



Ahh...Assisi...Subud Gathering 2022...What an Event!

Words and pictures from Ashwin Rajaraman...



Amazing ceiling in the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi. Brothers and sisters from 37 countries assembled in Assisi during Oct-Nov to give the feeling of being in a mini Subud world congress.

Assisi, a perfect setting for a Subud gathering

Assisi, beloved city of God, by itself is a spiritual and holy city. I felt it was a perfect setting for a Subud gathering of this nature. For those who think St. Francis has left this place long ago, one has to only walk to the chapel next door from the venue to feel his presence or what he did to this delectable city in the hills.

Or trace his roots in Assisi visiting the paths he trod long ago – all the magic is still alive and so is the peacefulness, serenity and a feeling of bliss. Assisi is blessed and is indeed a place of bliss to this day. I felt blessed and peaceful to be here, a special place no doubt.

If that was not enough, then the venue was downright perfect – everything was in place, there >

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were a lot of rooms and dining areas and meeting spaces, including a theatre for performances and talks, apart from nature and trees and open spaces to sit, chat, loiter and generally chill out.

“ Assisi was all I hoped it would be...”

Domus Pacis was indeed a perfect venue for a gathering of this size and though everyone could not be accommodated here – there were over 400 brothers and sisters from around the world who had come as participants – it was a perfect setting in a perfect city to witness the event that followed. Prices were reasonable, the food was good, and it was spic and span and clean too. There was indeed nothing to complain about the venue or its environs.



The chapel next door to Domus Pacis.



An artist at work in Assisi – St. Francis is everywhere.

The event itself was a grand success, brilliantly held and put together by Hannah De Roo (HDR) and her dedicated team – I said as much to her in one word at the closing ceremony – brilliant work HDR – it is amazing what a small, dedicated team can do, and it showed! This was one of the best organised Subud meetings I ever went to and everything, including the meetings, went like clock-work. But I am getting ahead of myself here...

Visa, travel, arrival, registration and start...

I had to come to Assisi via Switzerland as a tourist since there were no dates available in my country for the rest of the year for issue of a visa to Italy directly. Other Subud members from many countries too faced similar problems, some having to come via Portugal for instance. Three flights and 26 hours later I landed in Rome to be met by the ever-smiling Sara at the airport lounge where there were many brothers and sisters waiting, who had all arrived at different times and were waiting for the shuttle.

The shuttle brought us to Assisi in about 3 hours and we registered at the desk, manned by the ever-smiling Ruth Taylor and a tired but enthusiastic HDR and again at the hotel reception desk for the room and moved to our rooms quite comfortably. This was Day 0, the day of arrivals and registration and meet and greet and dinner. Many were perhaps tired, and I went to bed early to be fresh in the morning for the eventful days to follow. There were four shuttles that day bringing people till past midnight.

The event began with Bapak's Talk 70 ROM 1 and latihans for men and women followed by ice breaking activities,



Action Agenda from Joint Wings Meeting.

small group meetings and open house sessions of the respective wings and kejiwaan sessions for the delegates.

It was the first day, tentative to start with, many having met each other in person after years and it took a day to get to know each other, set agendas and priorities and there was general camaraderie and bon homie all round. That day my time was spent with the SDIA Teams of Zones 3 and 4 to discuss, agree and to execute plans for the event over the next few days, including presentations, open house, etc.

The formal opening ceremony followed with the two hosts HDR and Salamah welcoming everyone and ensuring all participants were noticed by all – the event had



Opening Ceremony – the hosts welcome all.

formally begun if ever there was a need for one in the first place. Cultural performances in the theatre rounded up the evening / night as we gently imbued the atmosphere of friendship and brotherly / sisterly love. A rousing performance by Louiza was the highlight of the evening, an amazing and gifted voice, rendering soul stirring music all by herself. Kudos sister, way to go!

Events, Programs, Fun and Friendship

Days and events passed by one after the other in clockwork precision. Some days were full and others not. There were many parallel sessions to choose from with one's own priorities as well. Every evening there was a cultural event or two and days started and ended with latihans. In between were testing and other kejiwaan sessions interspersed with business and delegate activities.

The Wings had their own programs and presentations and group meetings and charted out their course in relatively leisurely fashion while elsewhere it was hectic. The International Helpers worked overtime and there were presentations by MSF, SDIA (in two separate sessions, ably handled by Vincent Mount and Viktor Boehm), SEA, SIHA, SICA, SYA and WCOT among others with special meetings for World Congress Resolutions and Two separate sessions for Joint Wings Activities.

In addition, SICA had their AGM in parallel and in conjunction and the Youth had their own thing going and priorities to sort out. Zones 3 and 4 meetings and Delegate sessions ran parallel for a couple of days.

Some days I was running from pillar to post just to catch up and be on important meetings and



Suyono and Rusdi at World Congress Presentation.

on others, a little dazed by lack of sleep and constant activity of one thing or other. But it was fun, and there was a lot I gained in those days, perspectives gleaned, and friendships made while renewing bonds with those whom I knew earlier. It was hectic and busy and enjoyable and satisfying on many levels, at least for me.

It was not all work and no play. We did take a day off to see the sights of Assisi and Perugia and UNESCO heritage sites and villages. Five or Six buses took off in two different directions to two different places. I chose landscape, nature and Perugia and came away stunned having seen at close quarters what Italy could achieve once upon a time, long, long ago. And then >

we went back to meetings and agendas and kejiwaan and testing in the following days to round up what was a truly memorable event and gathering.

The agenda was interwoven skillfully with workshops galore of every kind – be it ball room dancing or clay modelling, playing soccer or training your voice, human culture or listening with love, there was one for everyone and it was only your appetite or the time that you had at your disposal that prevented one from sampling it all in one go.



Bus tour to Perugia.

SICA showcased art, too.>



Concerts, Closing Ceremony and Goodbyes

Very soon, it was time to wind up and leave and say goodbyes but not before renewing long lost friendships, forging new ones and promises of keeping in touch and in contact. A grand finale was still in store for us, and Frances Madden wowed the audience with her superlative performance and consummate skill that elevated the concert to great heights.

A rousing start by Louiza and what a finish by Frances! Not to forget all the other artistes in between, who performed every day, meticulously planned by SICA and Rusydah and who all performed for free – with great skill and unwavering enthusiasm. Great Cultural Showcase to say the very least.

The closing ceremony brought the curtains down in the first week of November and meticulous planning and logistics were still in place to ferry brothers and sisters back to Rome airport in several shuttles as before (during arrival).

Yours truly took a week off to see LDV's Last Supper in Milan, MA's David in Florence and MA's Sistine Chapel Frescoes and the Pieta in St. Peter's in the Vatican and to savor the Eternal City (Rome) before heading back to Switzerland for the return journey home. From the beloved city of God to the eternal city and everything Subud in between, what more can one really ask? It was a blessed time for me, and I really enjoyed every moment of it – it was fun, friendship, travel and Subud work all rolled into one

Thank you all, from the Zones 3 and 4 to make this event happen. Thank you HDR and Salamah and the entire organizing team for your untiring efforts, meticulous planning, and flawless execution. And a big thank you to the SDIA Team who helped put up a great show and showcased several outstanding SDIA projects to the Subud world.

Not to forget the ever-smiling International Helpers who went out of the way to do some critical organizational testing (in addition to their usual duties) at very short notice, which hopefully would pave the way for closer Wings interaction and improve the relationship between the Wings and WSA

Summing up and last thoughts:

Assisi was all I hoped it would be... Assisi proved that we can and must hold these Subud Gatherings at least once a year somewhere in the world... Assisi showed what is possible with a small >

“ *Assisi proved that we can and must hold these Subud gatherings at least once a year somewhere in the world...* ”

but dedicated team... Assisi renewed hope and positive enthusiasm for the future... Assisi showcased talents, skills, projects, people, and a positive attitude to all things in life... Assisi was heavenly and blissful, a blessed and holy place, a perfect setting for a Subud gathering... Assisi helped forge brotherly love, lasting friendships, and a feeling of unity in following the Latihan... Assisi was fun, enjoyable, full of life and an experience to cherish for a lifetime...

To see some videos from Assisi Gathering go to ASSISI SUBUD GATHERING: Ilene Pevac presents her SDIA project <https://youtu.be/uYLVGNFiX6Q>

ASSISI SUBUD GATHERING: Frances Madden from Australia sings <https://youtu.be/cPyxvchPyHk>

ASSISI SUBUD GATHERING: Closing Ceremony Choir sings to participants <https://youtu.be/Kt06CTOAz7Q>

ASSISI SUBUD GATHERING: Clay Modelling Workshop <https://youtu.be/be4E5JVal7U>

ASSISI BROCHURE with complete day wise agenda and complete list of participants country wise :-) <https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Assisi-2022.pdf>

For more photos and videos go to SUBUD ASSISI 2022 – Google Drive

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qGbPtKtH51toZLPIZFd0j_RcgiRaHctP?usp=sharing



Frances Madden wowed the audience.



Closing Ceremony – Choir sings to us.

Is Ashwin on holiday?' queried a sister... >



Seasons Greetings from the Editor

Is there a difference between being smart and being wise? Harris writes...

What? Christmas already? No, it can't be! Where did the year go? What happened?

Well, one thing that happened to me was I got flooded in. Yes, back in February we had very heavy rains leading to the worst floods ever in our area in northern New South Wales, Australia.

The Tweed River flooded and washed away the causeway which is our only way of getting out from where I live. For nine days we were flooded in. We had helicopters dropping bananas and raw milk being sent across the river on some wire contraption.

That was one of the things that happened in the flood. People who were previously inconspicuous or marginalised in the community was suddenly the stars, because they still had those old bush pioneering skills that enable people to cope with any disaster.

So, someone rigged up a structure of bamboo poles that enabled us to cross the river at last. You couldn't drive on bamboo poles of course, but you could walk out and do some shopping.

But of course, our floods do not compare with the floods that other people had. A whole third of Pakistan was flooded and millions of people who already had nothing, lost everything. And the story of flood was repeated all around the world.

So, the scientific consensus links these "unusual weather events" to global warming as the result of human actions such as burning coal. Of course, there are people who deny this. Even in Subud we have global warming deny-ers. (Merry Christmas, Tony!). Nevertheless, the consensus of scientific and political and economic opinion around the world is that we are in deep trouble regarding the condition of the planet.

As the year 2022 comes towards an end, there have been these important global summits and forums all around the world. Our Prime Minister has just been to 3 such events in quick succession.

At one of these summits a new decision was taken which is that all us developing countries should now start paying compensation to poorer nations for all the effects of climate change that we have unleashed upon them.

Sometimes, you can look at the world, and you can think to yourself, the world is grossly unbalanced in that there are certain nations which are doing fairly well, are still prosperous and reasonably stable. Of course, the ripples from the appalling war in Ukraine are reaching out to affect us all, no matter how far from the conflict we are.

Nevertheless, the massive droughts and famines which still seem to afflict so many countries in Africa are much worse than anything we are currently experiencing. So, sometimes you look at this gross imbalance in the world, and you think, if we really tried couldn't we really solve this problem. If we were just more intelligent, and less selfish, and less greedy, and less concerned with ourselves, couldn't we come up with solutions?

And so, we come back to Subud and the latihan. We are trying to be wise. We are trying to be less influenced by our lower forces. Bapak advised us about this in talk after talk after talk.

Christmas of course symbolises the dream that the world can become a better place. The birth of Jesus is a sign of the possibility of something new and helpful coming into the world. Every year we are hopeful but sometimes hope seems elusive. The results always out of reach. But still we hope. Still, we have the vision of something new and better coming into the world, the unexpected grace of God.

The year ended on a very positive note for Subud with the gathering that was held in Assisi. I hope you will enjoy the material we have included in this issue about this wonderful event. Another positive was when I received some correspondence from Emmanuel Aronie who was responsible for bringing Subud to Ukraine. Now, when other people are fleeing Ukraine from the appalling war, Emmanuel has gone back. This seemed to me to be a very courageous and visionary act. You can read about it in this issue. There are many other good things as well in this issue. Raquel Alcobia from Portugal has become one of our regular correspondents and she has written a long article about another moment of hope and vision, the creation of Amanecer in Columbia.

And then we have a number of very good stories with a Christmas flavour. And something we have never had before, a Christmas trivia quiz.

And so, we hope this issue will hope you have a Merry Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year. Thank you very much to all who have supported us through the year with your readership, your financial support, your excellent contributions to the magazine and your prayers and goodwill. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year. We give thanks to Almighty God that we have been able to continue to produce the magazine. And we give thanks to Bapak who bought us the gift of the latihan.



Angel of Peace by Rohana Darlington.

Harris, Marcus and Kitka ●

Life Here Is So Sharp

By Emmanuel Aronie, who is currently living in Cherkassy in The Ukraine...



*Each broken window and broken heart
Each shattered wall and shattered life...*

Life Here is So Sharp,
It cuts like a knife,
Everybody's on edge,
An edge so sharp,
Tears come quickly
Harsh actions, moments away,
It comes from all angles,
It cuts in beauty and agony.

A granny from a village,
Just liberated,
Cries joyful Tears,
She can emerge safely now,
Speak her own language,
And hug a nearby soldier.
Why? He's Ukrainian ! And, so is she !

Another life,
A distraught wife,
With fresh news from the front,
Wails in pain, cries inconsolably,
Her husband and the father of her children
Is gone forever,
An old widow looks on,
Wants to come closer and help,
Such is the razor's edge,
That makes all that came before
Dull, drab and forgettable.

It's simple –
Like a bomb or a pair of scissors.
Suffering is terrible, inescapable,
It lives everywhere, with no exceptions.
It describes us human beings,
After a bomb has exploded
And we are hauled into surgery,
Under the knife,
In a field hospital somewhere,
A medic dresses our wounds,
Maybe dulls the pain,
Sponges up the blood,⁷
Applies ointment that
Holds things together.

Urban courtyards
Once full of swings, whirlygigs
And noisy kids,
Yelling their joyful nonsense,
Now sit dormant,
Maybe a few oldsters
Chat on a bench quietly,
Many residents are long gone,
To the West and further

Out of harm's way,
Unless they stayed for some reason
Holed up in cold apartments
Or dank hideous basements.

Who would have thought
We'd be in this awful place ?
And it will surely get worse
Before it gets better,
Troops huddle in trenches,
Waiting to use their weapons,
Hold-out villagers, refusing to leave,
Too many years of life and habit,
Or just plain calculation,
Keeps them in place,
With their precious few jars of food,
All bodies trembling to the music of cold,
As winter waves her icy wand,
And the world looks on,
Everyone, everywhere,
Almost voyeurs,
Watching their luminous screens,
In armchairs or comfortable couches,
With all the comforts, coffee, tea ?
But no, they, you and me,
All have hearts, don't we ?
Hearts that care for one another ?
Though it's clear
Rockets, artillery, bullets and bombs
Don't give a rat's ass –
They simply create mayhem,
They land, explode, cut, shred,
Penetrate, smash and dismember,
Empty of feeling.

And the war plods on,
A hungry avaricious monster,
Drooling over each disastrous day,
Each broken window and broken heart,
Each shattered wall and shattered life,
Each caved-in building, caved-in hope for
peace,
Life abandoned, haphazard, what a mess !
1000's of vehicles scattered chaotically,
And each human face,
With a "why?" etched on it.
Life here is so sharp -
It cuts like a knife –
And, if there's a pause,
A break in the action,
The daily sirens are close by,
Ready to return us
To the razor's edge –
Life Here is So Sharp.

October 26, 2022

Day-to-Day Life in the Ukraine

Emmanuel Aronie is living in Ukraine in the Cherkassy Subud house. Here he writes of day-to-day life in this war-torn country...

I came to Ukraine via a Humanitarian Transport arranged by Halim Korzybski and driven by his very charming and highly intelligent cousin, Martha, whose husband is a Ukrainian soldier. She is Polish. Photo attached of the two of them. She had a letter from a high-ranking military person, and we got through the border in a record 15 minutes.

Fast forward- I got dropped off at the Lviv Central train station and took an overnight train to Kyiv. After spending two days with a Subud couple, the Gerzhinas, Andrii and Feodora, old friends, I proceeded by luck to Cherkassy with old Subud pals, Benedikt and Ivan.

So, I have been here at the Subud House in Central Cherkassy since mid-August, 10 weeks or so.

The day-to-day here has changed a bit, since when I arrived I promptly hurt myself doing some construction work with a Subud brother and inflamed my right sciatic nerve, giving me serious pains from right hip to right foot. This took 6 weeks to heal almost completely, 95% well now. I have now been walking without a cane for about 2 weeks.

My intention when I came here was to rent a place and live somewhere permanently in Ukraine, since I just sold my house in Massachusetts. But, after the injury, I had only the intention to get well. At the moment, I am almost back to normal and will be looking for a place.

In the meantime...

I have a cozy little bedroom here at the Subud House and get to do a lot of latihan, especially lately, since we try to do latihan simultaneously with the Zonal meeting going on in Assisi. This is quite nice. We also do lots of testing of all kinds.

For the last month or more, there have been Air-raid alert sirens at least twice a day. I attach an audio file I recorded back in September. This is a little disconcerting, knowing I could be blown to bits at any moment.

Yet, I feel like the chances of this are about as likely as meeting a penguin chewing gum on roller skates tomorrow morning, not likely. (But note, there are now, many, many soldiers, mostly men, in uniform, roaming around, many on leave or short vacations from the front. This is new.)

However, other people here are far more perturbed than I and have various kinds of mild to severe anxiety about this. But I just carry on, immediately diving into life here. I have started teaching Conversational English here at the Subud House on Saturday afternoon and twice a week by Zoom with a 15-year-old Ukrainian refugee living in Warsaw, formerly from Kyiv.

I also help moderate on Sunday afternoons with an English language Movie Club. Our last 4 films: *Men in Black 3*, *Nebraska*, *Casablanca* and *Young Frankenstein*. Here I am with some of the Sunday film devotees.

When I came here, I had no intention of writing anything except a screenplay I've been working on. However, I have been pregnant and giving birth to political poetry since I arrived, now with four poems I actually like, along with my usual diary drivel.

I have been trying to get these published back in the



“ I just carry on, immediately diving into life here... ”

USA, without success, so far. But, as my cousin Al often says, "Nothing Beats a Failure but a Try". So, continue trying. This is some of what I do in coffee shops.

“ We all have precious little time here and it's our job to wake up and make the best of it...”

The sirens again...

We all have precious little time, here on this mortal coil and it's our job to wake up as much as possible and make the best of it.

As I write these words, 10:08 in the evening on the 2nd of November, I hear the sirens again. They usually blast for a minute or two. I laugh, but it is a little haunting, knowing that somewhere in Ukraine, rockets have been caught on radar and will either be shot out of the sky (80+% of the time) or explode somewhere. That's disconcerting.

Other stuff - I like to sit in coffee shops, sit and write or read. Lately, I have been learning Ukrainian, from dual language books, Robert Louis Stevenson, in English and Ukrainian. I am semi fluent in Russian, but far behind in Ukrainian, so, that's also part of my day-to-day.

Walking about in the streets here in autumn, during a war, is a real education, seeing war or not on people's faces. Most of the time, people here are quite normal, mother's with little kids, teenagers on scooters, people buying stuff, strolling about on their daily missions.

Whenever possible, I interact with people and take the 'pulse' of life, or not. Sometimes, I just chat up a salesperson while buying a scarf or some boots or meet a musician playing on the street..

People like hearing a different version of their language. My accent, though I can't 'hear' it, is obviously foreign. Sometimes, when someone wants to hear what a Texas accent is like, I'll speak Russian with a Texas accent, which is funny, even for me.



What else ? I love the uniqueness of Ukraine and the feeling here. 3 of my 4 grandparents came from Ukraine. The 4th was born in Vilnius, Lithuania. So, there's a baked-in comfort for me here. The food, the air, the trees, the people, all very familiar.

There is also the sense of community here. See, our typical little tea party group, after latihan.

Lately some of us have been having a sauna Fridays at Sasha's place. In the photograph, we are, from left to right: Ivan, Benedikt, Sasha and myself.

It's a small but very powerful sauna, with very challenging (high) temperature, usually between 85 and 100° C. It's true. I personally monitor the thermometer. No, I don't know how it's possible. I do know it's the hottest room I've ever been in (average sit time is between 3 - 10 minutes.)



Sirens just sounded...

Subud sister Sofia just brought me a 'bulochka s makom", a baked loaf (bulochka) filled with (s) poppy seeds (makom) my favorite, I add a bit more.

I now make my super oatmeal, designed to make a superman out of a mouse - a dazzling array of ingredients - base of millet, buckwheat and oatmeal. Then, I add fruit, seeds and nuts, today, apple, fig, sweetened cranberry, date, almond, pumpkin seed and the little tiny ones that make you even more regular, psyllium seeds.

To read some more recent correspondence from Ukraine with Emmanuel, click <https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ARONIE.pdf>

Sirens

By Emmanuel Aronie



Click here to hear how it sounds to be in the Ukraine:

https://youtu.be/KnWuoJp_1mo

I hear sirens,
Waaaah, waaaah, waaah,
I feel the “boom !!”,
the boom of a bomb,
the boom of a rocket exploding,
shrapnel, glass, blood, bones,
walls, shrieking, moaning, shock.
My friend tells me
that earlier this year,
March, April, maybe
there were 6, 8 or even 10
siren alarms, daily,
when 1000's upon 1000's of people –
descended into bomb shelters,
old, young, very young,
with all their things –
food, water, blankets, coffee, tea,
probably even bottles to pee in.
Can you imagine ?
Each time they descended,
to the bomb shelters,
scattered around the city,
and stayed there,
until the “All Clear”.
Cain killed Abel
over a pot of beans,
killed him in a passion, no doubt,
over a stinking pot of beans,
and then,
he wandered off, crazed,
into the wilderness.
Adam and Eve,
as legend tells us,
then produced a third son, Seth.
Then Seth,
with many women
from God knows where
began to populate the earth.
And here we are now,
once again,
brother against brother,
the same as before,
it's just a different pot of beans.
Where's the end of this madness ?
Where's the peace ?
Where's our Seth ?
No one knows.
It's out of control
and no one really knows
what to do.
Can you imagine?
God help us,
I hear sirens..

Cherkassy, Ukraine, November 3, 2022

Tickled Pink – A Portrait of Patricia

The editor writes,,,

Rohana Darlington has become something a good fairy or angel in my life as she not only frequently writes and illustrates excellent articles for this magazine, but she also has a gift for bringing people together.

Recently she wrote to me about a young Ukrainian artist who has been displaced by the conflict in the Ukraine and is currently living in Germany. Her name is Anastasia Yakovtsova, although she also has a nickname Nastya Happy and is happy to be known by either. Rohana wrote to me about her efforts to find ways of supporting Anastasia through her art.

Recently she suggested Anastasia as a portrait painter to her relative Rod Lewis who wished to have a portrait made in memory of his dear wife Patricia. This is what Rohana wrote to me about her recent visit to Rod...

Yesterday my husband Mashud and I visited the home of my daughter-in-law Jane's father Rod who recently lost his wife Patricia of 61 years happy marriage after her death from Alzhiemers.

Rod asked me, as I was an artist, did I know anyone who could paint him a portrait of Patricia and so I immediately recommended Anastasia Happy, the Ukrainian Subud member artist who had to flee to Germany from Kiev last year.

She specialises in portraiture from photos, so I put him in touch with her and so yesterday I saw Anastasia's painting of Patricia for the first time. It's really beautiful, a very good likeness and he's had it framed in a gold frame and hung opposite his sofa in his living room so he can see it all the time.

When Jane saw it, she liked it so much she encouraged Rod to commission a second portrait of Patricia from an earlier time of their marriage to be hung in his bedroom so he could see her when he went to bed.

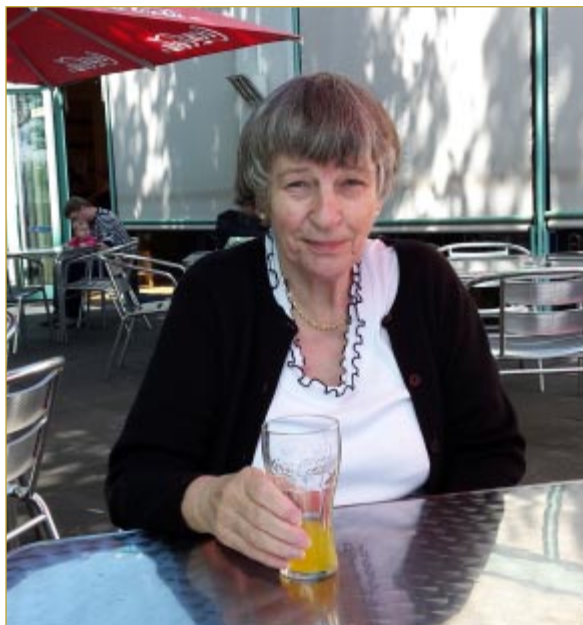
So, Anastasia has agreed to paint a second portrait which should be ready in another two weeks. So today I emailed Anastasia to let her know how good her painting looks and to ask her how she is.

Subsequently Rod wrote to me...

I wanted a better reminder of Patricia than just photographs. I asked Rohana because she is a talented artist herself. She immediately told me about Anastasia and put us in touch. We exchanged several emails in which we discussed which of several photographs to choose for the work. Anastasia writes good English so there were no language difficulties.

I followed her advice on the photograph, how to change the background and how to change the colour of the clothes to better suit the colour co-ordination of the whole. In all things she was absolutely right. I think Anastasia has a great ability to understand the character and fine detail about the subject of the portrait.

This has all resulted in the really beautifully painted work of art I now have. To me, it is amazing >



The original photograph from which the portrait was produced.



Portrait of Patricia
by Anastasia Yakovtsova.

how well Anastasia has captured the fine details of the face, hair and particularly the eyes.

When I look at the portrait it seems to exude Patricia's character in a way no photograph can ever do. She has captured that character and the cheeky smile beautifully. Above all, I feel that when I look into the eyes, I am actually looking into Patricia's soul. I shall never tire of looking at this portrait and I cannot thank Anastasia enough and Rohana for making the introduction."

[Finally, some words from the artist herself. From a message to Rohana...](#)

I am so much happy reading emails from You! Of course, I don't mind this to appear in Subud Voice. On the contrary, I am very grateful for Your help, and Harris' and Rod's. You gave me this wonderful opportunity

Sorry, sometimes I am very busy and cannot even reply fast.. But, of course, I have time for painting and drawing, so the second portrait is in process. Nearly done

If You have any more question, please let me know. I will try to reply as soon as possible!!!!
Have a wonderful day...

[A final word from Rod...](#)

I do hope the inclusion of this portrait brings benefit to your readers and particularly helps Anastasia in her career. If Patricia knew what was happening, she would be "tickled pink" as the English say!!

So, anyone wishing to commission art can contact Nastya at hnastya985@gmail.com

Help Sustain SEF – \$32 Left in the Kitty

Rasunah Marsden, Chair of the Subud Education Association and Arnaud Delune, Chair of the Subud Education Fund committee, write....

The Subud Education Fund (SEF) was created in 2010 as a joint initiative of The Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace (GHFP) and the Muhammad Subud Foundation (MSF) to help build a strong future for Subud in the world and to ensure that Subud children and youth would be able to further their educational objectives.

Originally, The Subud Education Fund (SEF) was part of the WSA Care Support Programme but, in 2017, this function was reduced and then in 2018, disbanded. Instead, when the WSA approved the creation of the Subud Education Association (SEA) under the umbrella of SDIA, SEA revived the Subud Education Fund to help respond to the ongoing educational needs of our association.

The Subud Education Fund committee is chaired by Arnaud Delune and their monthly meetings are attended by a dedicated team of Subud Educators from the Subud Education Association (SEA) who facilitate the selection of completed applications and liaise with other national organisations: in various countries, the SEF Committee liaises with either the Subud National Committee or the Dewan of National Helpers, or the SD Organisation, whichever group is willing to assist with the monitoring and assessment of applicants within their countries.

Importantly, if you are an educator with an interest in



SURTINA RAMADHANI is from the Grade 10 Vocational School in Madiun, Central Java. Surtina with her English knowledge acquired when at BCU School, chose to take Tourism as her major to be able to share the beauty of Indonesia to tourists.

Pictured here as she received her SILVER AWARD for English in a national language competition. She recently also won the GOLD MEDAL for English during a National Independence Day Competition.

furthering SEF activities through joining the SEF committee, or would like to receive additional information about SEF procedures, please contact Hadrian Pollard, CEO of SEA at hadrian.pollard@gmail.com

During the school year 2021 -2022, the SEF was fortunate to be able to distribute grants for a total amount of USD 13,397 to twenty-eight students including four primary school children, ten secondary school students, ten university students and four vocational training or professional improvement cases. SEF received applications for educational support from Columbia, the DRC, Ecuador, India and Indonesia. Eleven applications did not receive a positive response either for not completing the SEF application or after unfavourable testing by the IHS. However, some former and current beneficiaries have become deeply involved in both Subud and SD organisations.

To date, SEF grants are reserved for Subud members and their direct family members. Donors can send donations that are ear-marked for the Subud Education Fund either through their national Susila Dharma associations in several countries (see countries listed at: <https://susiladharm.org/about-sdia>), or through the Susila Dharma International Association at <https://susiladharm.org>

For the school year of 2021-2022, SEF received \$5,000 from the MSF, \$5,000 from the WSA and \$3,429 from various donors for a total amount of \$13,429. As of November 2022, **all funds but \$32** have been distributed, and the new school year has begun!

As a result, the SEF committee appeals to all Subud members to support our Subud Education Fund, either through your Subud National Committees or the SD National Organisations. Where SD is a registered charity in various countries, donors will receive a Tax Deductible Receipt, whereas Subud organizations have charitable status in only a few countries.

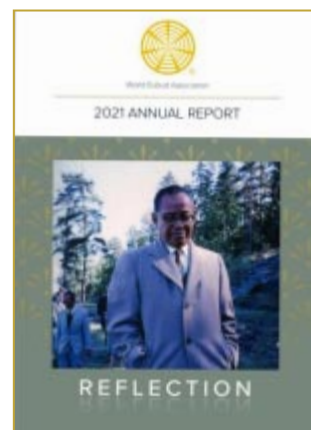
Please assist with making the SEF fund sustainable and accessible to Subud members or their family members who would otherwise be unable to continue their educational pursuits without your support. Encourage your committees to post our request in their newsletters or SD organizations. As mentioned, funds ear-marked for the Subud Education Fund can be sent via your national Susila Dharma organization or via the Susila Dharma International Association.

Thanking you in advance on behalf of our deserving students. ●

WSA Annual Report

Dear World Subud Council Members,
The WSA presents the 2021 Annual Report. Thank you to the contributors, the translators (Paloma de la Viña, Joseph Delcourt, and Arifin DwiSlamet), and a special thanks to Ruth Taylor for orchestrating the entire production. With warmest regards, Pudji Wahjuni Purbo, WSA Administrator/Secretary
18-24 [wsa.secretary \(at\) subud \(dot\) org](mailto:wsa.secretary@subud.org). [pudji.purbo \(at\) subud \(dot\) org](mailto:pudji.purbo@subud.org)

CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL WSA 2021 ANNUAL REPORT
https://mcusercontent.com/e62d63a0a69f6fa97e93b80f6/files/bfeffd9-5c1b-7f7671aac5f954f7e364/WSA_2021_Annual_Report.pdf



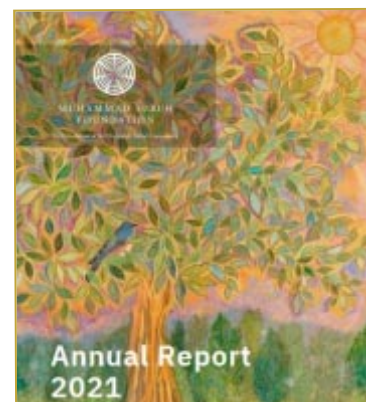
MSF Annual Report

CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL MSF ANNUAL REPORT 2021

https://mcusercontent.com/e62d63a0a69f6fa97e93b80f6/files/dd70c2497d46-b5e08523-5d17cf58870a/MSF_Annual_Report_2021.pdf

MSF OPEN PRESENTATIONS

December 3rd, 2022 at 09:00 a.m. EST & 19:00 p.m. EST
Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82089897508>
Meeting ID: 820 8989 7508: Passcode: 184566



ALL BECAUSE OF A 'TALKING' PALM TREE...

An homage to Amanecer

By Raquel Alcobia



Volunteers.

Thinking about the upcoming World Congress here in Rungan Sari, I started remembering another one, also in Subud land 29 years ago; Amanecer! Because Amanecer was “ours” the same way R.S is also “ours”, and for me personally, there is no feeling that can be compared with any of the other World Congresses we have had around the world since then.

That is why, for the ones that “have been there, did that” we all know what I am referring to, THE Content! And for the ones who never had that amazing experience, here is a bit of my personal history since Amanecer’s beginnings, until after the World Congress there.

Arriving in Portugal from South Africa in 1989, I started working at Muchtar & Othoman’s architectural office. I had been recently opened in Subud, when I heard the story of a ‘talking’ palm tree in the Quindio area near Armenia, the capital of the coffee area in the Central Andes.



“ Apparently, that palm had ‘said’ that the plot where she had been growing up on for many years, was the land that had been designated for Subud, and that she had been waiting for us to arrive there for a long time. ”

To read the complete article click here

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Amanecer.pdf>



Amanecer Sale

Dear WSC* Members,
(CC: Sharif Horthy, Garrett Thomson, MSF Team)

I would like to report that the Sale of the Gran Salon in Amanecer*, Colombia has been completed satisfactorily.

The process corresponded to a regular sale of a property in Colombia, that was purchased by GHFP* for USD 240,000.

The keys of the property were handed over to GHFP as new owners on Friday October 21, which corresponded to the final task performed by MSF on this process.

In this way, MSF has accomplished one of its main mandates during this term.

On behalf of the entire MSF team we thank the entire WSC for your support.

Finally, I would like to specially thank the GHFP team who contributed to the successful completion of this process, and send our best wishes for success for the projects that they have planned to develop in the Gran Salon.

Warm regards, Mauricio Castillo,
Chairperson Muhammad Subuh Foundation

www.msubuhfoundation.org

SUBUD GLOSSARY

*The WSC (World Subud Council) consists of the Chair of the World Subud Association (WSA), the chair of the Executive Team, the Zone Representatives (speaking through their zone representative), the International Helpers, and the Chairs or coordinators of the affiliates as well as the chair of the Muhammad Subuh Foundation. Here is a contact list of council members. https://subudworldnews.com/wsc_officers.html

The main function of the WSC is to represent Congress, i.e. the WSA member countries, between world congresses, as well as carry out World Congress directives. For more information, visit <https://www.subud.org/world-subud-council>

*Amanecer: Amanecer is a Subud Center in the municipality of Tebaida, Colombia. The 9th Subud World Congress in 1993 was held there.

*GHFP The Guerrand-Hermès (GHFP) was founded in 1995 by Simon Xavier Guerrand-Hermès, then a board member of Hermès International, and by Sharif Istvan Horthy, the grandson of Admiral Horthy (Regent of Hungary 1920-1944). The GHFP's mission is to promote and support peace, and a flourishing human future. Our objective is to facilitate processes that help true human qualities to develop in the world, and for our work to be inspired by these qualities. The GHFP works as a research institute, investigating areas of concern key to the advancement of our mission.

For more information, visit <https://ghfp.org/>

Christmas Cards 2022

Designed by SICA artist Rohana Darlington, these greeting cards are now available with 15% of each sale for SICA Britain funds to help develop other SICA artists projects. The cards are all 6" x 6" (15.5cm x 15.5cm) printed on white card with white envelopes, blank inside for your own message. They are sold in packs of 4 (of any of the 4 designs as requested) and are £10.00 per pack including postage and packing in a padded envelope. Please specify which designs you require. To order, please email Rohana at rohana@rohanadarlington.com so she can send you payment details. For orders outside the UK, the postage price will alter according to postage charges in different countries.

The designs are:



Angel of Peace



Dove of Peace



Home with the Holly



Choosing the Tree

An Incredible Christmas Present

Mardijah Simpson writes...

Late one Christmas Eve I had a strong feeling to go to church for the midnight service. I had not been to church for over 10 years.

As a child I had been taken regularly and as an adolescent I had yearned to get closer to some inner understanding I felt was just outside my grasp. At last, when I was 15 I had been prepared for confirmation; I had prayed so hard and earnestly!

Finally, the day came; in my white dress I went forward to be blessed by the Bishop full of expectancy, my head vivid with the New Testament account of the Pentecostal flame. The Bishop's hand, emerging from lace, was laid on my head I waited. I went back to my pew.

The service ended. Nothing was changed. I knew no more, I felt no more. So, time went on. I attended Holy Communion every other Sunday, early. I felt it was my fault I experienced no change, but that I must persevere.

So, I did, for two years. For all the outer ritual, no matter how I prayed or tried, there was nothing there for me.

I searched in other places, other religions: Quakers, Zen, Yoga, Gurdjieff and others; a brief taste and I always knew, "This is not my path; it is not changing me inside at all.

Then in my mid 20s, in Chelsea Public Library, I found *The Path of Subud* by Husein Rofe. As I read it I knew that everything I felt could be possible, was. I found the central London group and joined as simply as a fish being tipped back into a river after being trapped in a jam-jar.

So, after about four years of experiencing the grace of the latihan, I felt to go to church. I followed my feelings.

Chelsea Old Church is a small and simple church, beside the Thames, upstream from the centre of London. It was built at least 900 years ago. It had been quite badly damaged in the war but restored with love.

Walking along the embankment in the cool Christmas Eve night, I saw it lit up, golden light pouring from its windows. As I went inside I was amazed to find it was packed solid, I had to find a seat in the gallery.

The white walls shone, and the candelabra bathed everything with gold. The atmosphere was so alive and happy with family groups of all ages and a feeling of expectancy in the air.

The service started, the traditional Christmas carols and readings and prayers. There was no trace of the mournful, grey atmosphere of the dim, Gothic churches sparsely attended by a faded view I had remembered from years back. It was so light and happy.

Eventually the service reached a point where communion was offered to those that wished. I looked down from the gallery to the busy line of worshippers who waited to receive the sacrament. I was surprised, I had not expected communion to be at this service.

It was so long since I had chosen to stop going to church that I thought I had no right to join the queue. But then I went down. No one knew me. Everyone seemed so happy and accepting; God would understand, I reasoned, it was a sentimental journey.

Finally, I was kneeling at the altar rail, quietly waiting as the clergymen moved slowly along. The first with the wafer of bread, the second with the chalice of wine. The old ritual, I knew how it was. The clergyman was there, placing the bread on my tongue.

The most ecstatic joy poured through my body with the intensity of an electric shock. My mind >



All Saints, Chelsea Old Church.

“ *The most ecstatic joy poured through my body with the intensity of an electric shock.* ”

had barely started to comprehend this incredible sensation than the chalice was touching my lips and I sipped the wine. Thorough anguish beyond all pain imaginable suffused me. Then it was gone.

I stood up and return to my place in a daze. The service continued. I marvelled at the totally unexpected experience and thanked God for such an incredible Christmas present.

KILIMANJARO

Dachlan Cartwright writes...

The last weeks of December in our calendar are significant, including as they do the Solstice (Dec 22), when things tend to happen. My birthday is Dec 24 – five minutes before Christmas, lol – and I now try and use those days to take stock of my life, past and future. (There's nothing cosmic about Jan 1st.)

I assume the real date of the birth of Jesus is not known, so Dec 25 was chosen as it was the date of the

Roman festival of Saturnalia, the Celts also had a festival to celebrate the death and the rebirth of the Sun, and it seems the Germanic festival of Yule lasted from Dec 22 to Jan 1.

I used to be rather envious of those Subud members who had and wrote about spectacular supernatural experiences, although for me the greatest benefit of the latihan is simply knowing what to do, or what not to do, in every circumstance, often without thinking about it or planning. Wow.

But I have had the sensation, “the brush of an angel’s wing”, on two occasions: when I got married, and once in Bapak’s house. But the most spectacular experience happened during the December Solstice of 2019.

I call it “KILIMANJARO”...

Here is my “diary” account of it. “KILIMANJARO” was a sequence of events which happened to me in the 191222 - 200101 solstice week. Remarkable. And generally beginning round Midnight. Never experienced anything like before in my life.

It began when once about Midnight, I was awake, and the door to the balcony and the balcony itself were open to the night sky. It was raining heavily, noisily, a sultry storm. I think that Srie and Adi (my wife and child) were awake, but they were not aware of anything unusual going on.

There was a “presence” with a “message” outside on the balcony. I’ve a feeling that it was connected with a certain Subud member whom I knew and who was making a renewed connection/message, which was surrounding me.

In a turbulent tropical storm, in a peaceful midnight open-air balcony, at the same time.

‘The Holy Time as quiet as a nun, breathless with adoration’. This took place every night for the next few days.

Notes. I have never been to Africa...

*I call it “Kilimanjaro” because for some reason I was thinking of a book by Elspeth Huxley, *The Flame Trees of Thika*, which I had read a long time ago. I was confusing Mt Kenya in Kenya with the snow-covered extinct volcano in Tanzania, Mt Kilimanjaro. Images of flames and trees and snow and erupting volcanoes were thrusting through my mind. It was an experience of great confusion and great clarity at the same time.

Yet perhaps the most satisfying experience was, as I was thinking, “yeah great, but this won’t last”, remembering the bittersweetness of life, and I was told, “No, this one will stick.” (And it, the >



“ *There was a ‘presence’
with a ‘message’
outside on the
balcony...* ”

good feeling I had from it, has, *alhamdulillah*, lasted.)

And it coincided with the most severe illness I have ever had in my life.

I had been feeling under the weather, and looking terrible, for over a year, but I put it down to a dental problem. Subud friends from London, abdu' Rashid and Hamidah Craig, had visited Indonesia a year before, and Hamidah, who "sees things" had told me to get a checkup, but private medical treatment in Indonesia is expensive.

But now my insurance cover was renewed, and I had a check-up. I was suffering from haemoglobin deficiency, which if left unchecked might have led to leukemia. *Alhamdulillah* I was treated by the best specialist in Indonesia, spending about two weeks in hospital, and was released just before Covid broke out (which would have made hospital treatment difficult).

And have gradually recovered, so now I feel fine. But, because of Covid, was mainly "confined to barracks" for over two years. I'm glad of the opportunity to share these experiences with you. ●

The Inner Mansion

Daniela Moneta writes from WSA Archives...

I received an email from Subud California that our dear Subud brother Stephen Latif Allen had passed away in Sri Lanka. It was very sad news as we had known each other in Los Angeles and had been pen pals off and on for quite some time.

I wrote a message on the Subud California website about a beautiful book that Latif wrote called *The Inner Mansion* published in 2014. He wanted his friends to read it and sent the WSA Archives a box of his books as a fundraiser for the archives. It must have cost a fortune to mail so many books from Sri Lanka.

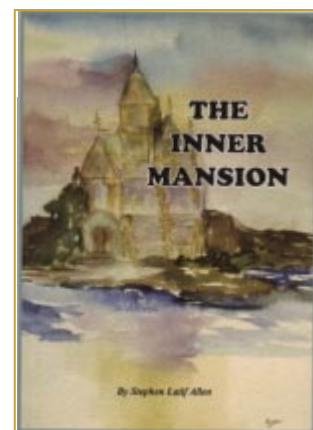
We had a suggested price of \$20 that would go to the archives as a donation. We still have copies left. Maybe some Subud members would like to have a copy of their own. Latif also gave us a digital copy for the WSA Archives website.

Members who sign up for access to the WSA Archives website by sending an email to: admin@wsaarchives.org can read the book online. If anyone wants a hard copy for their library collection, they could request it and for the cost of postage, and we can send them one.

[Here is a description of the book:](#)

In the words of the author "...this book is about the arcane architecture of Spiritual Anatomy. It is about the spatial connection of one inner environment to another. It is about the rooms, passage-ways and thresholds within our Inner Mansion. It is about the many different parts of the non-physical world that Bapak Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo spoke about in his lectures and talks."

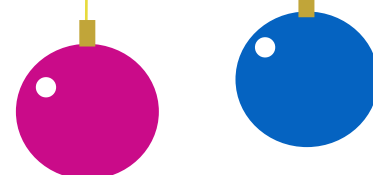
[From a review by Emmanuel Elliott of the first edition] "A Subud memoir, overflowing with spiritual experiences and passing on the training, guidance and wisdom imparted to Stephen by his two super-helpers, Pak Sudarto and Mas Adji, throughout the author's nearly two year stay in Jakarta in the early 70s, during much of which period he also enjoyed free access to Bapak's home." ●



Cover by Latif's sister

"MERRY CHRISTMAS, SISTER SUNDANCE" – A HISTORY AND LITERATURE QUIZ by Dahlan Cartwright *(Answers on page 24)*

1. The 1983 movie *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence* is based on which two books by which author?
2. Of which war was it not said "This should be over by Christmas.?"
 - a. The War of Jenkins' Ear
 - b. The US Civil War
 - c. World War One
3. At Christmas 1914 in some theatres of war there was a truce and fraternisation between Allied and German soldiers. What did this not include?



- a. Approval by General Smith-Dorrien, and by Adolf Hitler (who was fighting in the German Army)
- b. Exchange of souvenirs and cigarettes
- c. Football games between the two groups of soldiers



4. What is the country of origin of these Christmas carols?
- a. Deck the Halls
 - b. I Bid You Goodnight
 - c. Silent Night

5. Who is the author and what is the title of the poem, the last line of which has the speaker, one of the “Three Wise Men”, longing for death?

6. “Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.”



- a. Who wrote the above lines?
- b. In which play do they appear?
- c. Which character speaks these lines?
- d. What is the background to the speech?
- e. What is the metrical pattern of these lines (the one most frequently used in English poetry)?

7-15. In 1912 the humourist Max Beerbohm published *A Christmas Garland*, a brilliant parody of some famous writers of the time. Here is the first of two extracts:

“The roofs of the congested trees, writhing in some kind of agony private and eternal, made tenebrous and shifty silhouettes against the sky, like shapes cut out of black paper by a maniac who pushes them with his thumb this way and that, irritably, on a concave surface of blue steel. Resin oozed unseen from the upper branches to the trunks swathed in creepers that clutched and interlocked with tendrils venomous, frantic and faint. Down below, by force of habit, the lush herbage went through the farce of growth—that farce old and screaming, whose trite end is decomposition.”

7. Which literary device is not used in the above passage?
- a. Anaphora
 - b. Personification
 - c. Simile



8. Who is the writer being parodied?
9. In which country was he born?

10. Which one of the following countries/regions does not feature in his stories?
- a. The Congo
 - b. Kalimantan
 - c. Ruritania
 - d. South America

11. Name any two of his classic novels and stories.

Here is the second extract:

(Preface to “St. George. A Christmas Play”)

... In those days the more enterprising farm-laborers used still to annually dress themselves up in order to tickle the gentry into disbursing the money needed to supplement a



local-minimum wage. They called themselves the Christmas Mummings, and performed a play entitled Snt George ... The plot was simple. It is set forth in Thomas Hardy's "Return of the Native"; but, as the people who read my books have no energy left over to cope with other authors, I must supply an outline of it myself."

12. Who is the writer being parodied?
13. What is the adjective coined to describe his peculiar brand of wit?
14. Which one of the following countries/regions is not a setting for one of his plays?
 - a. The Balkans
 - b. Medieval France
 - c. Tanaku
 - d. The United States during its War of Independence
15. Name any two of his plays.



Obituary for Max Potter

Sebastian Paemen writes...

Max Potter passed away on the 1st of November. Max was a long-term member of the Oxford group. He was well known nationally and internationally in Subud as he often attended congresses and gatherings. Max was a group helper for many years and had also been national helper, as such he was totally dedicated to Bapak and Subud.

Max studied chemistry and worked for a paint company most of his life. He had a scientific mind and, when required, you could always rely on his calm, research-based opinions as a scientist. Max and his wife Annie loved gardening. Their house on the edge of the Cotswolds had a large garden

where they grew a variety of fruit, flowers and vegetables. Together they had a son. Theo was close to his parents and Max was very fond of his son. Theo gave a beautiful eulogy during the funeral.

I got to know Max about 20 years ago when I joined the Oxford group. When we realised that we shared a passion for books and Turkish and Middle Eastern food we soon became friends. We developed a routine which became very dear to us. Once a month or so we would park at the car park of Central Oxford Mosque, off Cowley Rd, the lively street which goes through the heart of the multicultural part of town. This is where many international restaurants and used bookshops are. Max and I loved Cowley Rd. We would have a coffee first, then go around the bookshops and finish off with lunch. We would often discuss the books we were reading. This wonderful routine came to an end three years ago when his health caused him to move to Wisma Mulia, the Subud retirement home in Frampton on Severn which was too far away from Oxford.

Max was a much loved Subud brother who donated generously towards charity projects. The popular annual plant sales he organised together with Annie at Loudwater Farm and in his local village for many years raised funds in support of charity. He also supported individual Subud members who needed money.

I remember a story he shared, which his mother told him. As a little boy she once saw him playing by himself at the back of the garden. He was jumping around singing to himself, "happy boy, happy boy". This was Max's nature. He was always happy and satisfied within himself and didn't know depression or heavy feelings.

Bon voyage, dear Max. God willing, we'll have a coffee and discuss some books in the next life. I would look forward to that.



Max Potter.

A New Book

The Editor writes...

Here is the Prologue from former SICA Chair Latifah Taormina's new memoir, called Ha Ha Among the Trumpets. The book is in two parts; the first chronicles the sixties in San Francisco when she and her husband set up The Committee, a comedy improv group that paved the way for the improvisation and satire genres, and how they discovered and joined Subud. The second part is the story of her move to Wisma Subud, Cilandak, and her personal Subud story while teaching drama at the Jakarta International School...



Latifah Taormina

Prologue

In many ways, I'd not have a story to tell had it not been for a phone call from Alan Arkin. And he had no idea how prophetic his advice became when I called him back to let him know Second City had hired me: "Stick with it," he had said, "it could be your life's work."

In his sweeping history of improvisational theater, *Improv Nation: How We Made a Great American Art*, best-selling author Sam Wasson calls San Francisco's The Committee "improvisation's answer to the 60s." Indeed, when Alan Myerson and I began it all—and we knew in our bones it just had to be in San Francisco—we had this inescapable passion to create a theater where personal authenticity and political urgency—not just discourse, but real action—would characterize the improvisations. And. . . we were very much in love!

Fresh, zany, irreverent, and needed, the critics said of our improvisational satire. An instant hit, we became a San Francisco institution. The place to be. The place to hang out. Then what we call 'The Sixties' hit, and we became part of creating its new narrative. From civil rights protests to Vietnam War protests, teach-ins, censorship challenges, and the Artists Liberation Front; from the founding of The Fillmore to the Trips Festival to The Human Be-In; from local and national elections to beauty contests and anyone who liked to throw pies—we were there.

More than a chronicle of how we began The Committee and the ongoing adventure of creating our own brand of improvisational theater, my book is also a woman's story—and a personal one. Betty Freidan's wake-up call to women of my generation, *The Feminine Mystique*, came out the same year The Committee opened and ignited a new wave of feminism that both asserted and questioned a woman's role in the world, her personal agency, and especially, her right to personal fulfillment.

Up to that point, society, in general, felt a woman's most important "job" was to be her husband's "helpmate." Even the roles women played in improvisational companies then—the chick, the mom, the teacher, the sister, the secretary, the prude—almost always set up the man to be funny. Then, as we moved into the counterculture of the 60s, everyone's "roles" were in question, and everyone was improvising.

Ultimately, my story is a spiritual journey of challenges, forgiveness, and redemption I never expected to have and that I've never really shared beyond my close friends. Outwardly, it began when I joined Subud, a spiritual practice that had initially attracted Alan as well as people like Alan Ginsberg, Aldous Huxley, and the founder of EST.

I didn't think of myself as a seeker. I challenged what I was experiencing every step of the way until I came to experience a kind of inexplicable grace that gave me my reason for living just when I felt I didn't have one anymore, and that began a whole different journey: a journey to myself. A journey that very much included improvisational theater in oh so many unexpected and rewarding ways.

If good improvisation reflects the spontaneous interplay of "yes, and" among the players, my spiritual journey reflects the spontaneous interplay of "yes, and" between self and soul.

That's a lot to swallow, dear reader. So take it a chapter or two at a time. And forgive the inter- >

ruptions. I used to quip that what caused the failure of my first marriage—there were three of them—was that he spoke in paragraphs and I spoke in interruptions. But then, like good improvisation, it's often the interruptions that begin what you've been looking for.

A New Book from former SICA Chair, Latifah Taormina

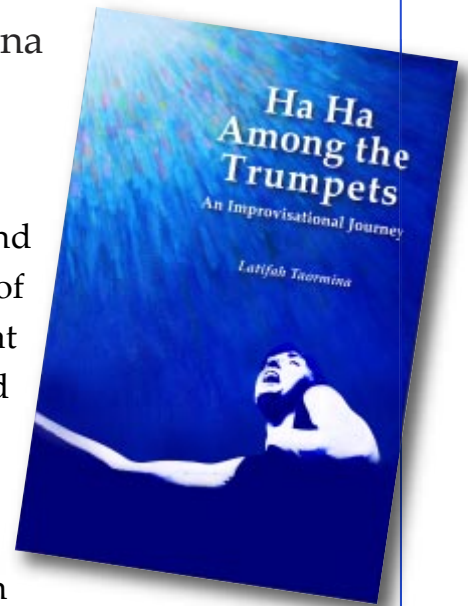
Ha Ha Among the Trumpets

An Improvisational Journey

Names like Howard Hesseman, Alan Arkin, Bill Graham, and even Caspar Weinberger illuminate this incredible chronicle of The Committee, San Francisco's improvisational company that not only gave rise to many Hollywood stars, but also pioneered long-form improvisation.

Ha Ha Among the Trumpets chronicles the incredible journey of newly married Second City alums, Alan and Jessica Myerson (later Latifah Taormina) who built their own company from scratch in San Francisco in the early 1960s while exploring a new spiritual practice called Subud. The fascinating story of this company is told against the historical backdrop of the Kennedy assassination, Bloody Sunday, Selma, the early feminist movement, and the beginning of the anti-war movement.

Taormina's spiritual quest ultimately takes her beyond her marriage, which is tested by the competing claims of politics, work, family, and the author's emerging sense of her own identity. She moves to Wisma Subud, Indonesia, where, using her stagecraft skills, she teaches drama at the Jakarta International School. It's an astonishing story. *Mary Adams* Paperback, 380 pages. Available from www.lulu.com (On the home page, click 'Bookstore', type *Ha Ha Among the Trumpets* into the search box then follow the onscreen prompts to order and pay.)



ANSWERS TO “MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR SUNDANCE” QUIZ

1. *The Seed and the Sower*, and *The Night of the New Moon*, by Laurens van der Post
2. a. The War of Jenkins' Ear
3. a. Approval...
4. a. Wales b. The Bahamas c. Austria
5. TS Eliot, *The Journey of the Magi*
6. a. Shakespeare b. *Hamlet* c. Marcellus d. The opening scene, when the ghost of Hamlet's father appears at night to the watching guards e. iambic pentameter
7. Anaphora
8. Joseph Conrad
9. Poland
10. Ruritania
11. *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, *Typhoon*, *Youth* etc etc
12. George Bernard Shaw
13. shavian
14. Tanaku
15. *Saint Joan*, *Man and Superman*, *Pygmalion*, etc etc

The Complete Recorded Jokes

Campbell and Bolt

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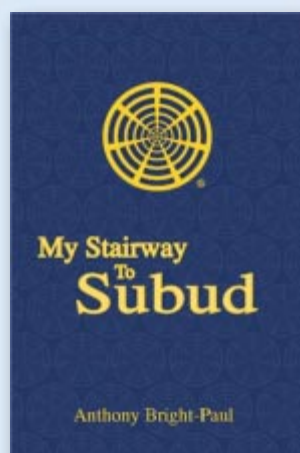
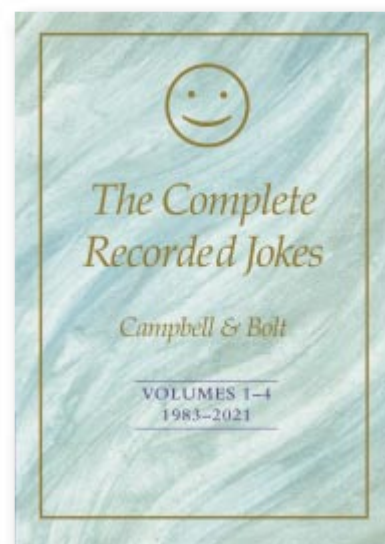
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