEART IN MANY WAYS
Berenika Lehrman
- 20 THE FELLOW TRAVELERS
Jacinta Gorchs

TAKING HEART | CREATIVE INTERVENTIONS

- 24 THE COLLECTIVE JOURNEY OF
THE PEACE PAGEANT
Nathaniel Williams
- 25 THE PREPARATION WORK
Isabel Dancey
- 27 CONNECTION THROUGH THE PEACE PAGEANT
Dorothee Nys
- 28 REFLECTIONS FROM SPECTATORS
Ueli Hurter and Andrea de la Cruz
- 30 ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE STUDENTS
EVENING PERFORMANCES - *Milo Janzon*
MORNING SONGS - *Golda Templeton*
- 32 A SELECTION OF ART PROJECTS
DURING THE CONFERENCE
LINO PRINTS - *Freya Knierim*
THE WEAVING PROJECT- *Luis Zienicke and Aster De Maeyer*
VISUAL MUSIC - *Hanna Biehain*

TESTIMONIALS AND ASPIRATIONS

- 34 WORKSHOPS - REFLECTIONS
FROM PARTICIPANTS
- 38 FUTURE ENDEAVOURS
Keivan Azimi and Gabriele Nys

IN CLOSING

- 40 OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE - INITIATIVE BAZAAR
- 42 GRATITUDE
- 44 THE TEAM

THE BIG PICTURE

The International Students' Conference took place from

10. - 14. April 2024

at the Goetheanum in Dornach (Switzerland).

17. - 19. March 2023

first organising team weekend in Dornach (CH).

Three other team weekends followed, accompanied by bi-weekly Zoom meetings.

22. December 2023

registrations opened!

56

highest number of registrations in one day on 2. February, 2024.

685 beds

2 people spent **14** hours together to puzzle the

37 different class and school groups and over **150**

individuals into the **14** different accommodation locations.

5,401 files

were saved in the ISC24 folder,

a total of **91.02 GB**

5 big puppets were papier-mâchéed out of over

100 donated art exhibition posters (**90x120cm**)

and over **2.5** kg of cornstarch to create at least

7-layers of strong papier-mâché.

734 registered conference attendees

581 high school students

71 high school graduates

80 teachers/chaperones

36 contributed towards a scholarship fund by choosing the support price

54 team tickets (sum of contributors, workshop hosts and organising team)

122 received partial or full financial support

Participants coming from six continents:
AFRICA | ASIA | EUROPE | NORTH AMERICA | OCEANIA | SOUTH AMERICA

People coming from more than

35 different countries

2,800 kg of food

was consumed, including **8,250** bread rolls

which is more than **10** bread rolls per person!

33,200 dishes

were washed up during the

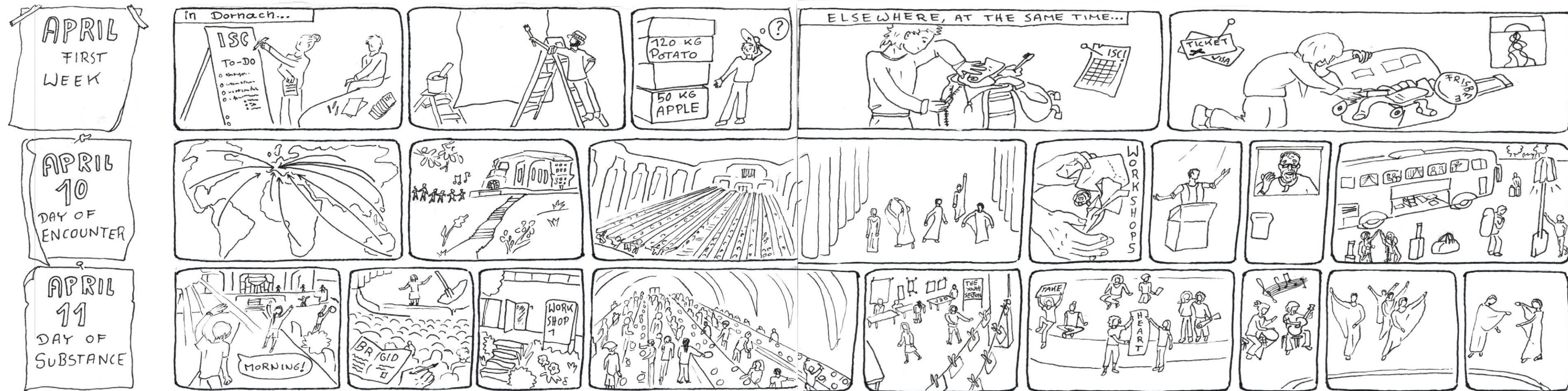
conference by the Speisehaus.

301

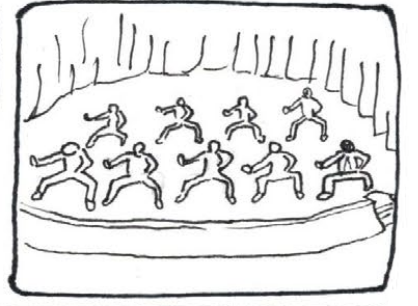
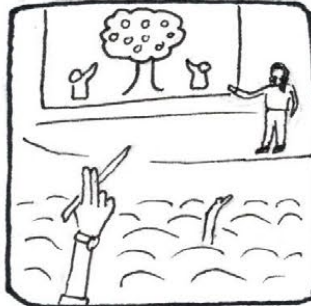
participants spoke or performed on the main stage in the Goetheanum during the conference.*

*This number does not include all of the participants in the picture on the right!

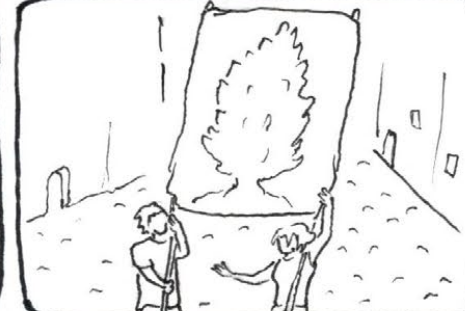
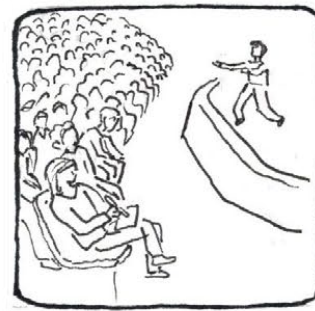




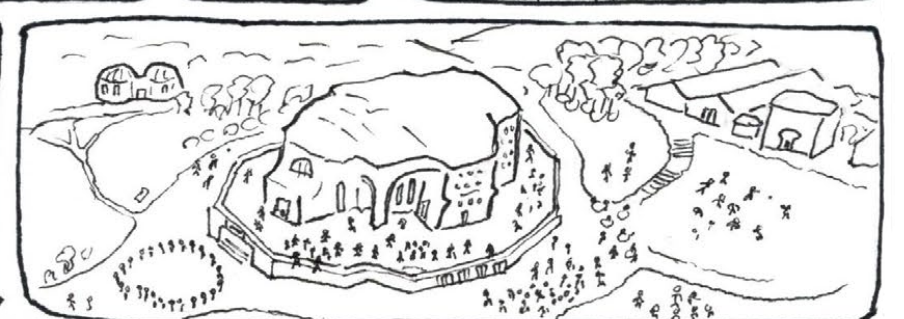
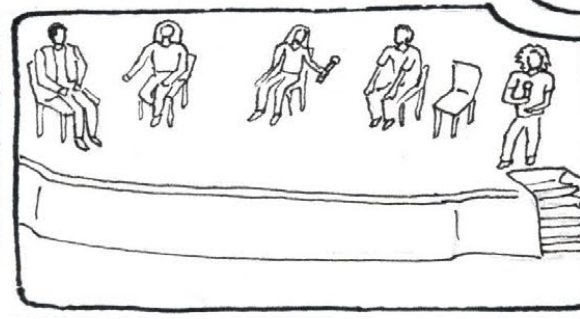
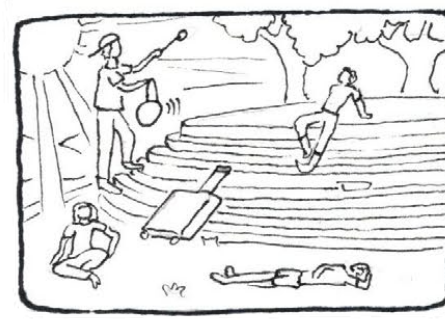
APRIL
12
DAY OF
PREPARATION



APRIL
13
DAY OF
CREATIVE
CELEBRATION



APRIL
14
DAY OF
FAREWELLS



Illustrations by Noël Norbron

ABOUT THE THEME



Looking back on over a year in which we have been working on the theme of the ISC24, both we and the topic have developed and changed a lot since the decisive meeting in March 2023.

When we first met, a lot of themes found their way on our blackboard. Words like «Fluidity», «Freedom» and «Encounter». They came as answers when we were thinking about the problems we see in the world and how to deal with them through the impulse we would give at the conference. We thought about the hundreds of students who would come from all over the world to meet for five days, then spread out again and hopefully take something home! In this huge world with so much diversity in everything, how can we find a theme that is relevant for all of us? How can we find our way together?

The seed for the second title of the conference had already been planted by bringing together a wide variety of approaches and inspirations. But how did «Taking Heart» come about? And what does this phrase mean? During our first meeting with a large, colourful group of people who were all in the right place at the right time, we read an excerpt from the book «Momo» by Michael Ende. Momo talks to Master Hora, who tells her about the «hour flowers» that every person carries in their heart and the very individual melody, their own melody, that every person possesses.

What can happen when many people find their way together? What happens before and what after? Opening up to a community requires great courage. And a community comes together to take up a work, a task with joint forces, to take heart.

So it is also an impulse to support one another and to find, from our heart, our most inner space, a connection to the rest of the world, so we can find our way together. After we found these sentences that became the theme of the ISC, we started to listen and see with sharpened senses: what does it mean to us and where do we encounter it? The heart is like a house - it is a space where we meet and come together in harmony. The heart is what is hosting us when we really are at home. We hoped that the Great Hall, the heart of the Goetheanum, would not only be an external space that surrounds us, but become a place that exists in each one of us during the International Students' Conference.

When the three of us entered the stage to welcome over 700 high school students to this place and to this conference, each one of us had thoughts to share, coming from our very own experiences.

Connected to the thought of the heart as a house is the ability of the heart to grow, and to grow past our physical body and beyond borders and prison walls. This is what the French writer Jacques Lusseyran experienced and

achieved when he was imprisoned during the Second World War. His heart grew bigger than the hate and the fear, and he became free within himself. Jacques Lusseyran is also the best example of the famous words of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry:

*«One sees well only with the heart;
the essential is invisible to the eyes.»*

Although he lost his sight at a young age, he was able to judge who could be accepted into the resistance group against the National Socialists and who was untrustworthy.

This great power of the heart, which can emerge from us like an invisible, larger body, can also be found in the following poem by J.P. Hebel:

*«First a dot
This grows until it is a circle
And then the circle embraces the whole world»*

It not only liberates us when our hearts grow as in the poem. We become real parts of this earth and carry it with us. This is how Etty Hillesum, who was imprisoned and murdered in a concentration camp, describes how she found an indestructible power within herself which she called the «thinking heart». In hopeless suffering, where most people felt nothing and no longer wanted to

think, she wanted to be the thinking heart of the whole camp.

A weaving is taking place in the heart. A weaving of the outer world with you. The heart is where our thinking, feeling and willing are woven together. By bringing your heart into your thinking, feeling and willing, they turn into something beautiful. Thinking becomes intuition and inspiration. Feeling becomes love and empathy, and your will becomes acts of kindness and compassion.

Nowadays, we see many symptoms of a strong isolation of our senses from each other, not the least the externally visible separation from other human beings and from the world. Take the will, for example. Our hearts are closed by fear and hatred, and because the will cannot follow its actual purpose of serving healthy thinking from the heart, it turns into a pitiful image of itself: the will to own. We try to fill the emptiness in ourselves by consuming more and more, but can't satisfy our spiritual needs with material goods.

It is not easy to take heart with all the crises that seem to overwhelm us, especially the younger generation. We really need other people to reach out to us and say: Take Heart! I will help you! That is why it is not enough to meditate in a quiet room. We want to carry this power out into the world, and the ISC has done so. It is worth seizing this power together!

*«The theme of the conference
allowed me to ask myself questions
which I didn't know I wanted to ask
myself, and while I haven't answered
them yet, the conference itself,
along with the workshop I was in,
has allowed me to start my journey
to finding those answers!»*
William Jack Flynn Hayes, Lorient
Novalis, AU

This year's ISC took place after the previous two conferences were held around the topics of «Courage» (2019) and «Trust» (2021). There is an arch over the last five years that the Youth Section has experienced together with young people from all over the world. In the booklet of the ISC 2019, we find the sentence «Courage is the absence of fear». It is exciting that a statement from this year's conference sounds completely different:

«Courage is not the absence of fear. It is to have fear but to know that there is something more important.»
- Yuuki Fujisawa

What happened in the spring months of 2024 is a small miracle. For over a year, we have been working on this theme, trying to live by it ourselves and preparing a conference that can bring young people from a wide range of cultures closer to the most human, most universal language of mankind. Our theme was at its most intense when young people actually found their way to Dornach, and together with them, we prepared for the opening session in the Great Hall. Then, the three of us stood on the stage and welcomed them with similar words, and now, after the conference, we can look ahead and know that the work we have begun and what we have experienced will shape the future for all of us.

Yuuki Fujisawa, Noël Norbron and Malin Thomas

Yuuki Fujisawa - workshop host, fellow traveler and part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Participant of the ISC 2015, , alumna of the Hokkaido Waldorf School, Japan. After studying for a year at the Goetheanum, she is now travelling around the world.

Malin Thomas - part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Student at the FWS Westpfalz, Germany and board member of the WaldorfSV.

Noël Norbron - part of the core team for the ISC 2024. Part of the organising team of the ISC 2021, alumnus of the FWS Göttingen, Germany, former board member of the WaldorfSV. Starting a biodynamic training after his experience at the Goetheanum.

THE QUESTIONS OF THE DAYS

It was the day before the start of the conference when we finally found the questions we would live and work with over the coming days. Four questions matched the four days and their focal points that followed the Day of Encounter. They were presented in the morning during the interactive contributions and given as guidance for the 'walkie-talkies' that followed the contributions. They enabled a more in-depth examination of the topic, which was taken up very strongly and ultimately even developed into a common thread through the ISC24 post-conference video.

Thursday, 11. April - Day of Substance:
In what sense does humankind experience disconnection in today's time? Aren't we more connected than ever...?

Friday, 12. April - Day of Preparation:
Does connecting to the world start with connecting to ourselves? Can you find the world in yourself?

Saturday, 13. April - Day of Creative Celebration:
Is peace the absence of war? How can we invite peace and take care of it?

Sunday, 14. April - Day of Farewells:
Can «Taking Heart» also be a communal act? Can we find ourselves in the world?

It's amazing how these questions seem almost simple and quick to answer at first glance, but then develop such depth in conversation.

Friday's question, for example, provoked real discussion. On the one hand, it was a strongly tangible message that your own heart must first be nourished by you before you venture into connections with other people and that individual development is therefore essential for good social interaction. One idea that challenged this order is that the human being «becomes the Self from the Thou». And therefore the formation of your own ego can have an effect on you from within the world.

Finally, we had to realise that the boundaries between the self and the world are not semi-permeable. Since I can find the world within myself, every change, every example that the world shows me can also be a movement deep within me. We should be mindful of being a world for other people that encourages them to create space for the self to land and be at home in this world that takes place in the social.

Noël Norbron



Participants during the 'walkie-talkies'

«The conference could have had so many other names. 'Taking Heart' and 'Finding our way together' are just some aspects of the big universal themes that were touched during the conference - themes of love and understanding, and what it means to live in our world, of courage and hope and being united in times of separation. I think it's the things everyone should be talking about, the themes that concern every single one of us, although we tend to forget them in our daily lives.»
Helena Giersch, FWS Karlsruhe, DE.

TAKING HEART IN MANY WAYS

With over 700 young people from all over the world gathered in one room, not knowing each other, it was fitting to have Angaangaq Angakkorsuaq begin the contributions to the International Students' Conference 2024. To meet someone for the first time is almost always a moment when one can feel frozen and unsure, and in a context where everyone around you is new, that feeling of frozenness can be powerful. Angaangaq, who comes from a very frozen place, embodied the power of what warmth of heart can do in his contribution. He spoke of how we all have a responsibility to recognize our connectedness, our collective humanness, and how that roots us on the Earth, where each of us might physically be now, but also to the Earth as a whole. Angaangaq reminded us that we are all inhabitants of one earth, and this must live in our consciousness as we strive for peace for the whole earth. He spoke of how the divisions of country, religion, and culture do not separate us from our common humanity and the connection that can be developed through that simple recognition. These differences are no longer barriers to friendship or understanding when we begin to allow our hearts to thaw. As we grow our capacities for warmth toward other human beings, we also face the overwhelming task of our responsibility to the whole earth. We all belong to the earth. Angaangaq pointed out that it is essential that, although we must fully take up our responsibility to the earth, we must also be aware that we belong to the earth; the earth does not belong to us. Angaangaq also emphasised that even though we

are all searching and striving for peace, we carry wars within us, and we must be working to bring peace within so that outer peace can be truly possible. It is striking that as much as the responsibility to the earth and each other can be overwhelming, somehow the responsibility to and for ourselves is almost more daunting. A heartfelt connection created through the simple recognition of another's humanness is a beginning. This is a way that we can each begin to feel we belong to one earth.



Earth! Dirt! Brigid LeFevre started off the morning speaking about compost. She shared about her life as she found her path toward farming and gardening. Gardening is a universal experience across the world, another way in which many people across cultures can connect. The earth as a whole can be felt viscerally in the effect nature has on us. In our connection to nature, we also connect

to others and can develop a sense of community. Community is also essential to compost-making! There is the human community that creates food scraps, but there are also the insects, the plants, and the microorganisms which all contribute to a beautiful garden. Finding delight in the living world brings about a drive to contribute to it and steward its health. Brigid brought the idea that in practical work, such as weeding, a parallel inner process is also happening, where many thoughts are sprinkled and then weeded through, creating a sense of satisfaction and peace at the end of a row. When we do work with the earth we are literally grounding ourselves, which is such a needed experience in this time of digital and virtual experience. Brigid described an encounter with a tree in England as «arriving home», another way in which the natural world can have an effect on us and transform what we experience internally. A poem by Wendell Berry that Brigid spoke also brought the parallels of inner and outer experience; as we listen to birdsong, can we be listening to the whispers of our own song rise up from within? As we tend to a garden, or just one tomato seed, are we tending to each present moment? Do we acknowledge and appreciate the wonder and power of this simple act of faith? As much as the future can take hold in our minds, Brigid pointed to how vital it is to give our attention to each moment and how, when we are listening for the right moment, what is needed will emerge.

«What is needed» was an essential aspect of Kelley Buhles' contribution. What is the purpose of the economy? It is to meet each other's needs, simply. There are many other layers in this domain which Kelley addressed. In her contribution, she shared her personal experience leading to her involvement with economics and then began with the image of compost and how one of the ideas for economics that she works with is that money composts or that it would become mouldy! This promotes the flow of money so that it doesn't just sit in one person's hands for a long time, creating a healthier economy. She introduced us to the «economic loop» developed by Rudolf Steiner, which begins with Nature. Economics is a broad and sometimes difficult field, which can bring up challenges and questions regarding morals and how human beings can (or can not) work together. It became clear that what is really important to Kelley is bringing economic decisions back to communities and creating opportunities for people with less access to certain privileges to join the conversation. Her empathy and interest for all, reflected in her work, is beautiful. She also asked us to consider the idea of reparations, how to create a fully just society from where we are now, and to really consider how much needs to change on a large and small scale. We need to reframe our ideas of scarcity and abundance and how it is easy to become passive and possessive in an anonymous economic system. Kelley also spoke about how challenging and seemingly impossible it can seem to make a shift, even in our own lives, but she



Kelley Buhles - active as a facilitator and co-creator of new economic models centered on the common good. She has extensive experience working with philanthropy, part of it at RSF Social Finance (USA). She recently moved to Basel (CH).

«After Kelley's contribution, some other young people and I gathered around her to further ask/discuss some topics, including environmental protection. And back at home, just a few days ago, I realised that there was a seed of acting for the environment planted during that moment. I started caring for the recycling of used items because I learned that there are people overseas actually doing things, and I should put in my efforts, too.»
Ruien Ma, Beijing Nanshan School, CN

Yecu Barnech - as a young adult, he took part in a youth conference at the Goetheanum, which was an important moment in his biography. He is a priest in the Christian Community in Munich (DE). He accompanied the International Youth Camp of the Christian Community for many years.



Yecu Barnech

suggested to try and see how it might feel to give a gift of money, or honestly look at what our «money trauma» might be. Even though economics is a field where one can get easily intimidated, Kelley reminded us that even when it looks hopeless, there is a reason to keep trying, and that when we ask ourselves honestly «what do I need» or «what can I give», we contribute to building the conversation that creates healthy economics.

On Saturday morning, Yecu Barnech brought our attention to the room in which we were all seated and to the fact that there had been another building there, many years before, which had been burnt to the ground. After the first Goetheanum burnt, before a second could be started, an inner building, a commitment and resolve had to be built in the hearts of all who contributed to the Goetheanum's creation. Then we all participated in an exercise of meeting another person by looking in their eyes for 30 seconds without speaking. In this process, it became apparent how vulnerable it is to truly meet someone and allow them to meet you, with our eyes being, in a way, an access point to the soul of each human being.

Yecu spoke of his journey to spirituality, and introduced the idea of the 'cycle of love'. With this cycle, as in a human cycle, there is birth and death, but Yecu asked us to consider what might the resurrection be like in any person's experience of love. If birth is a pure gift, like

falling in love, and death when love becomes stagnant and possessiveness takes hold, resurrecting love requires us to love beyond ourselves, to love the essence of a person, not what personal gain might come from the connection. Yecu compared how love can die to a capitalism of love, where we are only consuming and consuming, concerned only for ourselves. In a resurrected love, do we find freedom? Perhaps, but there are many ways in which one can learn from a relationship, even where true love has died, and each time we fail we have the potential to become conscious of that failing and take a new step toward transformation. Love as a transformative power, in wonderful and challenging ways, was a central aspect of Yecu's contribution. Yecu gave us his thoughts on the connection between spirituality and the heart, but he also gave the opportunity for anyone from the audience to share their thoughts on love, emphasising his warmth and interest that could be felt simply in his presence. Many shared, with many different views, but there was a general acknowledgement of the power of love to transform ourselves and the world, in many contexts, from self-love to an expansive, eternal love. Yecu's generous listening and quiet wisdom clarified that we all know, without thinking, that love is somehow centered in our hearts and that our minds do not always have an answer. As we meet one another, striving to connect across cultures through barriers of doubt and the fear of being seen, the power in our hearts, if we listen to it, will help us find our way together.

During the last morning contribution of the ISC24, the contributors came together to bring final thoughts and questions in a conversation facilitated by myself. We sought to weave connections between the different areas covered by the contributors. There was a sense of how much had just been experienced over the past days and how many challenges there are to face in the world, but with each other there are many solutions and possibilities. A chair was left empty on the stage so that individuals from the audience could be invited to ask questions or share thoughts and engage in a brief conversation with the contributors. The questions and contributions from the students in the audience were filled with genuine striving to understand, to connect, and the desire to bring lessons from the past days home. These students spoke of the courage they had to find in themselves to step on the stage, being from many cultures. I was deeply touched by the poignancy of the questions and how they related so directly to each individual's specific home but also to the whole world. The universality of the topics being brought up reminded me intensely that it is essential to have many voices and perspectives. To find our way through the challenges in the world today, we need each other. We must find the courage to truly listen.

Berenika Lehrman



Nathaniel Williams, Kelley Buhles, Berenika Lehrman, Yecu Barnech and a participant

Berenika Lehrman - workshop host, fellow traveler and moderator during the ISC 2024. Alumna from the Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School. Co-founder of Chrysalis, a home-school initiative in upstate New York (USA).

THE FELLOW TRAVELERS

«Ready for the journey? Active members of the Global Youth Section Network will creatively share meaningful stories about their work, initiatives, and projects, as well as their personal experiences as young people finding their way in the world...»

The International Students' Conference has traditionally been organized by the Youth Section at the Goetheanum and the board of representatives of the Waldorf schools in Germany (WaldorfSV), together with young people from other youth initiatives who are connected to this event in different ways. However, the International Students' Conference hasn't been intrinsically connected to the worldwide network of the Youth Section; until now.

Since the beginning of the organising process of the International Students' Conference, the organising team had a strong wish to build a more conscious bridge between the conference and the network of the Youth

Section, which consists of active groups of young people across the world who are working with anthroposophy. How could this be an event not only carried by the team at the Goetheanum but also by the network of co-workers?

One of the ideas that came up was to send out a special invitation to the Youth Section co-workers to host workshops, which were going to be a very significant part of the program. It had also already been decided that one of the sessions would involve a «youth panel», to which young people would be invited to contribute something of their experience of what it is like to be young today. But who were those young people going to be? It became apparent that such a panel could be a great place for the Youth Section's network to take the initiative and prepare something special for the students.

«What would you say, do, or share, if you had the opportunity to be in front of 700 high school students?»

A group of 11 Youth Section co-workers - fellow travelers - from 9 different countries worked with this question to create a meaningful contribution. But why the «Fellow travelers»?

If you have had the opportunity to travel, seeking new horizons and experiences, you may have perceived in yourself a certain openness, an attitude of interest towards anything new. In many cases, you meet fellow travelers; people like you who are also looking for new horizons and experiences. Also, an image which, in a way, reveals something of the spirit of the Youth Section: an attitude of wonder and interest in discovering oneself through the world and others.

There is something about this moment in life, this journey of discovery, that is very special. Something that awakens between being at the end of your high school journey, looking out of a window with fear, curiosity, and excitement, to the moment of heading towards the door that leads out into the world.

What does that transition look like? What are the big challenges of our time? Do we have the courage to open ourselves up to share about a vulnerable or challenging situation? Can we find ways to address some of the big challenges of our generation, in relation to a moment of our biography?

These were some of the questions that guided us as we tried to find our way together, taking heart!

We decided to carry backpacks during our contribution and to make dynamic use of the space: not what one necessarily imagines as a «youth panel». We grouped in pairs and trios and used the main stage as a meeting point to share our stories, whilst the others (those who were also sharing their stories) «traveled» around the Great Hall.

Jacinta Gorchs

Jacinta Gorchs - part of the organising team of the ISC24. Alumna of the San Miguel Arcángel Waldorf School in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Co-worker of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum since 2022 as well as being a student in a Waldorf teacher training.



Jacinta Gorchs and Berenika Lehrman



From left to right: Lisa van Holsteijn, Marilha Ferreira Balieiro, Leonora Meier-Nielsen, Leonards Kokorevičs, Berenika Lehrman, Jacinta Gorchs, Sophie Khadurishvili, Lāsma Kokoreviča, Yuuki Fujisawa, Magdalena Ries, Tania Prince.



The fellow travelers shared questions, fears, and challenges, as well as ways to address them through our own experiences in life. We also had «meaningful messages» that we felt were important to share and could also serve as a synopsis of our stories. Some of the stories or life experiences were intimate, others were aspirational, but all of them were unique and told from the heart.

«How many tiny encounters
are constantly changing our lives.»
Berenika Lehrman, Youth Section in North America

«There, where your gifts and the needs
of the world meet, lays your vocation.»
Jacinta Gorchs, Youth Section at the Goethanum
- the origin of this quote is often traced back to Aristotle.

«Don't rush! You've got plenty of time.»
Sophie Khadurishvili, Youth Society Parzival, Georgia

«Find your inner voice.»
Leonards Kokorevičs, Momentum Latvia

«Accept and trust your destiny.
Mistakes are good, they make you grow.»
Lāsma Kokoreviča, Momentum Latvia

«How can I live my life in such a way that you are free?»
Leonora Meier-Nielsen, Youth Initiative Program, Sweden
- inspired by Orland Bishop.

«There is a crack in everything;
that's how the light gets in.»
Yuuki Fujisawa, organising team of the ISC24
- taken from the song 'Anthem' by Leonard Cohen.

«What matters is not the perfection in which we can carry
out what has to come from the will, but rather, that what
has to come into life, even if it comes imperfectly, is done
once so that there is a beginning.»
Marilha Ferreira Balieiro, Seção de Jovens Brasil
- quote from Rudolf Steiner.

«Serve those who you aspire to!»
Tania Prince, YIAM (Young Impulses in Anthroposophic
Medicine) and the Oceania Youth Group.

«Have the courage to trust in the
ever-present help of the spiritual world.»
Lisa van Holsteijn, Youth Section in Germany

«Listen to your heart to find the right way.»
Magdalena Ries, Youth Section in Germany

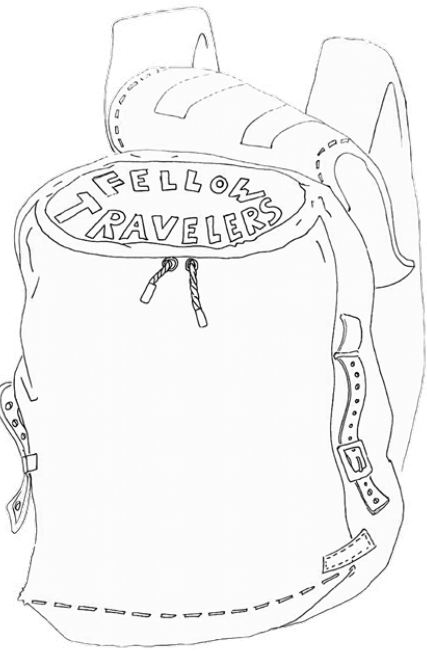
The openness and vulnerability of the fellow travelers, as they shared parts of their biographies, created a very special mood in the hall. Below you'll read some reflections from the audience:

«At the age of 18, there aren't many more meaningful
things than listening to people in their twenties share
stories about what brought them to the place they are in.
I can easily recall the openness and honesty these people
spoke with and find great comfort in it being on my own
journey.»

Aster De Maeyer, alumna of De Zonnewijzer/
Homeschooled, BE - organising team ISC24

«To hear the Fellow Traveler's stories really filled my heart.
It made me remember the importance of trusting in life
and the world. I have often found this trust when I needed
it and lost it again in times of doubt.»
Helena Giersch, FWS Karlsruhe, DE.

«Listening to the experiences of individual stories is like
looking at the landscapes of this world, so many roads,
cities, mountains, lakes and seas, so many opportunities
and possibilities. Listening to the Fellow travelers was like
having a whole galaxy on stage.»
Toribio Gorchs, alumnus of the Rudolf Steiner School
Buenos Aires, AR.



«During the #ISC24, I had the great opportunity to get to
know some students who traveled all around the world.
They gave helpful advice on how to plan our journey after
school. I got inspired by the short stories
about traveling after school.»
Nica Willing, FWS Münster, DE.

Nathaniel Williams - artistic director of the Peace Pageant in the ISC24. Studied visual art and puppetry at the neueKUNSTschule, Basel. Co-founder of Free Columbia. PhD in Political Theory at the University of Albany. Leader of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum since January 2023.



Our three puppeteers: Nathaniel, Madison and Isabel

THE COLLECTIVE JOURNEY OF THE PEACE PAGEANT

In preparing for the ISC of 2024 the desire arose to create something cohesive and interconnected. How could we prepare a students' conference where all the activities and aspects are somehow related to one experience or picture? There was also a question of how we could create this feeling of interconnection with the greater society, and not just the conference community. How could we make an offering to the many people who live in the area around the Goetheanum?

This is how we came to the idea of preparing a participatory storytelling event for a public space on the last full day of the conference. Many of us are used to storytelling events that take place in theaters, auditoriums, in cinemas or on videos, but there are also ways to tell stories that involve the participation of everyone. One example can be found in open-air puppetry and pageantry.

Not only did we want to have the event involve as many students as possible, and to take place in a widely accessible and public place, but we also wanted to find the right story for this conference. Gradually we arrived at a vision to bring together song, movement, imagery, procession, and performance to tell "Excerpts from the Journey of the Peacemaker". This story relates the watershed transformation that led to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in North America over seven hundred years ago. It unfolded in an area that was in perpetual war and culminated in a constitutional confederacy built around the power and spirit of Peace. The more one learns about

the Haudenosaunee and their remarkable political and spiritual history, the deeper one's admiration. The story is woven of important political events but also images of deeper import, where the snakes are combed from the hair, backs are straightened, and thinking replaces killing. It is seldom recognised today, but the events narrated in the story continue to have effects to this day in the structure of some of the most enduring democratic republics. A similar version of «Excerpts from the Journey of the Peacemaker» was first performed in New York in 2014. The script was inspired by many written sources, as well as conversations with Kay Olan. Kay is a storyteller of the Mohawk nation. When asked if she would pass on a message to the participants of the ISC in 2024 she wrote:

«I think it is always good to share the story of the Peacemaker's Journey. Thank you for wanting to do that. I think it is also very important to consider sharing Haudenosaunee teachings that emphasize the importance of remembering our relationship with and our responsibility to the natural world. We are instructed that we, the human beings, were put here as caretakers, not destroyers. We are supposed to consider the effects of our actions and of our words on the future generations. We are supposed to think seven generations ahead in order to make good decisions for the sake of those to come. Onondaga Faithkeeper, Oren Lyons, once said that we cannot have peace until we make peace with Mother Earth.»

Kay Olan

THE PREPARATION WORK

The face of a puppet is the first consideration. It began as such, sketching their countenances, thoughtfully in meditation on their individual lives. I spent an early morning till lunch drawing each of their faces, the Peacemaker, Hiawatha, Jigonsosee, and Tadadaho. For the rest of that day, with great focus, I made bold judgements in clay to form their features. This took a certain commitment and trust to the feeling that accompanied their characters, which they were granting me the freedom to express. It was as if I was given the opportunity to help a great being or spirit incarnate into earthly existence. And this pretty much put the fear of God in me, but I played the part of a troubled artist with sincerity.

After making small models, Nathaniel and I worked on transferring them onto large-scale mounds of clay, which would be proportionate to their 3-meter-high bodies. We were apparently building giants! This took muscle... Smashing layer upon layer of clay to make each feature protrude in the correct way. When we had to wrap up our work time, to keep the clay moist, we stabbed the surface all over to make little divets to hold the water. I'll never forget how funny the giants' faces looked covered in little finger pokes.

The clay modeling went by quickly, within a few days, which led to the long papier-mâché process. Seven or eight layers of paper on each of the four heads, not to mention eight head sized hands that needed the same

attention. We started bringing the rest of the story into physical being with the help of so many wonderful volunteers. Painted banners, warriors, weapons, and various wildlife, emerged out of the piles of donated material. Our studio always looked as if a tornado had swept through by the end of the day.

As the team of young, inexperienced volunteers (myself included) cranked away at the scenery and mounds of cardboard and paper, Nathaniel skillfully attached necks, shoulders, arms and bodies to the sleeping giants. One of the very last steps was painting their faces, waking them up.

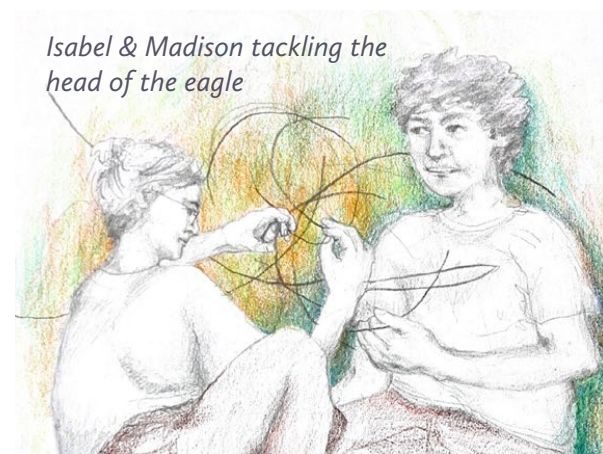
As soon as the last layer of paint had dried we brought our first puppet outside into the world, just to see her move and be amazed by her grandness. Who knew a four meter puppet could look so graceful; her flowing blue dress in the tall grass of the hill, and her ancient gaze showed a peace and knowing that I'd never experienced before.

We had all done our work as builders. The payment and satisfaction came when we got to play the puppets. It seemed that everybody looking for a fun time wanted to play a puppet, but that part was reserved for a lucky few: a group of gracious teachers who didn't know what kind of responsibility lay ahead. Everybody stood up for their task in the end. And the pageant went out with a bang!

Isabel Dancey



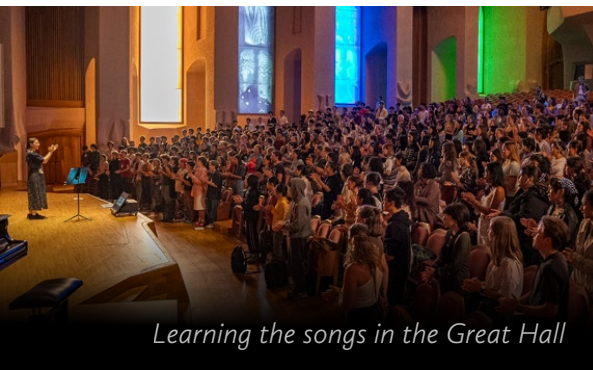
Isabel Dancey forming the faces in clay



Isabel & Madison tackling the head of the eagle

Isabel Dancey - puppeteer and part of the organising team of the ISC24. She attended the Kimberton Waldorf School in Pennsylvania, USA. She spent many summers as a camp chef and is an artist, farmer and beekeeper.

CONNECTION THROUGH THE PEACE PAGEANT



Learning the songs in the Great Hall

On the very first evening of the conference, Nathaniel shared the story of the Peacemaker in the Great Hall. Words of context were given both by Nathaniel and participants from the Toronto Waldorf School, Canada. And so the seed of the Peace Pageant in Basel was planted in the Great Hall, still with some mystery hanging in the air of how this great project would become reality.

From then on, I led the participants each morning through a physical and vocal warm-up, with a focus on building connections. It was an opportunity for me to connect with all the participants in this one large group, and for the participants to connect with each other. Importantly, I introduced one Peace Pageant song per morning and so reinforced different images of the story throughout the conference. These warm-ups were short, sweet and strong moments to start the day where I could observe people settling in with each other, sharing laughs and making impressive rich sounds. There was a special sense of willingness, openness and eagerness present.

Friday was the big «Day of Preparation». After lunch, the participants split up into four groups for the dedicated one-off practice session. Each group represented one artistic area of the Peace Pageant and was led by respective artistic directors: The puppets with Nathaniel Williams, Isabel Dancey and Madison Shulkin. The big puppets were played by the teachers, who had taken



Practice: the speech group

the time during the workshops to get acquainted with the movements of the large puppets. But a number of banners and many flat puppets were still waiting to be brought to life by the participants. The movement group took their 40 flags and went with Barbara Bäuml and Rafael Tavares to the Halde. The speech group joined Brigitte Kowarik.

And lastly, the biggest group stayed in the Great Hall: music. I led the music rehearsal and was so impressed by the focus, speedy learning and ability to vocalise these very different images of the story. There was space and time to deepen the atmospheres of the three songs, giving each a distinct essence. I felt blessed to build on the connections I had already made with this group from the morning warm-ups, making the process of directing so much easier on my side. Meanwhile, in each group, everyone discovered their role within the Peace Pageant and practiced, making the ultimate most of the limited time.

After a short break, everyone came together in front of the Goetheanum for the dress rehearsal, the one and only practice of weaving together all the different groups before the journey to Basel. There was a buzz, curiosity and eagerness in this large group. Because no one really knew what to expect, what had been happening in the other groups and how they would fit together. A great sense of excitement and calmness among the artistic directors, knowing we had to stay in close connection with each other. And then the magic happened.

All the different elements came together, so well. I saw surprise, excitement, curiosity, awe and focus. It felt so easy and natural, as if it's normal to bring together so many people to share an artistic project with very limited rehearsal time. Before we knew it, the last Peace Hymn was sung. So ready for Basel!

In Basel, the Pageant Parade gave opportunities for the big group to build up towards the participatory storytelling event, to take space in the city and invite passerby's. Once at the Münsterplatz, we had some time to settle down and find our space. We formed a big circle, singers sitting down to invite spectators to look into the middle. A brief moment for the artistic directors to come together, to start together. And once again, the magic happened. Compared to the rehearsal the day before, there was more calmness in the air as there were no more surprises. This solidified the feeling of a united performing, where all the different art forms were weaving with each other in different combinations. An incredible focus and immediate response gave a natural sense of flow. It was aesthetically impressive and performed genuinely. Really everyone contributed and it was the culmination of those individual efforts with a huge sense of community and togetherness that underlined this multidisciplinary storytelling.

Dorothee Nys

PEACE HYMN

1 2 Text and music by Dorothee Nys

Join and sing a - long for peace is here. Join and sing a - long for peace is
La ti do re do re re ti ti. Do re mi fa mi so fa so fa

3 4

here. Join and sing a - long for peace is here. Join and sing a - long.
mi. La la so la la ti do ti ti ti la si. Mi re do re mi.



The one and only rehearsal of the Pageant

«Singing in one amazing acoustic hall with 700 people from all around the world has been a highlight. Being embraced in colorful harmony will always be a refuge for me.»

Ruilen Ma, Beijing Nanshan School, CN

«The singing in the mornings with hundreds of voices was truly magical.»

Ruby Aylen, Mount Barker Waldorf School, AU

Dorothee Nys - musical director during the Pageant of the ISC24. Alumna of De Zonnewijzer, BE. She holds a Bachelor's in Music Education from the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow, Scotland, where she teaches music in a high school next to leading a choir and being part of other musical ensembles.

REFLECTIONS FROM SPECTATORS



A warm spring day in Basel. The elevated Münsterplatz in full sun. The sound of drums in the distance, somewhere in the alleyways of the old town. They come closer and suddenly a procession of people becomes visible. A banner appears, and 5-meter-high puppets sway with the procession onto the square. A festive and joyful atmosphere spreads. Hundreds of young people form a large circle. The circle becomes a stage. A story is told. The various indigenous nations in early North America. Each one is proud, has its territory, its forefathers, its identity. The tribes rush across the square in a eurythmic circle dance. War is in the air. The drum rolls get faster, the choirs sing against each other. Then a wise teacher appears. Don't we belong together? Isn't the great spirit there for us all? Isn't there enough land for all the tribes? The chanting choir clearly marks this moment when the call for peace is heard. Is it being heard? The chiefs confer with the elders. There - an eagle circles over the hunting grounds. And its flight makes no distinction between the tribal territories. The sign is understood. The tribes make peace. Everyone here at the Münsterplatz in Basel, 750 young people from over 30 countries co-create peace, experience peace. This moment is deeply engraved in their souls and will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Ueli Hurter

Ueli Hurter - spectator of the Peace Pageant at the Münsterplatz. Co-leader of the Agricultural Section at the Goetheanum since 2010 and part of the Executive Council of the Anthroposophical Society.



Andrea de la Cruz - spectator of the Peace Pageant at the Münsterplatz. Former co-worker of the Youth Section (2017 - 2022). Coordinator of the Anthroposophy studies at the Goetheanum, part of the General Section.



What I encountered at the Münsterplatz in the afternoon of the performance was a gentle - yet vibrant - atmosphere of expectation and warmth. I arrived early before the performance's start to a relatively quiet circle (considering its size), calmly waiting for something special to begin. The puppets, gently laid on the floor, seemed to be resting. Beautiful, inviting music began as a kind of humming. A genuine artistic preparation was going on, an inner readiness to take action at the right time in an unpretentious way. The facilitators coordinated the different artistic groups transparently, letting us into the process, making us a part of it. There was Presence.

It was not the first time that the Youth Section took to the streets of Basel. Already in 2019, during "Courage", around 700 young people filled the square with banners and songs. Yet the mood was so very different back then. In 2019, the group seemed to walk in a togetherness that stood before the world to send a message, or at least to make a statement of their own. Instead, in 2024, the group made a quiet, beautiful circle that was not to be occupied by them, but by the stories of others who came before and had a message of peace that would defeat the passing of time. This seemed to me to be a wonderful expression of a possible future when we may work together gently to create and prepare spaces where significant actions can unfold, not just for those present at the time, but also for generations to come. That we can allow room for something higher, even than the sum of all of us there, to appear and speak to us.

In this sense, the students gave us a moment where we could experience hope that something good can come about when we prepare ourselves, with inner readiness, together with others.

Andrea de la Cruz



ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE STUDENTS

EVENING PERFORMANCES

The fact that the ISC is a students' conference was also clearly recognisable as the participants were not only to be found in the Great Hall, but many of them also on stage. And this was particularly intense during the evening performances!

The four evenings of the ISC were organised by six groups who presented the art and culture of their country to the conference community. After the Bühnenfortbildung (Postgraduate Training in Eurythmy at the Goetheanum) performed their programme during the opening of the conference on Wednesday afternoon, three eurythmy groups: Sternum and YggBrasil/IANDE (Brasil) and the Rudolf Steiner School New York City (USA) followed on Thursday evening. From the audience, you could see energetic, passionate young people; in the backstage area, you could sense the thrilling silence and respect for the huge stage, and after the performance, the joy and relief were clearly visible on their faces. The hundreds of teenagers watching rewarded the performers with thunderous applause. This was also the case on Friday evening, when groups from the Tbilisi Waldorf School (Georgia), the Acacia Waldorf School (the Philippines) and the Hokkaido Waldorf School (Japan), shared their culture with us in songs and dances. The Goetheanum stage has seen a lot, but these fresh and powerful performances gave the venerable Goetheanum stage a whole new youthful character.

After each day filled with programmes of all kinds, lots of movement, exchange and encounters, it was a gift to be able to lean back in your chair until you jumped up for the applause!

The last evening, the open stage, was organised with numerous contributions from individual participants as well as group performances and people who found their way together during the conference. The hall was filled with everything from singing and dancing to the sounds of the bagpipe. It was a really rich programme that we were able to experience in the evenings.

Milo Janzon

«I remember this moment during the open stage, when there was a group of seven students that sang a well-known Waldorf-song and it ended up that more than half of all the students went onto the main stage. The moment I started seeing how everyone stood up and joined them on stage is the moment that awakened an immense sense of hope for the world and for my life in my heart.»
Isaac Dominguez, Escuela Waldorf de Cuernavaca, MX

«Finally, taking to the stage with our eurythmy group was a unique experience of being able to show this art, with the tropical flavour that only Brazil can show through its ginga.»
Luciano Almeida Prates, Rudolf Steiner University, BR



Colegio Inlakesh, Mexico



Rudolf Steiner School New York City, USA

MORNING SONGS

But also in the mornings, after the folk dance in front of the main entrance and breakfast, and before the collective singing during the interactive contributions, we could listen to the music of the participants and get a glimpse of all the different cultures that were present in the Great Hall.

Students from the Trento Waldorf School in Italy were the first to bravely take to the stage on Thursday morning to perform. On Friday morning it was a group from the Colegio Inlakesh in Mexico who welcomed the day with five guitars and singing, and on Saturday students from the Colegio Michelangelo in Chile. The largest number of students then took to the stage the next morning when 54 young people from the Waldorf schools Beijing Nanshan and Hairong in China filled the Great Hall with their voices.

Golda Templeton

«During the entire week, in the morning break, there would always be someone singing and playing on the terrace, they created lighthearted moments that will accompany me for a long time.»

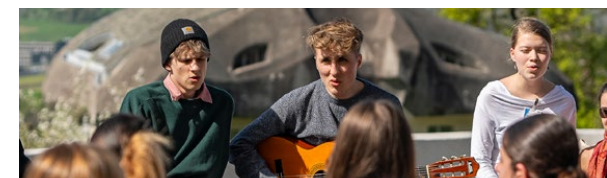
Ginevra Garavelli, Scuola Rudolf Steiner Clericetti, IT



Beijing Nanshan and Hairong Waldorf School, CN

Milo Janzon - part of the organising team of the ISC24. Student at the FWS Sankt Augustin, Germany and former board member of the WaldorfSV.

Golda Templeton - part of the organising team of the ISC24. Student at the RSS Hamburg-Wandsbek, Germany and board member of the WaldorfSV.



A SELECTION OF ART PROJECTS DURING THE CONFERENCE



Letterboxes



One of the four different linoprints

In addition to the main organisational tasks, we devoted ourselves to a number of art projects during the preparation period shortly before the conference began, which were intended to accompany the day-to-day running of the conference. For example, we designed envelopes labelled with the names of all participants and hung them up in the foyer so that participants had the opportunity to communicate with each other in writing.

LINO PRINTS

During this intensive preparation time, we came up with the idea of giving the students handprinted postcards to take home as souvenirs. No sooner said than done. Without further ado, we set up a linoleum printing studio and began producing 800 postcards. While we worked in small teams to produce one card after the other and the excitement of the students' arrival grew, the idea came up to not only distribute the cards as souvenirs, but also to use them for an exchange and reflection project. In order not to let this exchange end abruptly after the conference and let the inspirations be forgotten, we handed out a postcard to each participant on our last day and asked them to write down thoughts that had arisen in the last few days and also to write down their email address on the card. We then collected all the cards again, and after we had shuffled them well, all the participants received a postcard as a farewell gift, together with the task of sending a photo of the text to the email address that was written down in a year's time.

Freya Knierim - part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Alumna of the FWS Landsberg am Lech, Germany. Trained paramedic, looking ahead to a volunteer year in Brazil.

With this project, we want to give the impulse in a year's time to think back to the time of the conference and to trace what emerged from these intense thoughts. Perhaps pen friendships will also be created all over the world.

Freya Knierim

THE WEAVING PROJECT

To open the conference in a creative and connecting way, in line with its theme «Finding our way together», we decided on a collaborative weaving project as a symbolic first gesture. Not only connecting with each other but creating together something that could set the tone of our conference.

The idea was to build a living weaving frame in which each participant would become part of the whole by weaving a strip of fabric into it. The path from idea to realisation was exciting and full of challenges. No one had a clear image of what this would turn out to be, yet everyone who helped put their energy and focus into it. First, we collected various ideas on how the project could be realised. Standing in the middle of the Great Hall with some paper, a pencil and rope to measure seats, we realised what started as such a simple idea would turn out to be a time-consuming preparation. In the end, we decided to build a large, mobile weaving frame using long tubes. Between these tubes, we attached six lengths of fabric with the same width at an even distance from each other. Strips of fabric in different colours were then to be woven in between these panels, in between the warp we just created.

Like with all ambitious projects, we encountered a moment of despair, not knowing how to continue our work. This is where the wonderful strength of our team came through, the only reason we were able to actually bring our ideas into reality. We could really count on each other to help out wherever needed.

First we built a prototype, which we tried out with the whole team, full of hope. There was great enthusiasm when the prototype worked. With renewed motivation, we cut numerous fabrics to size, sewed them together and attached them to the tubes. The final preparations were complete, and the big day was approaching. On April 10, 2024, during the opening of the conference, the time had finally come. Unsure whether everything would work as planned, we stood ready to install the project in the Great Hall. Piece by piece, participants enthusiastically began to weave in their strips of fabric: an ever larger, collaborative work of art was created. This was a symbolic prelude to the core idea of "Finding our way together", whilst the voices of all participants filled the hall with sound and song.

Luis Zienicke

Aster De Maeyer

«I won't ever forget the welcome. The first time singing «The roots of my heart» with all those amazing people was just a great moment!»

Elias Yule Fourmont, FWS Bargteheide, DE

Aster De Maeyer - part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Alumna of De Zonnewijzer, Belgium/Home-schooled. She will start an art study year in the fall in Dornach, Switzerland.

VISUAL MUSIC

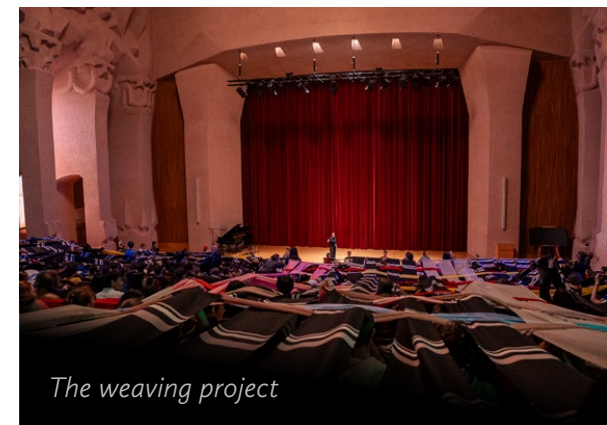
As a gift from the organising team to the participants, we worked with a unique artform that is still being developed: Visual Music. With modified overhead projectors, called light horses, two pieces were performed by the organising team, giving a small insight into this new screen culture. Four light artists were accompanied by choral singing from the rest of the team.

«Preparing for the light horse performance was a very special experience, it strengthened the group community and trust within the team. We rehearsed and created the choreography together and created a form in joint and individual movements. When the two groups met, it was amazing how quickly we were able to harmonise and it was a great feeling to be able to rely on each other in the creation of this project. It was a totally new and interesting experience as I had never seen such instruments before and found it incredibly beautiful to play with them and the light; it was magical through and through. Being able to give this magic to the participants was exciting and beautiful at the same time.»

Hanna Biehn

Hanna Biehn - part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Student at the FWS Görlitz, Germany and board member of the WaldorfsV.

Luis Zienicke - part of the organising team of the ISC 2024. Student at the FWS Wiesbaden, Germany and board member of the WaldorfsV.



The weaving project



From behind the stage: Visual Music

WORKSHOPS - REFLECTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS

The main idea for the workshops was to give a space for the students to be creative in every possible way. Many of the workshop hosts are connected to the Youth Section network and/or had been participants at previous students' conferences. Each space was held in a unique way: we had workshops full of movement, art and creation, spaces for reflection and deepening of a topic. But first and foremost, participants could create deeper connections over four workshop sessions in a smaller circle of people.

«We talked about how we could transform some problems into opportunities, how we deal with situations in general, we shared memories and got to know each other.» *Levin Ritschel, FWS Wiesbaden, DE* | 1 - Jacinta Gorchs | Building resilience: from barriers to opportunities.

«It put me out of my comfort zone, but it was fun.» *Participant of the ISC24* | 2 - Miroslav Mütze | Clowning/Free Improvisation

«If it comes from the heart, it is art. There is no need to be good at it, to make art.» *Fiona Chen, Xin Wu high school, TW* | 3 - Dino Lippert & Jule Klinger | Making Art - Finding our way to ourselves

«It was nice and calming through these full days.» *Jana Bahnsen, FWS Eckernförde, DE* | 4 - Tori Göhring & Anouk Roskosch | Meditation & Movement

«Working with paper was a calming experience, that required focus and imagination, wonderful!» *Participant of the ISC* | 5 - Sebastián Gatica Caro | Paperwork and origami, three-dimensional expression

«I loved having time to get to know other participants by talking in the sun and through the art they made.» *Indigo Cope, Thomas Rotherham College, GB*

«I had a lot of fun giving the workshop. It was impressive how talented and participative they were.» *Tamara Spieth, Workshop leader, DE* | 6 - Hannah Terfort & Tamara Spieth | Sunprint, one of the oldest types of photography

«The workshop I was in was wonderful, I got to open up to other people and rebuild some of the trust I have lost over the years of growing up. The workshop also allowed me to talk to people I wouldn't normally talk to, meeting strangers and making friends, which was incredible!!» *William Jack Flynn Hayes, Lorien Novalis, AU*

«Teaching you to learn to listen to my heart and listen to others rather than judge.» *Samara Correy, Lorien Novalis, AU*

«I initially chose this workshop to get involved, not being a person who shares their private things, but I was surprised how much the workshop helped me open up and make a connection with other people.» *Azzurra Gallon, Novalis, IT* | 8 - Magdalena Ries & Lisa van Holsteijn | Witnessing from the heart

«Our workshop spoke a lot about who I really am, by asking ourself what is the most important thing that is with us. And what we would do if someday that thing would be taken away from us? It really helps us go through it: Who am I as an individual.» *Yi-Hsueh Lin, Kuang-He Waldorf School, TW*

«During those days at the workshop, as a group, we came up with a variety of questions, including questions about ourselves, our relationship with the outside world, and more. I was very delighted to delve into these questions to understand myself better and to reflect on my feelings.» *An-Tong Hung, Kuang-He Waldorf School* | 7 - Leonard Kokorevičs & Lāsma Kokoreviča | INDIVIDUALITY IN A MULTIDIMENSIONAL WORLD

«We made prayer mats and explored our relationship and communication with ourselves, our community, and the world. The combination of deep thought and simple work was so beautiful, I can't really describe it.» *Helena Giersch, FWS Karlsruhe, DE*

«I also loved how they forced us to come out of our comfort zone. They did an amazing job! They were able to connect a group of mainly introverts, that's impressive.» *Izara Sleuwaegen, De Populier, BE* | 11 - Berenika Lehrman, Alexander Pitman & Iona Temple | Woven and Working Together

«Everyone there had different personal goals and all of them were so interesting. I felt so listened to.» *Torres Montserrat,*

Colegio Waldorf Michelangelo, CL

«It was very constructive, especially because it was a collective synergetic evolution of individuality.» *Lorenzo Chirizzi, La Cruna, IT* | 14 - Marilha Ferreira Balieiro | Bringing ideas into reality

«It was been really interesting and inspiring because we talked about problems and conflicts going on right now, but also about different ways to solve them.» *Anna Christina Steffens, Rudolf Steiner Trento, IT* | 15 - Maaïke Aylen Valdez Rivera | International conflicts and how young people can contribute to peace

«We did a lot of courage and community building work, sometimes spiritual. For me, letting go of anxiety and a feeling of shame wasn't easy.» *Nora Claussen, FWS Kiel, DE*

«The workshop was perfect for me. Most importantly, we became a family. We did many extreme exercises out there that built connections between us.» *Jess Hulley, Michael Oak Waldorf School, ZA*

«I absolutely loved the workshop! Henric was such a good teacher, so calm and encouraging. I feel like everyone was able to get out of their comfort zone without too much stress or anxiety. I'd do it a thousand times over!» *Greta Zsiros, FWS Lübeck, DE*

«We worked on different scene settings, to explore being courageous through acting, while also trying to find a connection to each other as humans.» *Amrei Feger, FWS Überlingen, DE* | 16 - Henric Lewengard | Unveiling Courage through Acting





«It was spectacular. Dorothee's teaching method is sensational, and the group dynamics were a lot of fun!» *Yan lamamoto, Escola Waldorf Novalis, BR*

«Amazing to have time to get to know some participants. Everyone was so eager and fully-hearted there. Joy and music were at the heart and gave opportunities for deepened connections. For me personally, it was just incredibly fun and so remarkably easy because of the good group atmosphere!» *Dorothee Nys, Workshop leader, GB* | 17 - Dorothee Nys | Playful musical explorations - Kodaly

«I found beautiful ways to connect with others without speaking. I really liked that it had group and autonomous, individual elements.» *Emilia Godoy, Colegio Waldorf Michelangelo, CL* | 18 - May Wyss | Being in motion to bring into motion

«The first day we met up as a group I felt a little lost and thought I hadn't chosen the right workshop for me. But that was so wrong! I was really happy with my workshop leader, the other people in the workshop and the things we did at the end of our time together. I am so glad I chose exactly this workshop.» *Indigo Petters, Annie Heuser Schule, DE* | 19 - Annette Thomas | Play of light and darkness - printing/etching

«The AI workshop was very intriguing and interesting. Learning to notice the difference between AI and human-made things is a useful skill that will likely be very needed in

the future, and the workshop also made me reflect about my feelings and how technology can change how we interact with other human beings. I really liked the workshop, it changed my perspective on how I view my electronic devices and how I use them and AI in my life.» *Beatriz Queiroz, Waldorf Rudolf Steiner São Paulo, BR* | 20 - Cory Holzinger | A discussion with AI about spirituality

«We are a group of people who are storytellers and listeners. We told, acted out, played with stories, and most importantly, listened.» *Ruien Ma, Beijing Nanshan School, CN* | 21 - Leonora Meier-Nielsen & Flora Gerber | The Art of Storytelling

«Talking about my privilege, right and responsibility to take action against inequality and oppression for those who can't do this without fear of imprisonment or punishment. I had some really interesting conversations about activism and found new motivation with people from all over the world. I am really grateful for being able to experience this!» *Emely Kröger, FWS Aachen, DE* | 22 - Tobi Rosswog | Activism - shaping the world together

«I was in Yuuki's workshop, a workshop that related directly to the theme of the conference, and I really liked it! That's what saved me from being clueless about what we were talking about. Either way, it's really difficult to talk about the theme, with it being so abstract. I know I was able to comprehend it, but it's hard to explain now after all this

time. It was intense, I didn't think it would be like that when I attended it on the first day, but it got so intimate, and I felt really close to everyone there. I didn't have the chance to thank Yuuki for everything, but I really found it an amazing workshop, and I appreciate it so much that I was in it.» *Clara Miyuki Leyton lamamoto, Escola Waldorf Novalis, BR* | 23 - Yuuki Fujisawa | Awakening the Heart

«In the Teachers' Workshop, we worked on the Pageant play. But more than the preparation, I have learned a lot from the colleagues from different parts of the world. It was amazing how the 750 participants were able to come together to share the story of the Peacemaker. The team did an amazing job in working out the whole thing, especially the logistics.» *Belinda Grace Garcia Manlapaz, Acacia Waldorf School, PH*

«Through working with the puppets and the team, the theme came to the forefront a lot. The Peacemaker story blazed the universal invisible oneness into my heart. The meaning of taking heart is to me so common because there are so many moments that I'm telling myself to do something which requires me to be a little bit brave. And how do I do that? An observation I have is that it's much easier to have this courage when I remember that all the beings around me are doing the same. That simple awareness breaks the ice towards working together.» *Isabel Dancey, Puppeteer, USA* | 24 - Nathaniel Williams, Isabel Dancey & Madison Shulkin | Teachers' Workshop



FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

In the beginning of this booklet, Nathaniel shared about the tasks that were given to the Youth Section at its founding 100 years ago.

How can we continue, work further, deepen and grow that of which the International Students' Conference 2024 at the Goetheanum was just the beginning of? We can't but point out the resources that are required to organise an event like this. In a time where eco-anxiety is a reality for many young people, why on earth would you bring together 700 people from all corners of the world for just a mere five days?

And moreover, we can only start to imagine what it has meant financially for all families and school communities to make it possible for their children, their students to participate in the conference. It is a fact that Switzerland is one of the least accessible places financially, and of course that impacted the organising of this event as well. Yet there is no doubt about the importance of this event for the many young people that attended, and what fruits it might have in the near and far future for them and society at large.

You have just been able to read a small number of testimonials from participants and organisers. They can offer a glance of what happened at the Goetheanum in the Spring of 2024. However, many of the connections, the encounters, the wonders of the experience of this event

we will not be able to put into words and on paper in a format like this booklet nor in our post-conference video. These two media forms are one way of communicating and reporting, but they lack the opportunity to provide a full picture, a certain depth is missing and the experience of a young person can't be pictured - let alone the experience of 700 young individuals.

So, how can we move forward acknowledging these two opposites? On the one hand the clear intention that gatherings like these are of great importance for young people that are navigating their path into adulthood today, whilst also recognising the reality of the resources that are connected to it.

It is not possible to recreate any of the unique moments; even if we were to get exactly 734 people with the same demographic together again in the same space in two years of time, their questions would develop, their impulses, and the world surrounding them.

And perhaps this is exactly where the potential lies.

There is no necessity to exactly recreate these moments. Or in other words: we do not need to gather 700 students in Dornach to create a space for the questions, enthusiasm as well as the fears that young people have today.

What special qualities can shine through when we begin to expand our horizons?

As you might already know, the WaldorfSV organises students' conferences in Germany twice a year. How can we start to imagine something like this happening in many places around the globe, and look outside of our country borders? What can be the gift to a community when hosting a group of high school students? How can regional events be supported, in a way that the unique colour of the place, the wisdom of a place, can flourish? And how can we weave our intentions together when this were to become a reality?

Gabriele Nys

CREATING ENCOUNTERS.

This is the impetus and motivation behind the organisation of conferences such as the International Students' Conference 2024. In times of ever-increasing social division, such moments have a very important and unifying function.

During such a conference, you enter a bubble of harmony. Many participants talk about how inspired they are by the open-hearted encounters with each other and the friendly atmosphere.

But shouldn't we try to make our society such a place?

Places are often revitalised and rediscovered through such dynamics. At the International Students' Conference 2024, it was very impressive to see how the Goetheanum, which is otherwise quite a quiet place, suddenly took on a much more dynamic, almost paradisiacal character thanks to this large number of young people.

The opportunity that lies in such conferences is therefore enormous, but on the other hand, the pressure and responsibility to carry these progressive principles forward in a sustainable way is also enormous.

An international impulse such as the one we experienced in Dornach in April is a good basis for bringing such bubbles of harmony into our own regions.

The most important thing to realise is that the most lasting encounters often occur in the spaces in between. So you need both the one and the other. Both the programme and the structure as well as the freedom, because without the surrounding, there can be no in-between.

Keivan Azimi

Keivan Azimi - participant of the ISC24. Active in the school political section of the WaldorfSV (DE). Recently graduated from the FWS Kiel (DE). He will join the growing co-worker team at the Goetheanum this summer.

Gabriele Nys - part of the core team of the ISC24. Part of the organising team of the ISC 2021. Alumna from De Zonnewijzer (BE). She has been a part of the team of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum since September 2022.

If you wish to stay updated about the future work, please subscribe to the newsletter of the Youth Section. When a seed was planted and you can imagine to take initiative, reach out to mail@youthsection.org!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE | INITIATIVE BAZAAR



Encounter during the Initiative Bazaar

One of the tasks set for the Youth Section 100 years ago, was the creation of a program aimed at young people as young as 16 years to experience youth wisdom. There are a variety of different trainings and gap-year programs that have brought this or a certain aspect of it into the world. During the Initiative Bazaar, young people had the opportunity to be in conversation with representatives of the different programmes.

You will find the contact details from a selection of initiatives that were represented at the Bazaar.



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GRATITUDE

Wholeheartedly we thank everyone who was involved in the conference and contributed their time and effort towards this event.

First and foremost: the Goetheanum and all the co-workers there that made our conference possible!



Speisehaus
am Goetheanum



RUDOLF UND CLARA KREUTZER-STIFTUNG



HELIXOR STIFTUNG

STIFTUNG ZUR PFLEGE VON
MENSCH, MITWELT UND ERDE





Team meeting in May 2023



The accommodation puzzle - by Aster and Gabriele



Our lino design team



Prototype of the weaving project



Nathaniel



Last meeting before the conference starts!

THE TEAM



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Jacinta Gorchs | Jimena Montoya | Linus Reifferscheid | Luis Zienicke | Madison Shulkin | Malin Thomas
Milo Janzon | Nathaniel Williams | Noël Norbron | Tarik Stainbank | Thorben De Geest | Yuuki Fujisawa

*Special thanks to these caring
individuals who supported the team
before, during and after the conference.*

Adva Sagie | Alicia Mora Sümmermann | Cornelia Buser
Irene Fernandez | Janne Bierens | Jannes Llull | Jannis Lux
Johannes Seeberger | Julie Norbron | Luzie Se-Baradar | Michaela Sieh
Olivia Moller | Prema Wishart | Raphael Kleimann | Tania Prince




IMPRINT

Name and address of the publisher:
Youth Section at the Goetheanum
Rütliweg 45, CH-4143 Dornach
Contact:
(+41) 61 706 43 91
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www.youthsection.org

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Editors: Noël Norbron, Gabriele Nys
Proofreader: Charles Cross
Images: Frithjof Möhle,
Hans Raab (p. 24, p. 32, p. 37,
p. 44, p. 48), Gabriele Nys (p. 44),
Nathaniel Williams (p. 25, p. 44),
Layout: Gabriele Nys
Publication of July 2024
CO₂e emissions for the printing
of this booklet were compensated:
www.natureOffice.com/
DE-275-NKNGA84



«If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.»

EXCERPT FROM 'A RITUAL TO READ TO EACH OTHER'
BY WILLIAM E. STAFFORD

*A project brought into reality by the
Youth Section at the Goetheanum
in collaboration with the WaldorfSV.*