



Dear Reader,

gymnastics in the workplace is not a very innovative thing to do. Particularly in other parts of the world like Asia community sports on the job are commonplace.

With cultural or even artistic work, at the conveyor belt or at the desk, it is an entirely different thing. Many have been questioning the relevance and use if managers pick up the conductor's stick or blue collar workers take off the body suit and on the eurythmy shoes.

Art has its own language, the proponents of art in the workplace reply. To ask for its use and need means sticking with the short-sighted interests of capitalist thinking that only keep on looking for the monetary relevance of it and fail to see its inherent albeit different value. They are even advocating not to address the issue of monetary value at all. If one asks for the value, they claim, one often already excludes what is indispensable for art in the full sense: the freedom from any predetermined understanding of criteria of usefulness. Only this way can art exert its true effect - and value.

That does not mean that the value of artistic work at the conveyor belt cannot be expressed in terms of productivity. It only means that one should not approach it with a predetermined understanding of what that sense is and thereby limit routes of development.

In this issue we aim at showing you that eurythmy in the workplace does indeed work - and pay off.

Your Editors

Art

Eurythmy in the workplace

Culture

3. seminar in medicine at SEKEM

Economy

ISIS launches new product lines

Art in the Workplace

Professional Education for Guest Trainers Offers Eurythmy-In-The-Workplace to SEKEM Employees



Artistic work is a regular part of professional education in the workplace at SEKEM

The contribution of art and culture to the daily life in SEKEM's firms is of manifest relevance in the Egyptian initiative. All employees are offered numerous fields of cultural activity and a fully-fledged eurythmy ensemble also provides a framework for long-term artistic work.

The introduction of art into workflows dominated by economic considerations offers chances and challenges alike. The benefits do not have to run counter to efficiency-led thinking. Twelve eurythmy train-

ers from Switzerland, Germany, Southern Tyrol, Poland and Denmark recently embarked on a training course of four weeks to find out what exactly that means.

First and foremost, artistic work focuses on the development of the senses. It can be put to good use also in commercial environments because it helps to better understand workflows in their possibilities and risks and learn how to reform them. To have a certain viewpoint, to lean how to question it and to work with it with the

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aim of learning to see (and judge) things in different and new ways sharpens concentration and lets workers understand their fields of work better. Therefore, as a focal point, the participants in the course were avid



We were stunned to see how difficult the seemingly easiest movements were for many workers.

to look for the harmony of the integrated development of the physical, mental and intellectual composure of the workers, their motivation and the spatial and temporal structure of work itself.

After several visits to the firms and their factories, the trainer participants were challenged to see workflows from an artistic angle and immersed in their local contexts. They had to make out their defining features. These individual experiences were then brought together to develop a clear sense of where the trainers wanted to go with the workers and how this was to be accomplished.

This held special educational value for the eurythmy trainers: *„Close examination and our understanding of what was to be done based on these observations helped me to formulate and concentrate on my artistic ideas. To use the short timespan of half an hour to create a technically sound as well as motivating and stimulating exercise and to present it to the group of trainers required strong mental composure“*, a participant recounts. *„This way, I was effectively training my efficient style of work.“* During the day and on the basis of the first on-site observations, a clearer picture of the various kinds of work and possible artistic concepts applicable to them was developed.

During the third week, participants were required to apply to real-life situations in the factories what they had learned theoretically. Artistic work at

the conveyor belt gains in sophistication with the extent to which it is able to respond adequately to different work situations and their particularities. The packers of tea bags sit next to their machine that keeps on filling tea bags throughout the day and night and pack the same tea bags into larger cartons under very noisy conditions. They work speedily, in a highly efficient way and with movement of their hands so accurate they seem to be machine-like themselves. At LIBRA, workers lift heavy sacks of cereals into huge grinding machines under circumstances just as noisy. At NATURETEX, the sewers sit together, row after row, in spacious halls working at countless sewing machines. They move almost only their fingers and arms.

Each of the participating trainers was assigned a group of a maximum of 20 employees, a translator and an assistant. Often they not only had to tackle the particularities of the employees' work situations but also the difficult room situations: pillars in the centre of spacious halls, desks in community offices, lessons to be held on the flat rooms of the factories under the open sky.

A particular challenge was posed by the clear understanding of the individual work situation, its separation into operable parts and the development of a concept to work with them artistically. *„It was a true challenge to find the best way of dealing with the employees in order to engage them, to motivate and not to bore them. You have to challenge them a little to keep them interested“*, a participant says. Through targeted questions and relevant answers, the use of images and by connecting directly to their work experience, trainers aim to incite questions and stimulate lasting engagement.

Workflows in the workplace usually concentrate forces thereby often limiting individual development. *„Initially, we were surprised by how the simplest of movements, e.g. like moving a stick through a circle of people from left to right posed serious challenges*

to participants in our courses. After a while, we were very happy to see that the Staccato-movements of the workers used to heavy and coarse work developed into controlled and skillful movements.“

The eurythmy work in an economic environment can effectively encourage the personal development of the employees. It stimulates the conscious and responsible work with the own body and allows for new physical and mental experiences. The individual worker can experience itself



outside of the routine of work as a capable human being sensitive to new and different forms of skilled work.

The transfer of knowledge gained in one work environment on another is possible but needs careful observation of their specific requirements. The training programme therefore concluded with the task to develop specific catalogues of skills for various groups of employees like managers, seamstresses or teachers, and the development of individually suitable concepts for artistic work with them in their places of employment.

Angelus Huber



Egyptian Doctors Engaged in Anthroposophic Medicine

3. Seminar on Anthroposophic Medicine Sees First Contributions of Egyptian Doctors

The third annual seminar on anthroposophic medicine was held at beginning of March, again on the initiative of Dr. Hans Werner and Danielle Lemann. Working as tutors were again Hansueli Albonico, Christoph Tautz and – for curative eurythmy – Christoph Graf. The German general and children’s practitioner Claudia Menzel took part in the seminar as a visiting speaker.

The third seminar certainly is a milestone in the series of events that have been held for the past year. For the first time, local practitioners actively contributed their expertise in the field to the workshops. Dr. Hany spoke his experience in using anthroposophic medicines, Dr. Magahed about the natural defense of infections in urology. Dr. Hans Werner and Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish accompanied the group work, a contribution that positively affected the understanding among the participants.

Thematically, the diseases of the upper respiratory tracts were at the centre of interest of the participants. Here, diseases like angina and otitis of the middle ear have to be seen in contrast to allergic reactions like hay fever or asthma. Thanks to „Evidence Based Medicine (EbM)“, we today know that even acute inflammations of the respiratory tracts can in most cases be treated

successfully without using antibiotics. It is important to understand that in these cases the fever has to be closely observed and guided. Homeopathic medicines allow for very differentiated therapies.

The development of allergic diseases like asthma is often complex and difficult to understand. Suppressing chemical medicines are still used far too often. It was the aim of the seminar to raise awareness about this issue - not only the bronchia have to be cared of here, but also some long-standing and often highly mechanistic notions of practitioners.

Thanks to the artistic work of Christoph Graf this was effectively achieved. Through an extensive introduction into his concepts of the therapy of asthma through curative eurythmy, a lively exchange was stimulated among all participants. Using the newly built facilities of the Medical Centre, curative eurythmy shall also be accessible to the patients of the SEKEM clinic from now. Additionally, it was decided that also the work with anthroposophic medicines is to be expanded in the near future.

Hansueli Albonico

Impressions from SEKEM



The colourful inside of the SEKEM School

Most walls in the class rooms, hallways and community rooms inside the SEKEM School have been designed in a colourful way. In both softer and more intensive tones and pastel colours, these decorations create a lively atmosphere for learning and living that is remarkably different from the surrounding desert where colours of brown and beige dominate. Even on the SEKEM farm itself, the sandy grey is the predominant colour because the dust from the desert usually covers all plants and buildings visibly. Moreover, some areas inside the SEKEM School have been designed with the help of European artists (see picture above).

„SEKEM Day“ in Stuttgart

Saturday, 12 Mai 2007 will see another SEKEM Day at the Rudolf-Steiner-Haus Stuttgart, Uhlandshöhe 10.

The day will begin with the members assembly of the German support association at 15.00h and continue with an afternoon of encounters between the audience and representatives from the initiative. Several seminars and speeches will focus on the idea of „Art - Science - Religion: the ideal of education at SEKEM“.

Together with Prof. Helge Löbler, University of Leipzig, and Dr. A. Schmelzer, Freie Hochschule Mannheim, Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish, founder of SEKEM, will be holding a seminary on the issue. The duo Maren Bäumer, piano, and Jonathan Schirmer, cello, will take care of the musical contributions of the evening.

VEREIN ZUR FÖRDERUNG KULTURELLER ENTWICKLUNG
in ÄGYPTEN e.V.
lädt ein zum

SEKEM - TAG

am **Samstag, den 12. Mai 2007** 16:00 bis 19:30 h
im Rudolf Steiner Haus Zur Uhlandshöhe 10 Stuttgart
(15:00 h) Beginn der Mitgliederversammlung)

Kunst Wissenschaft Religion

als Entwicklungsimpulse für die Bildung des Menschen
Das Bildungsanliegen von SEKEM

16:00 h Kaffee & Kuchen Begegnungen
Ausstellung und Verkauf von SEKEM Artikeln

17:00 h Seminaristische Arbeit zum Thema
Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish, SEKEM Ägypten
Prof. Helge Löbler, Universität Leipzig
Dr. A. Schmelzer, Freie Hochschule Mannheim
Moderation: H.J. Matthe Waldorfschule Stuttgart

Fragen und Gespräch

... durch das Duo
Schirmer, Violoncello



Musical Encounters in Cairo



Angela Hofmann leads the team of school musicians

Fifteen pupil musicians from the elementary and secondary ranks of the SEKEM School took place in a musical encounter in Cairo on 29 March. The Hayat Academy, a private school in the city, had invited various schools to the community event.

Additional to the pupils from the SEKEM School, two other schools sent their children to take part in the day-long musical exchange through performances of recitals and percussions. The SEKEM School's group enthused the audience through their contribution of pieces for several voices including recorders, celli and violins.

It was a welcome opportunity for the pupils to now for the first time demonstrate the results of a year of hard work to an attentive audience of roughly the same age. Everyone was inspired by the well-earned applause and recognition. The music teachers immediately agreed to meet more often and to plan for additional events in the years to come.

Christina Boecker

New Herbal Teas in ISIS Portfolio

As one of SEKEM's most successful firms, ISIS is always engaged to offer new premium organic products to the consumers of Egypt who are already open to the new trend of environmentally friendly consumption. Products aim to be both modern and innovative. During the last months, ISIS has worked intensively on the expansion of the herbal tea assortment. The firm is market leader in the field of herbal bagged teas. Three new varieties have just entered the market.

Beginning already in November 2006 with the arrival of the Egyptian winter season, „Ginger&Cinnamon“ was

launched. Tarek Nabil, Marketing Manager for the ISIS brand: „The zesty, slightly sweet mixture was well received by customers and has sold particularly well during the cooler months. We expect that the new product will

be one of our best-sellers during the coming winter.“

The new mono-variety „Thyme“ was released at the end of November, also under the label of the ISIS brand well-known to customers. It complements the existing assortment of peppermint, anise, tilia, cinnamon, caraway and chamomille in an excellent way, as thyme is well known to be an effective expectorant medicine.

Only recently in February, a new lemon tea was launched. ISIS „Lemon“ offers a refreshing, intensive taste and will most certainly be selling particularly well during the hot summer months.

The new products are immediately available on the Egyptian market from local resellers, in pharmacies and leading supermarkets.

Christina Boecker



A Job Well Done



The calves enjoy their lives in the new stables

After the move to the newly erected cattle stables last July, the animals have begun to visibly enjoy their new home. „One could say we are experiencing a real wave of „new arrivals“. So many calves have been born since the beginning of the year“, says Angela Hofmann, responsible for their raising. „Not a single week goes by without at least 4 births - sometimes we have 2 a day!“ All mothers and children are alive and kicking. At the moment, the SEKEM herd on the main farm consists of 300 animals: 80 milk cows, 1 breeding bull named „thunder“, 120 fatlings, 60 cattle and 40 calves.



Masthead:

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The editors of SEKEM Insight wish to thank all contributors who helped in creating this edition.

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