

ENTERPIECES

CARROLLWOOD CULTURAL CENTER • Spring 2014 • Vol. 7 No. 2

■ A Talk with Gainor Roberts

For 20 years, the Center's Art Curator Gainor Roberts has been working on a series of 12 paintings called the *Feeling Series*. Each is a still life representing a major feeling. She's completed *Anger*, *Fear*, *Grief*, *Inspiration*, *Jealousy*, *Joy*, *Loneliness*, *Love*, *Shame* and *Awe*. Earlier this year, Gainor made the decision to step down as the Center's art curator so she will have time to finish the last paintings in the series. *Centerpieces* sat down with her recently to talk about these paintings.

CP: *You've often spoken about how artists are looking for a wall; they want their work to be shown. These paintings are really hard to understand. Does that matter to you?*

GR: Well, artists paint to communicate. I hope what these paintings say gets through to others. I've been working on them a long time and see them as my major achievement.

The paintings are unusual. You don't see still life paintings that carry an overtly symbolic label any more. They remind me of paintings from the 19th Century and earlier, like vanitas paintings, but yours are about emotional states. There's no standard set of cultural symbols for us today. Did you think about that when you started?

The paintings are what the feelings look like to me. I'm not trying to convey a conventional idea of feelings. I have no idea what "anger" looks like to another person, for example. It's my interpretation. I've tried to avoid stereotypes. The only one in which I've used a color associated with the feeling is the first one, *Anger*, which is red. (continued on page 6)

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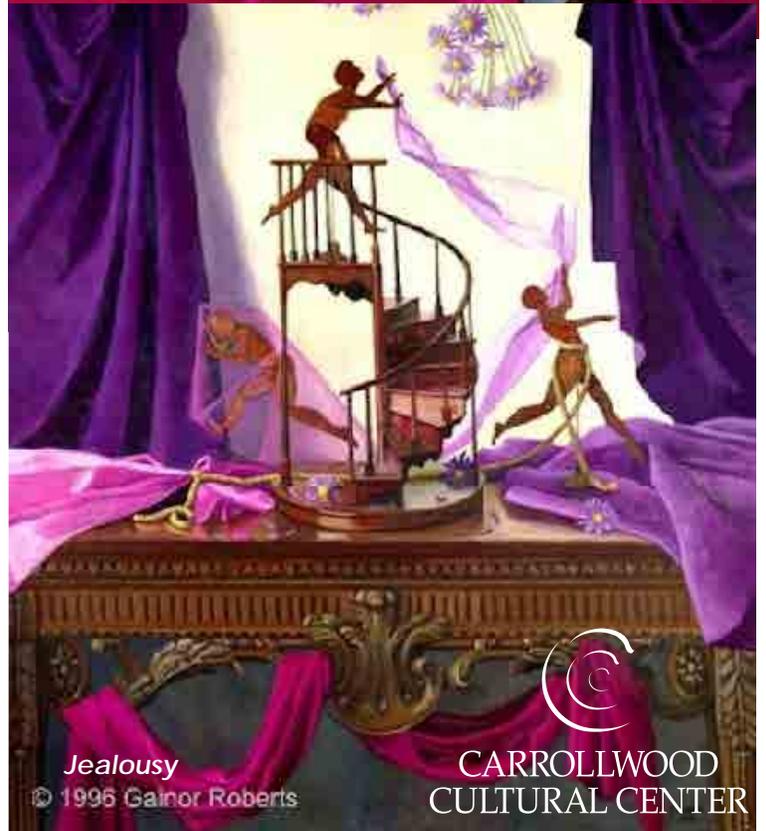
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Banner Image: *Loneliness* by Gainor Roberts. For more information, visit Gainor's website at www.gainor.biz.



Anger

© 1994 Gainor Roberts



Jealousy

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CARROLLWOOD
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Visit CARROLLWOODCENTER.ORG for upcoming events and activities.

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At the Center, being a member is more than a way of showing support and staying involved; it's joining a family. Thank you to all of our members, including our Circles of Giving donors and corporate members listed below. As of May 7, 2014

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4537 Lowell Road
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P: (813) 269-1310

E: info@carrollwoodcenter.org

W: CarrollwoodCenter.org

The Carrollwood Cultural Center is a partnership between Hillsborough County and the Friends of Carrollwood Cultural Center. The Friends of Carrollwood Cultural Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

■ Centerpieces

Official Newsletter of the Carrollwood Cultural Center
Spring 2014 • Vol. 7, Issue 2

Centerpieces reports quarterly on activities, people and issues associated with the Carrollwood Cultural Center. Letters to the editor and reader submissions are welcome. Please email the editor at centerpieces@carrollwoodcenter.org or mail to *Centerpieces*, Carrollwood Cultural Center, 4537 Lowell Road, Tampa, FL 33618. Include your name, address, phone number and the date. *Centerpieces* may edit your submission or withhold publication.

Centerpieces is produced by volunteers of the Carrollwood Cultural Center. New contributors are welcome.

Centerpieces Team

Editor: Evelyn Bless

Writers: Janet Bucknor
Adrienne Hutelmyer
Pat Keeley
Kendra Langlie
Judy Schiavo

Proofreader: Nancy Manning

Photographer: Bob Kerns

Graphic Designer: Adrienne Hutelmyer

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- Ruth Levy, Volunteer Coordinator
- Gainor Roberts, Art Curator

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Thank you to all of the volunteers who contribute to the success of the Center. We couldn't do it without you!

■ Center Mission

Our mission is to provide cultural and educational programs and events to our region that enhance learning, creativity, and a sense of community across groups and generations.



CARROLLWOOD
CULTURAL CENTER



Note from the Editor

■ Giving Back, a First Chair Story

Behind every gift to the Center, there's a story. Here's an example. I gave a First Chair in memory of my mother, Muriel Levine. She loved going to theatre and music performances, and she loved art shows. I was never able to bring her to the Center, because she lived in Largo and was in poor health for her last several years. But she delighted in hearing stories about the people, performances, clubs and art receptions here. I imagine her sitting beside me, nodding and smiling, every time I attend a show. I donated a chair because my mother was already here in spirit for me; it was a way for me to honor her. I think of the inscriptions on chairs as stones in the river of our memories. I read the plaques on other chairs and wonder about the connections that led other people, like me, to give this gift.

"I donated a chair because my mother was already here in spirit for me; it was a way for me to honor her."

- Evelyn Bless

The Center has many ways to donate. Consider supporting the Center through a First Chair or other gift. Like the First Chairs, the Center is a collection of individual stories — from young to old, from artists and potters to singers, musicians, dancers and performers — that come together to make a greater, ever-changing community. Your gift helps those stories to continue.

Evelyn Bless

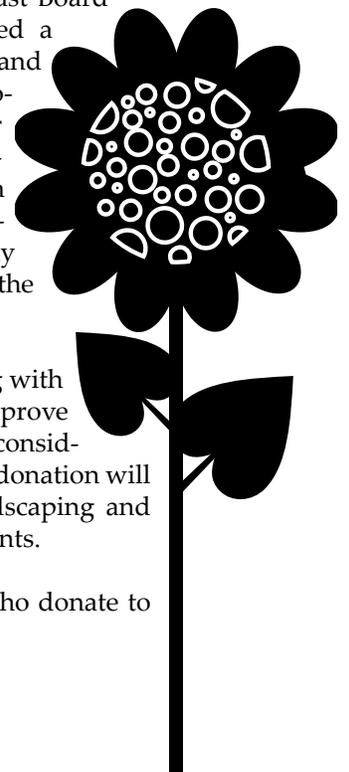


■ 2014 Landscaping Challenge

In an effort to improve the landscaping and aesthetics of the Center, charter member (and past Board member) John Miley has issued a challenge to the membership and patrons. He has graciously donated \$1,000 to be used solely for grounds improvements. However, the funds are contingent upon the Center receiving an additional \$1,000 in donations specifically for grounds improvements by the end of the year.

If you're interested in partnering with the Center and Mr. Miley to improve the look of our grounds, please consider donating to this project. Your donation will help with flower planting, landscaping and general landscaping improvements.

Thanks to John Miley and all who donate to this cause!



Letter to the Editor

■ Ueberglucklich

I am a member who enjoys JAZZ WITH JIM and occasionally other musical events. I just read your magazine and the article on happiness with the definition of the German word ueberglucklich. You did a good job and I just would like to give you the correct spelling of this difficult word. I have become so conscious of proper spelling since I learned the English language. I had some [mistakes], which gave me a high respect for other people, their language and culture. We enjoy coming to the Carrollwood Center; your volunteers, especially Norma [Ed.: Stemm], are such a cheerful group and we already feel like old timers and always welcome.

Sincerely,
Helgard Berrettini

Editor's note: *Thanks to Helgard for writing. Correct spelling and cultural awareness matter to us too. If you run into Helgard, please say "thank you!"*

■ Stories of Service

The Center's theatre was filled with small tables covered with green cloths. Food tables lined the front of the stage. When you sat down at a table, you saw the 4"x4" white tiles. Each had a drawing of a long-nosed face poking over a wall, with the legend "Kilroy was here." (The phrase appeared everywhere in the 1940s — it was a national joke.) Made by the Center's Mudslingers pottery group, the Kilroy tiles were party favors. This was a volunteer appreciation party, and the theme was the '40s.

Over the next half hour people wandered in, greeted friends, talked to newcomers, helped themselves to food (salads, sandwiches, cheeses, fruit, cookies, cakes) and found a place to sit. While we'd been urged to dress like the '40s, most were wearing their usual outfits, ranging from a suit to dress with ruffles to jeans and T-shirt. The party organizer, who would normally be hamming it up in a 1940's dress and hat, was in a plain white shirt and pants. And a wheelchair. She'd just gotten out of the hospital after surgery on her foot. But for Ruth Levy, the Center's volunteer coordinator, the show must go on — especially a show that shows how much the Center appreciates its volunteers.

Ruth emerged from her wheelchair, taking us through a quiz about 1940s events that got the people at each table talking to each other. She handed out prizes. She gave out tickets to the Sounds of Swing performance that night. She recognized volunteers for service. Then Ruth announced the 2013 Volunteer of the Year: Dee Lehner. Dee was so surprised and happy that she had tears in her eyes. A tablemate remarked in wonder, "This is like Miss America."

For a moment there, indeed it was. This party was one of a regular series of events for Center volunteers. Ruth, who has a background in theatre, puts together the appreciation parties. They always involve food, games that bring people together and honoring volunteers. Each volunteer event is different, but they are all the same in that everybody walks out with a smile.

Many people, many services

Volunteers have been around since the Center opened its doors. In the last couple of years, however, the volunteer program has become more organized to keep pace with the increasing needs and professionalism of the Center itself. It has also become more diverse.

Ruth has helped build the volunteer program into the multi-part program it is today. "I enjoyed theatre and working in this environment. I had done senior citizen training and enjoyed that." She adds, "I also needed to get out of the house more."

She started online signups to make scheduling and reporting of hours easier. The total adult volunteer roster is now 81, of which almost 90% are Center members. Three quarters of

"Without them, we could barely keep our doors open."

- Paul Berg, executive director

these volunteers are at the Center every quarter: preparing the theatre for events, serving refreshments, ushering, decorating, helping in the office and in classes, answering phone inquiries, updating the website, entering data, selling tickets and memberships, conducting tours, assisting at the Tampa Bay Market, writing for this newsletter and even helping with landscaping. "That's the whole thing about volunteering," says Ruth. "It should be convenient and fulfilling. It shouldn't take anything away from anyone; it should add."

All volunteers receive training annually, based on a manual that is updated periodically by Ruth and volunteers. The trainings are also Ruth-orchestrated events: there's always food, friendly jokes and news that knits the volunteers together.

The Center has additional volunteer groups. Ruth also coordinates the efforts of the Tampa Bay WorkForce Alliance at the Center. These individuals are learning or upgrading of-fice skills. Currently WorkForce has four people at the Center. From October through December they contributed 675 hours in office work and helped with educational programs.

Ruth has also continued the Student Volunteer Program, an initiative that started when the Center first opened. The program is most active during the Center's Summer Camps but functions year-round. Thirty-six to 40 high school and college students assist with running camps, preparing stages and props for shows and helping where they are needed.

Center volunteers racked up a mind-boggling total of 5977 hours last year. That's equivalent to three full-time employees. For an organization like the Center that runs on a skeleton staff, volunteers make all the difference. "Without them, we could barely keep our doors open," said Executive Director Paul Berg.

Volunteers now wear identification badges and uniform colors during the week, and for performances adopt the white shirt and black pants to which audiences are accustomed in larger venues. "The daily dress code was one of the most controversial changes," Ruth remembers. "It took 45 days to get everyone onboard with it." The dress code lets a person needing help identify the volunteers more easily, and it creates camaraderie. "As we've become more professional and cohesive, people are proud to be seen as Center volunteers.

"This place keeps my mind active and engaged with people," Ruth adds. "And it does the same for volunteers. It's one of the benefits of volunteering." She notes that people of all ages wish to volunteer. The rewards of service extend far beyond staying busy. "It's mentally stimulating, and it adds meaning to your life." *(continued on next page)*

Saying "Thank You"

To show the Center's gratitude and give back to people who give of themselves, Ruth awards gift certificates for the hours served — starting at 20 hours and increasing with the number of hours. At her volunteer appreciation events she selects a Volunteer of the Quarter, who receives a plaque, and Volunteer of the Year. "I look not just at number of hours but at what they do." Plaques are on display in the Center's main lobby. "We have some shows, for example Motown, that everyone wants to help with. But no one signs up for some other shows. So I will put out a request for people to help with those. I keep track; they will get first crack at the popular shows later."

Crucial to success of the volunteer program is everyone's trust in Ruth herself: her fairness and ability to solve problems. Ruth is well aware of this. "I am here to make the Center work for the community." The Center's "community" includes all the Center patrons and people who come through its doors, as well as all the volunteers.

Matching skills to needs

Ruth has an uncanny ability to match skills to needs in a way that keeps people happy and challenged. There is always a job for each volunteer. "I don't want to take anything away from someone," she says. "If they're happy with their slot, they keep it. If needed, I'll find new ways for them to continue or something new for them to do."

A good example of matching time with talent is Barbara Kime, who first volunteered for this newsletter (she came up with its name *Centerpieces*). Barbara has always worked with the



"That's the whole thing about volunteering...it should be convenient and fulfilling. It shouldn't take anything away from anyone; it should add."

- Ruth Levy, volunteer coordinator

donated books. She now manages the Book Sale at the Center, and takes it to the Tampa Bay Market each month. Another example is Nikki Brightstone, a college student who recently moved here and wanted a diversion from school. Nikki works with the Center's databases and does research to help with strategic planning.

Ruth adds, "I continue to be just amazed at the people who come in here. They are so interesting, so dedicated and thoughtful. You even see people who pick up around here as though it were their own home."

Does Ruth have any special requests for volunteers? "We welcome everyone; we always need more help," she says. Volunteers now assist the marketing and development staff with the website and mailings. The Center needs additional help with marketing and with grant research and writing.

Also on Ruth's wish list: "I'd love to have volunteers do community outreach. The Center needs people who will go out and spread the word about us. We're still not well known and people think we're only for locals. We need people on the ground, going to businesses and other places. They can do so much, by talking to people directly." Email Ruth at ruth@carrollwoodcenter.org to get involved.

Judy Schiavo



TOP: Neville C. Jackson, L. Joy Groetzinger, Terry LaRosa MIDDLE: Ellia Sliwiak, Dee Lehner, Dena Parker, Edna Parker, Lillian Klein, Debra Cellucci BOTTOM: Jeff Lewis, Claudia McFadden



A Talk with Gainor Roberts *(continued from page 1)*

Why did you start doing these?

I spent a number of years in group recovery meetings. All those years in meetings, people would be talking about their feelings, and I started to wonder what the feelings would look like. Then later my therapist challenged me, when I was talking about my anger, what the words would look like if I put them on paper [Ed.: in images].

It was part of an effort to make myself well. If I could get a picture, it would help me to externalize and manage the feeling. Since I never do things halfway, I immediately made a list of emotions and decided to do a series.

So this all started from therapy?

Yes. I couldn't paint at the time. I had a need to break through this creative block. The therapist said my anger and creativity were coming from the same place. So I started with *Anger*. It was to push off the cliff. The painting was this enormous catharsis; I was exposing myself.

But how do you know how to represent the feelings? Did you paint people from your past who made you angry?

I thought about times in my past when I was very angry with people, but none of that is in the painting. The painting came to me as an image in my head. It gradually took form.

I actually feel somewhat mystical about it. No one else has done a series like this. Why me, why now? It was almost as though I had to do it. It was coming through me. I've learned over the years not to question where this comes from.

I understand this as being a combination of the subject and artist finding each other. Your experiences made you fascinated with feelings, and being a painter, you express yourself in images. They're your voice. It's like the way a poet might evoke grief through words because words are a poet's medium.

I really don't know. Each painting gets harder than the last, but I feel compelled to finish. I have two left, *Guilt* and *Laughter*, and I think they will take me about five years.

Does your feeling change after painting it?

No, I think it stays true. I've gone back later to see if the painting feels the same to me. For example, I painted *Grief* before my husband died; and after he passed away, I looked at it again and said to myself 'Yes, that's my grief.'

We can't know what people looking at them feel. But let me tell you a story about my *Anger* painting. A woman wanted to buy it. She said it didn't seem like anger to her at all; in fact it was quite serene. She was buying it because of her mother. "My mother was a pastel person," she said. "She decorated everything in pastels. I HATE pastels. So everything has to be REALLY STRONG COLORS..." The longer the woman

talked, the louder her voice became. I thought to myself: "She doesn't see anger in my painting but she's sure got a lot of it."

Tell me what the imagery means, how do you come up with it?

The imagery is all symbolic. The images may represent word-play, a symbol or a metaphor. For example, the columns in *Anger* are like organ pipes because I feel anger rises up out of the body, up from my gut. The tulips are a play on their name, "two lips," where anger comes out of the mouth.

What is your process when doing them?

The image is in my head before I start. I have to see it first in my mind. Then I get props; I have to have the image in front of me. The image may be hazy, and I'll be wandering around a store and see something that crystallizes what I see in my mind. For example, when I saw the spiral staircase used for *Jealousy*, I knew it was perfect: the winding motion, circling on itself and going nowhere.

When painting, you don't feel the emotion directly, in the sense of being consumed by it; you feel what it feels like. So it's exhausting. *Anger* took almost a year, sometimes of 14-hour days. *Shame* took almost nine years, during which I went through a lot of personal trauma. I would stare at it; sometimes I felt like the painting was attacking me.

You have heads in more than one painting. Why?

The head represents the person, the human form. I use them to put the person in the scene; they're not individuals.

And the musical instruments? You use different instruments repeatedly.

I choose the instruments for the sound they make. *Fear* uses drums because of the suspense; also the drumming of your heart. The oboe is in *Grief*; have you heard the sound an oboe makes? The instruments stand in for their sound.

There is almost a magical element attached to musical instruments for me. Music is unbelievable in its emotional intensity; and it's interactive. It requires an audience, like painting does. It's symbolic to me. Music is ephemeral and depends on the entire set of circumstances; for example, no matter how good the musician is, the quality of music played also has to do with the quality of the instrument. It all has to do with honing one's craft; you want to demand excellence in everything you do. The musician does that all the time. Painting is the same; you want to push the envelope.

My work gets more complicated and more challenging as I get older. I've become a better painter, more technically proficient. I don't need to use props so much now; I can see directly from my mind's eye. *(continued on next page)*

A Talk with Gainor Roberts *(continued from previous page)*

One of the things that these paintings do is look at feelings from the viewpoint of a third person. You represent the person by a head, so you become the teller, not the actor. Your visual images pull in other levels of meaning. For example, the gladioli in Joy are associated with spring, rebirth; but you also want to bring in their name, "glads." Love has tied cloths—"tie the knot." In Inspiration, the black and white lilies stand for yin and yang. A musical instrument is its sound, so that's another leap the viewer must make. It's not the thing itself; it's the role it plays. This is your language of symbols.

You are objectifying the feeling; you're intellectualizing it; and that helps distance you from it. The viewer must do the same to follow you all the way.

That's part of pushing the envelope. You are evoking associations and you must mix them together in a way that will be beautiful and at the top of your technical form and hopefully also evoke an emotional response.

You are already thinking about the last painting in the series, even though it is years away. Is that usual?

I often walk around with a couple of paintings in my head, in addition to the one I'm working on. The last in the series, *Laughter*, will be a *tour de force*, the most challenging thing I've ever done. At first I thought of laughter as associated with clowns, so I bought some clowns. But that wasn't it. Then in a museum gift shop, I saw marionettes. There's something that's just right about that; I'm still thinking about it. This is going to be a satire on the art world. The painters are all going to be laughing and everyone is going to look at it and say, "What's the joke?"

Evelyn Bless



■ Sounds Right

The Center's Sounds Right campaign had a goal of \$7,727 to update the sound equipment in our Main Theatre. This was our first fundraising project in partnership with power2give.org/TampaBay, hosted by the Arts Council of Hillsborough County. Power2Give lets you support arts programs directly by giving online.

You may wonder how well we did. Well...first you need to know that the true cost of the sound system was \$15,427. Craig and Linda Nowicke of Tampa Realty Now gave \$4500 to the project. Donovan Audio Design, Inc. gave \$3200 worth of equipment and labor. (HUGE thanks to the Nowickes and to Joey Donovan!). So we already had half the cost; we were seeking the remaining half.

We are very thankful for the support we've received so far. We have a little further to go. To help us finish this important project, please contact Todd Dunkle, development director, at todd@carrollwoodcenter.org or (813) 269-1310.

**SOUNDS
RIGHT**
AN AUDIO IMPROVEMENT MOVEMENT



We need to give kids solid skills without killing their curiosity. We need to encourage flexible, creative thinking. We also need to give children the tools to lead fully developed lives. The short answer of how to do all this is: **add in the arts.**

■ Our Children and the Arts

One of the most treasured memories of my youth is from seventh grade in junior high in Norfolk, Virginia. I was selected (along with my three best friends) to work on the sets of *Hansel and Gretel*. The annual school play was going to be performed in the middle school's auditorium, in the daytime for students and in the evening for parents. I did not make the cast, but no worries. Our teachers let us out of class seemingly all week to work on the sets. And what sets they were! Gingerbread men. Lollipops. Candy canes. Gum drop trees with orange slice flowers. The more we could invent for the sets, the longer we got to ditch class and produce what turned out to be a Broadway-worthy stage. Compliments poured in. I didn't need another grammar or math lesson. I needed this, and I was lucky the school provided it.

I've worked in four middle schools and one high school in the 17 years I've been with the Hillsborough County School District. Not once did any of these schools put on a play or musical. Sure, we have performing arts magnet schools now, but the arts offerings at most schools have been sacrificed to the need to prepare for standardized tests. There is no time to introduce children to creativity without attaching a grade to the effort. In addition, our priorities are reversed. The students who are least capable of academic achievement are deprived of "enrichment" classes in which they can engage their natural curiosity in ways that may be more meaningful to them.

I cringe when my students come back in the fall and report that all they did during the summer was watch TV and play video games. Research in "summer brain drain" points out that many students not only vegetate during the summer; they actually decline a few months in basic skills.

Curiosity is innate

I am still as curious as a three-year-old about a lot of things, which I investigate regularly. I'll bet most of you who read this are curious also.

When my niece was two, she was caught stuffing paper towels in the toilet. The day care teacher explained that doing so would clog up the toilet and it wouldn't work. Her answer was, "I'm counting how many towels it takes to soak up the water." She might have been perceived as a "weird" kid. Today she is a research scientist at Genentech, plays guitar and sings in a band. How do we ensure kids like my niece continue to exercise their curiosity in fruitful ways?

Arts help prepare kids for the future

The decline in arts education is not confined to Florida's schools. The National Center for Education Statistics in the U. S. Department of Education reports a precipitous decline in arts education.

You may ask, Is there anything really wrong with this picture? Don't we need to emphasize STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to compete globally? Well, yes we do; but we're leaving out parts of the orange. Kids' brains are still developing. Just as physical coordination needs to be started early for children to become athletes later, brain neurons need to be stimulated in a variety of ways to prepare our children for the life-long learning that is to come. The window for brain development is from birth to age 14. After that, an undeveloped brain has little chance of catching up.

We need to give kids solid skills without killing their curiosity. We need to encourage flexible, creative thinking. We also need to give children the tools to lead fully developed lives. The short answer of how to do all this is: add in the arts. *(continued on next page)*



Our Children and the Arts *(continued from page 1)*

The arts make a difference

The arts make a difference in a number of ways. First, they are an alternative way to teach basic skills. Different children take different roads—sometimes to the same destination.

What if the kids who don't want to read in class were given parts in a play and had to read and memorize several lines? Do you think the class cut-up would pass up the opportunity to put on a costume and makeup and prance around the stage singing a silly song? There's a reason they call it "play." Self-expression trumps multiplication tables in the hearts and minds of children. Kids have to learn key signatures, notation and mathematical intervals to sing in a chorus or play an instrument. They must develop eye-hand coordination to learn to play the piano. When children have mastered skills through play, they can apply them with much less effort to books.

The arts also bring imagination into kids' lives. They show kids how to think out of the box—a skill highly valued in everything from writing and speaking to business and science. Personal experience of song, music, dance and stories gives children new talents and interests; it also introduces them to our cultural heritage. A young mother told me that her one regret was that her own mother didn't make her take dance lessons. "I really wish I'd had that because I'd still have it," she said. "I'd also know more about dance and music." She is making sure that her own daughter takes dance lessons. Kids who sing and play instruments keep music in their lives forever.

Summer is a time to open your child up to arts opportunities that the schools no longer offer. I speak from experience. Even though I was raised at a time when schools still put on plays, extra classes in the arts made a difference.

My own mother relentlessly insisted on piano, drawing, dance, and singing lessons outside of school for her three daughters. Today, all three of us can read music and write stories and plays. My home is full of beautiful pastels (mine) and my sister Sally Ling is an accomplished (and published) writer, crafts person and musician. These abilities were not nurtured in school. They were developed outside the school day in lessons and summer camps. Summer camps like the one at the Center.

The Arts Gone Wild at the Center

The Center's summer camp, *The Arts Gone Wild*, offers summer day camps from June 9 until August 15. Kids from ages 6-12 can make rockets, be a star in their own variety show, learn Spanish and make a notebook of favorite recipes, produce abstract painting (without messing up your dining room), learn music fundamentals while playing the recorder, tie dye T-shirts, sing and dance, make fruit and veggie art, get really messy in art and create chaos (old clothes required, but no clean up at your house), learn and perform sleight-of-hand tricks, and much more.

There is even a pre-school camp for four and five year olds. Through storytelling, playing games, listening to music, singing, dancing and creating art projects, campers will discover dinosaurs, bugs, the ocean, the rainforest and more.

Let your child come home tired, exhilarated and happy from a day of activities where no criticism or grade is attached. Let your child make new friends outside of school. A child who might have had a difficult year at school can emerge from the summer a new and energized person.

You can select camps by the week. If financial need is an issue, please ask the Center about scholarship opportunities. Visit us at CarrollwoodCenter.org for which weeks most appeal to your youngster; you can enroll directly online.

Pat Keeley

■ Interview with Joshua Sussman

The Center's MAS Community Theatre will present *Sweet Charity* July 18-20 and July 25-27. The musical will be directed by Joshua Sussman, who has acted and directed in productions around this area for four decades. *Centerpieces* recently interviewed Mr. Sussman about the show and his career.



Joshua and Petra Sussman

and the voice teacher, who is also an actress. The cast includes actors with whom I have worked before. I got the main characters of Charity, best friend Nicky and Elene.

Describe your experience with the Center and its staff.

Both my wife and I originally volunteered as ushers. It's a terrific facility with outstanding people. They are very supportive and I am looking forward to a pleasurable experience.

What would you say are your major successes? Who were your role models and why?

I've been in the industry for over 40 years while living in and around Tampa. I've done seven productions of *Fiddler on the Roof* because I have a very distinctive look. I've been in *Guys & Dolls* five times and four times in *Man of La Mancha*. I've done lots of musicals. My favorite dramatic piece is *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* where I had the role of "Big Daddy." I have also been in *The Man who Came to Dinner*. My role models are actors Gene Hackman and Philip Seymour Hoffman—they made the craft of acting look natural. I also like Paul Muni. For directors, it would be J. Hughley and Jerry Grayson who has been a repeat character on *Law & Order*. I worked with him both as an actor and director.

How do you perceive the importance and influence of the arts in the Bay Area?

Everything is influenced by the arts—architecture, geometry...all crafts and design facets come from art. I also taught a class to visually impaired children; it helped them learn how to interact with people.

What's next for you and do you have any words of encouragement for aspiring directors?

I will be doing a piece for an auction at American Stage's opening of *The Wiz*. I also do stained glass and copper sculpture and have participated in the Renaissance Festival for 15 years. I'm going to do some reading for StageWorks. As a director, I want to keep people's interest and am open to acting roles as well even though I'm semi-retired.

I have a few words for aspiring directors. Casting is very important. A director should also respect the people you are working with at all times. However, there is only one director who makes the final decision. That said, I'm reasonable and open to innovative suggestions. One more thing, with regard to the creative process: ...let it grow...

Janet Bucknor

"Everything is influenced by the arts—architecture, geometry...all crafts and design facets come from art."

-Joshua Sussman, director of *Sweet Charity*

CP: What was the inspiration that caused you to direct this play? How would you describe the play?

JS: I performed in the show twice and did two characters in two different theatres. The music is wonderful and it being a book written by Neil Simon says it all. The play is set in Central Park in 1966. At the start of the play there are people in the park with signs like "Free Charity." It's all about a girl looking for true love who works as a dancer in a run-down dance hall. Her character is innocent and naïve as evidenced by telling her boyfriend that she has \$230+ in her purse and he proceeds to steal her money and then the adventure begins...

What was the audition process like for you and what were some of the characteristics you were looking for in the various roles for the cast?

When looking for cast there are three elements for an actor/actress: to be able to sing, dance and act with energy and natural humor. I'm very happy with the wonderful musical director

■2014 Summer Concert Series

Watch for these great shows coming in the summer:

Girls Night Out Comedy Show

May 30 • 8 p.m.

Our annual Girls Night Out comedy show features an all-girl line-up with three hilarious women: headliner Traci "the princess of parodies" Kanaan, feature comedienne Catherine Maloney and emcee Mary Tischbein.

Motown Heat with the Sounds of Soul

June 14 • 8 p.m.

They're back! Join us for one of the hottest shows in town. The Sounds of Soul return to the Center to debut their new summer show: Motown Heat.

Paul Tanner, singer-impersonist

June 27 • 8 p.m.

Singer-impersonist Paul Tanner is a consummate entertainer who has amazed audiences from Las Vegas to Broadway and around the globe. His show is jam-packed with impressions: from Neil Diamond to Tom Jones and Johnny Cash to Elvis.

Nashville Storytellers

August 29 • 8 p.m.

You know their songs...but do you know the stories behind some of country music's most clever hits? Join us for a concert with the songwriters Tony Haselden and George Teren and hear the history behind the songs they wrote for some of country music's biggest stars.



■Find your Center

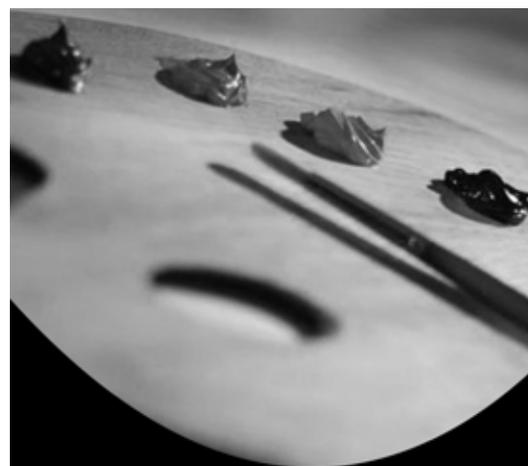
Please join us for our next open house on Wednesday, September 3 from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. You will have an opportunity to learn about the exciting classes coming this fall and meet with some of our teachers.

Dancing with Devora

Devora Howard, one of the Center's newest instructors, is an expert in jazz, modern, Latin, sports and other dances, as well as in choreography. Devora has been an actor, dancer, dance coach and choreographer. She can teach you any kind of dance you want to learn. Sign up for a class...and if you don't see the dance you want, let us know! When we have multiple requests, we'll put together a class.

Getting Centered with Sharon

Sharon Orbin has been with the Center since 2008. She is not only the instructor of one of the Center's most popular classes (well, make that *three* of the Center's most popular classes: Gentle Hatha Yoga, Hatha Flow Yoga and Power Yoga) she is also the instructor of the Center's preschool camp program.



Find your Center.

Open House & Class Preview
Wed., Sept. 3 • 6:30—8 p.m.



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■ "Spring"—What a Glorious Word!

Spring is a glorious season everywhere, and it's worth a few minutes to consider the many meanings of this name for the happiest season of year. Spring as a name for the season appeared in English about 1400, replacing Lent, and comes from the Old English verb *springen*, meaning the action of rising or bursting forth. The word described the movement of water out of the earth, the way it bubbles forth from hidden streams. The verb became generalized into a name for the time of year when plants burst forth in new life.

Like the season it represents, the word spring has a reservoir of energy and positive force associated with it. Spring as a verb conveys upward movement; springiness is to be resilient or elastic. Spring is a word of action. It could never be described as passive. It brings to mind vigor, upward motion, strength, buoyancy, power, quickness (which leads to the word quickening, the motion of life in the womb).

Think how we use the verb springing — to mean a leap, a sudden change, a bound, a bounce, a jump, a surprise — almost always out of the status quo, almost always positive. We spring into the air, we spring a party for someone, we spring for a change, we spring to someone's defense, we spring to attention, we spring for a new dress.

We use spring with an underlying meaning of a new beginning, a rebirth. Hope springs eternal. We spring to life. Thoughts spring to mind. We may not be a spring chicken, but we can have a spring in our step.

If we focus on spring's meaning of a stream, you can envision that our bodies are comprised of 75% water...a life-giving source and the majority of the earth's surface. A spring is perhaps the most intimate and refreshing of our many natural sources of water: close at hand, delightfully in motion, continually renewed, pure, cool and a joy to the senses.

The Spring season puts us in such a cheerful frame of mind. We get spring fever. We start thinking of spring break, spring cleaning, spring forward (as in Daylight Savings Time). Plants, animals and humans all feel the need to spring into action. We spruce up our homes and yards because — take a guess — it's SPRING!!!!

Spring is such a delight it even crosses over to our taste buds...spring rolls anyone? The list goes on but I will leave you with this thought-provoking quote by Arthur Rubenstein: "The seasons are what a symphony ought to be: four perfect movements in harmony with each other." We appreciate Spring as perhaps the most perfect of all.

Janet Bucknor



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Joy

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