

21st Century Learning Skills



The Winged Ox

Winter 2012

Tales from St. Luke's School

21st CENTURY LEARNING SKILLS

By Bart Baldwin, Head of School

At St. Luke's School we educate children, but there is more to it than that. We are also educating future adults. The habits of mind and character adopted in childhood often govern decisions made in adulthood. Our responsibility is to prepare children to thrive today and lay the groundwork for what they will need to succeed in the future. This is not a new challenge. In fact, in 1605, Sir Francis Bacon, the father of scientific thinking, outlined the habits of mind needed for success in his new century. He felt successful students needed to be:

- Nimble and versatile, able to see relationships among things,
- Inquisitive,
- Fond of reflecting,
- Patient enough to doubt and ask questions,
- Slow to assert and ready to consider multiple points of view,
- Careful to support opinions and formulate an argument with reasons and evidence,
- A slave neither to passing trends nor established traditions, but capable of judging the credibility of sources and making independent judgments,
- Alert to all deception.

(From Search to Research: Developing Critical Thinking through Web Research Skills: Microsoft)

How do we prepare our students to be effective, ethical, and adaptable learners and leaders? Building on the thinking

of Sir Francis Bacon, responding to the reams of current research, and incorporating the long-standing framework of an Episcopal education, St. Luke's School has identified five core competencies that will serve our children in the near and long-term:

- Critical and creative thinking
- The ability to work collaboratively
- An international perspective and global awareness
- An ability to use technology effectively and efficiently
- A guiding moral compass

Critical thinking may be broadly defined as the process we use to reflect upon and assess our own and others' ideas and efforts, and creative thinking as the process we use to develop ideas that are unique, useful, and worthy of elaboration. In addition to direct instruction in each of these areas, as an Episcopal school we offer an atmosphere of free inquiry in all academic pursuits and provide a learning process unfettered by dogma. As a result, our graduates are able to engage in reasoned debate, voice strong opinions, and negotiate the nuance of knowing when to stand for what you know to be true and when to adapt to what you realize is inevitable.

We are also committed to learning how to live and learn well within communities of diverse age, gender, national

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St. Luke's School

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A MIND TO THE FUTURE: Preparing Children to Learn in the 21st Century

By Lara Laurence, Upper School Learning Specialist

In November, I heard Howard Gardner, author of *Five Minds for the Future*, speak at the 2011 Learning and the Brain Conference focused on preparing students for the 21st century. Gardner proposed that the school's job is not to convey "stuff," but instead to foster different ways of thinking. The types of "minds" he promotes are: disciplined, synthesizing, creating, respectful, and ethical. If we achieve this, our children will be ready for the future.

The first two minds, disciplined and synthesizing, are taught in most schools. The disciplined mind focuses on mastery of a topic or skill, while the synthesizing mind concentrates on evaluating information, filtering what is important and organizing it meaningfully. Tests or essay writing are typically required to demonstrate what has been learned and how that learning can be organized and explained. The remaining three minds – creating, respectful, and ethical – are ways of thinking that are taught at St. Luke's School. The creative mind goes beyond the information presented and is comfortable taking risks. The respectful mind is tolerant and empathetic to all. The ethical mind has a sense of purpose and is prepared to act in a manner that is fair to others, even if it means being selfless. These ways of thinking are consistent with the St. Luke's Way (Respect, Honesty, Excellence, Dignity, and Compassion) and are what make St. Luke's a special place to learn and teach.



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origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, and socio-economic status. We help children respect themselves, learn about and respect each other, and experience joy in the world around them. We teach children how to work through difficulties and conflicts in ways that result in greater understanding and leave each person's dignity intact. These are the skills needed for collaborative learning and living.

The value of inclusion that is core to the Episcopal Church fosters a belief in the equality and dignity of all human beings and the fundamental unity of the global community. Both lay and pastoral-led worship at St. Luke's include traditions honoring different faiths in addition to following the rites and rituals specific to Episcopal practice. We teach children to participate respectfully, if not fully, in all faith practices and to interact knowledgeably with people from all cultures. Grade 1 students had a discussion about the similarities among Hanukkah, Diwali, Santa Lucia Day, and Christmas. Students in Grade 6 Skype with people from other countries to discuss current events from an international perspective. Grades 7 and 8 students established an Amnesty International Chapter to learn more about and advocate for worldwide issues of social justice and equity. By the end of a St. Luke's School education, our graduates will proudly proclaim, as one did recently, "My goal is to change the world. ...And this is what I'm doing to achieve that."

St. Luke's is a technologically advanced school. Learners today and workers tomorrow will be expected to adopt and adapt to ever-changing technologies. It is equally important to understand how technology is shifting the way we process and interact with information. As author Daniel Pink wrote, "The last few decades have belonged to the kind of person with a certain kind of mind – computer programmers who could crack code, lawyers who could craft contracts, MBAs who could crunch numbers. But the keys to the kingdom are changing hands. The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind – creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers and meaning makers. These people – artists, inventors, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, big picture thinkers – will now reap society's riches and share its greatest joys."

Mark Twain wryly commented, "To be good is noble. To teach others to be good is nobler – and less trouble." A true gift of a St. Luke's School education, and an immeasurable benefit of our Episcopal identity, is that *being good matters*. But how is that translated into an actionable credo? In chapel and the classroom, students talk about how one makes good decisions, how one identifies values worth holding dear, and how one navigates the nuance of right and wrong. When our students discuss literature, they look at the ethical challenges characters face. When they interact with each other, they look at the impact their actions have on others. When our children misbehave, they are held accountable. All of this is undergirded by our community standards: honesty, dignity, respect, compassion, excellence. The five values most commonly cited across all religions are: compassion, honesty, fairness, responsibility, respect. There is an important alignment between our community standards and universal spiritual values. Being able to discuss them in the context of literature, daily living, and the Episcopal tradition strengthens our children's connection to and understanding of these beliefs and reinforces the practical application of the idea that *being good matters*.

So what does it take to be an effective 21st century learner? Critical and creative thinking ... absolutely. The ability to work collaboratively ... without question. An international perspective and global awareness ... undoubtedly. An ability to use technology effectively and efficiently ... certainly. But most importantly, success in the 21st century will require a guiding moral compass. Sociologist Anthony Compolo offers the following observation: When you ask Japanese parents what they want for their child, they answer, "To be successful," and youth culture pays a high price. When you ask American parents what they want for their child, they answer, "To be happy," and youth culture pays a high price. What might be the better answer when a parent is asked, "What do you want for your child?" "To be good," he posits. Ultimately, nothing will serve our children better as they navigate learning today and living throughout the 21st century.



POW WOW

Each year, Grade 3 studies Native Americans in social studies. St. Luke's drama teacher, Karen Butler, supplements this curriculum by teaching the students songs and stories from other Native American groups. After weeks of practice, the students put on a Pow Wow for the entire student body. The Pow Wow consists of Native American legends, dances, and music all performed by the Grade 3 students.



CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING THROUGH INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING

By Sherry Froman, Grade 1 teacher

Education in the 21st century calls for the nurturing and development of independent and creative thinking, multi-faceted communication, leadership and teamwork, risk-taking, and integrity and ethical decision-making as essential elements in preparing our children for their adult lives. In Grade 1, one way we aim to advance this preparation is by using a method I like to call "The Contract System," which teaches and reinforces the curriculum based on the individual student.

Each child is given his or her individual work to be accomplished during the "work time" scheduled each day, which is written on a small piece of paper with various codes and phrases that the children learn to recognize during several "in training" work times near the start of the school year. Allowing each child to be responsible for his or her own learning fosters the development of independence and risk-taking. Given the multimedia tasks on their contracts, the children learn to manage their time as well as the quantity and quality of the learning that takes place through their own efforts. Help from a teacher is there if needed, but as the year progresses, the children become better equipped with their own management and problem-solving skills, and less assistance is required from a teacher.

Before working on their contractual tasks each day, the children are required to listen attentively to various complex directions and curricular mini-lessons. There are several tasks on the contracts that require clear writing from the children. These requirements of "The Contract System" help develop the essential capacity for "multi-faceted communication," which is increasingly required as children grow into adults in the 21st century.

"Leadership and teamwork," another essential capacity for the 21st century, is nurtured through the playing of curriculum-based games, many of which are assigned to two players. With these games, the learning of trust, how to resolve conflicts, how to support others, and the ability to negotiate are fostered.

All of the work that the children do within this system, in any capacity, is checked and corrected by a teacher. Children are helped to see failure as an opportunity to learn, and thus are also encouraged to take risks -- an important essential quality of the 21st century.

There are several contractual tasks that require creative thinking. To cite one example, we conduct a "Writing Workshop" where children are required to create their own unique stories. Examples of the tasks the children perform are starting a story with a sentence chosen from a list, choosing a plot, the characters and setting from a variety of options, and spinning a fictional short story.

Learning to act responsibly, with the interests and well-being of the larger community in mind is an essential skill that is fostered on a daily basis. If you were to walk in on one of the Grade 1 "work times" you would find children in various places attending to a variety of tasks. Some might be found at their desks, perhaps writing in their journals or working on a "Writing Workshop" story. Others might be at the reading group table for small group instruction, on the floor playing an independent game or one with a partner, taking a card from the word bank for use in spelling a word in their journals, at the snack area taking their snack, by a teacher's side requesting that she check a game, or by the folders basket, where the children place their written work to be checked by a teacher and collaboratively discussed with each student.

Each year I tweak the system and am rewarded with seeing the children's enjoyment of working, learning, and communicating grow -- and that enjoyment is the best part of "The Contract System."

The Grace Sawyer Library is a place of activity, discovery, reflection, and growth. It is a cross section of community that connects lower school and upper school, teacher, student, parent, and child. Its pages weave together and tell our story.

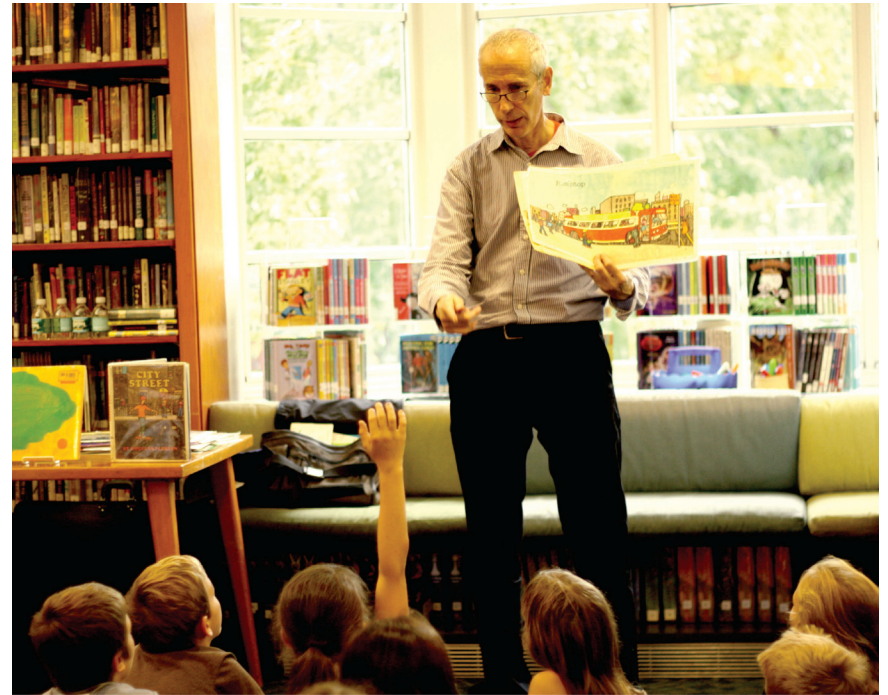


Library Update: A Day in the Life

By Eden Stewart-Eisman, Librarian

The library is alive with activity in the early morning beginning with parent volunteers, led by Misa Butkiewicz, checking in and shelving books that have circulated and labeling new ones. Students in homeroom trickle in and out for a quick browse and check out. On the second Tuesday of every month, parent volunteers ready books for the shelves and work on special projects. Then as classes begin, the Junior Kindergarten can be found reading *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* and other books by Laura Numeroff. They begin to recognize what we call a "circle story" (a story with a chain reaction) and that an author's body of work can be thematically connected. At lunch, recess student volunteers do their part, delivering books to a classroom or teacher, setting up book displays, recycling the newspapers, tidying shelves they have adopted in the library. Kindergarteners don Sherlock Holmes hats and magnifying glasses as they detect and dissect the parts of a book examining the spine and the end papers. Disguised as "Book Detectives" they look closely at the end papers and illustrations to gain knowledge about the story, making predictions. They are critically reading, even before the words begin.

Students in Grades 1, 2 and 3, utilize an iPad to write an eBook in the style of *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*,



craft an audio book of poetry composed of class recommendations, and research parks and areas of New York City using apps that ground their mini trips, respectively. Later they are able to refer to the same mini video clips, information, and maps during their trips thanks to the mobility of the iPad. Poet Douglas Florian visits St. Luke's, a gift of the Library Enhancement Fund, founded by a former St. Luke's family. This author visit is the perfect enrichment to the Grade 4 drama experience, a Poetry Café. Upper school students research while Grades 5 and 6 fill the afternoons with books clubs, i.e., student-directed discussions about *Animal Farm* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Above right: visiting poet Douglas Florian
Left: students enjoying their "Green Eggs and Ham"

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTS ANCIENT ROME WITH MODERN DAY

By Alicia Howard, Grade 6 Homeroom, English and Social Studies Teacher

In Grade 6, the study of ancient Rome actually brings out the best of 21st century education. Although thousands of years span the gap between our lives here at St. Luke's and the lives of Roman citizens, Grade 6 students use the content of their research projects to design computer games that are fun and informative. Students study the arc of Rome's absorbing story from its mythical roots to its decline in the Middle Ages and apply their learning to this culminating project.

This research project is remarkable in that it pairs traditional research skills with cutting edge technologies. Utilizing a variety of primary and secondary sources and both on-line resources and print materials, the class evolves into a dynamic learning community. In small clusters, students share resources and point each other in the "right direction" to locate a key fact or something that is simply "cool."

Each student is called upon to isolate salient facts, categorize the information that has been amassed, and then prioritize that data in a formal outline. After laying this groundwork, students then collaborate with their social studies, computer and library teachers to design a game which conveys the significant facts of their areas of study. The subject of each game reflects the interests of each member of class. Topics have included: Roman religious practices, food preparation and types, styles of dress, architecture and invention, and, of course, gladiators.

Students choose among various programs to develop the content they have gathered; some opt for linked Powerpoint or Smartboard slides, and some select Scratch software. In each program, binary decisions lead the user to a variety of destinations brimming with relevant facts and vivid images. In all, the matching of ancient content to a modern, technologically based skill set energizes students and teachers alike. There is a palpable enthusiasm among the children and the faculty that inspires us all to learn, to share, and to love the process.

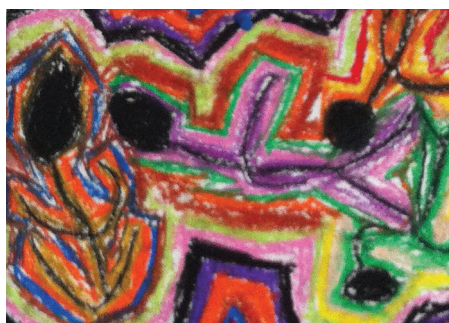
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE: Collaborative Learning Brings Shakespeare to Grade 2

By David Recht Grade 2 Teacher

Every year, Grade 2 embarks upon a dramatic exploration of a particular topic or Shakespearean play, and writes their own version to present to the whole school community. It's a long and collaborative process that allows us to arrive at our end product, involving teachers and students working on a wholly original play.

This year, our starting text is *Romeo and Juliet*. Everyone is assigned a role and we then read through a children's version of the play. Then we read it again, and again, and after the children feel they know their characters, we map out the play. Scene by scene, we plot the play so we become familiar with the important events of the story and where they occur.

Once this is established we take the original script away and we start to write our own. With a flip camera recording, we start to improvise the different scenes. New, fresh takes on characters, dialogue, and action begin to unfold within the framework of the original play. If something doesn't feel right to the actors, then we improvise it again in a different way. Once every scene has been recorded, I proceed to review the filmed material and piece together the new, entirely child-generated dialogue, into a script. This final draft is returned to the students and then we begin to block and rehearse the play. By this stage, of course, the actors are so familiar with their characters, the play, and basic blocking, that the rehearsals become further opportunities for the children and teachers to collaborate on the finishing touches of the presentation.



Collaboration Across Grades: PARTNERS PROGRAM AT ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL

By Audrey Shea and Vanessa Rosado

The Partners Program presents a chance for students in JK through Grade 6 to meet once a week and "form positive relationships with classmates and teachers, with older children and with younger ones." Students in Grades 3-6 are partnered with the younger grades to offer early experiences in service to others as they interact, play, and mentor their partners.

Highlighting the JK and Grade 3 Partners:

We work on projects together that are related to either of our curricula. We look for projects that both a Grade 3 and JK student can enjoy doing together, e.g., an art based project, as seen in the picture, or a math activity like measuring how tall the JKers are with non-standard units of measure. The third graders read to their partners and the JKers shares things that we have been doing like putting on a play or showing artwork. Other examples of projects we have worked on together are making spider hats, strategies for making and being friends, discussions about bullying, making hand wreaths or leaf prints, taking nature walks and picnics together, and creating Valentine's cards. Both the older and the younger children look forward to partners time and derive a lot from this connection.



Sports Update

Varsity Volleyball

By Ymhani, Class of 2012

Congratulations to the varsity volleyball athletes! The team ended the season with a 7 and 3 record and a third place finish in the DISC volleyball tournament.

The varsity volleyball season this year was great. Team spirit, hard work, and great improvement were all included. There were people in the beginning with no volleyball experience or even any sports experience at all, and by the end of the season, Ms. Rapp had helped them miraculously. Also, by working together, we almost went undefeated. This season was fun, and a great learning experience.

Varsity Soccer

By Isabel, class of 2014 and Katherine, class of 2014

Kudos go to the varsity soccer team which ended the season with a 9 and 1 record and secured a third place finish in the St. Luke's Invitational Soccer Tournament.

The soccer team was proud of the amount of skill they showed. They

played strong teams like Loyola and City and Country, and while battling these difficult teams, they managed to post four shutouts!

The team was led by the devoted St. Luke's 8th graders who taught the team that soccer isn't only about winning; it is about enjoying the experience of being on a team. Not only did the 8th graders lead us through the season, they also scored most of the goals and prevented a plethora of goals from being scored.

Coach Wood was the biggest help to this team. He can't be thanked enough for the 2011 season being as successful as it was.

Coach Wood discusses soccer strategy with Jack, class of 2012



GLOBAL COMMITMENT

In Grade 8, we continue to nurture our longstanding ties with Newcomers High School, a high school for new immigrants. In addition to the academic benefit of this collaboration, this partnership also affords us the opportunity to engage in human rights work.

Below is a transcript of the speeches delivered by recent St. Luke's graduate, Max, and his counterpart, Check, a Junior at Newcomers High School, on November 1, 2011, at the Facing History benefit dinner for Newcomers High School.

By Check, Newcomers High School

Good evening, my name is Check, I am 17 years old, a native of the Ivory Coast. Someday, I hope to be an attorney. Someday sooner, I hope, I will be an American. I am not yet an American, officially at least. But in some ways, I am already as American as you can be. And that's precisely because I am an immigrant. Like your fathers and mothers, or your grandfathers and grandmothers, all the way back to when this country was founded, I came here almost four years ago looking for what America has always offered, a chance at a better life.

I didn't leave the Ivory Coast because I was persecuted, I wasn't, unless you considered being whupped by your teachers to be persecution. In my country, street gangs take the place of the government, and the first choice a kid makes when he's old enough isn't whether to join a gang but which one he will sign on with. I chose my gang. It's a choice every Ivorian boy must make.

Here, if I was lucky -- and I was -- my teachers would encourage me, not threaten me. My family came to America, because here, the only limits to what we could be are the limits of our talent, our intelligence, and our willingness to work. In other words, we came here for the same reason that millions of people from every corner of the world have come and continue to come. We are the people who fill your city -- our city -- with the sounds and scents and sensibilities of our homelands, as we try to find a way to fit in.

Coming from the Ivory Coast, not speaking a word of English, I remember thinking how crazy it was here, how people seemed to be rushing everywhere, in such a hurry that even if they did take the time to ask “how ya doin’?” they didn’t wait for an answer. I was an outsider. Me and a few million other immigrants like me. You have heard the prejudice immigrants face, the comments, “They come here and steal our jobs,” “They just want benefits.” But you may not see the small bigotry, the way the subway booth attendant rolls his eyes at my accent when I ask for directions, the way even other Black Americans sometimes take a step back when they realize that even though I look and dress like them, I am foreign, the other.

And as immigrants we also have to overcome our own prejudices, about people from other countries, yes, but also about Americans. Everything I knew about Americans before I came here I learned from Hollywood, so you can imagine what I thought. But my guess is the people in this room understand all this. I think that, because you support Facing History. I went to Newcomers High School in Queens. The students come from more than 60 different countries and speak nearly as many languages. My teacher, Julie Mann, met another teacher, Kim Allen, at a Facing History training eleven years ago. Together they decided to use the Facing History curriculum to bring their students together – the immigrants from Newcomers High School with younger American-born kids from a private school – St. Luke’s in Greenwich Village. It was through this program that I met Max.

Max has taught me some valuable lessons. For instance, now I know better than to try to answer when somebody asks “how ya doin’?” The truth is, I’m doing well, and Max is one of the big reasons for that. Before we met the kids from St. Luke’s, the writer, Leslie Gilbert Laurie, came to our class to speak about the importance of knowing and telling your story. She is the child of Holocaust survivors. I had a story to tell, but needed help telling it. That’s where Max came in. Max helped me to tell my story and in doing so, we learned a lot about ourselves, and each other. He taught me about this big crazy city, but he also taught me to never give up, to keep trying, to keep pushing. Max in a way became my teacher. And maybe I’ve been a teacher to him, too.

By Max, St. Luke’s School, class of 2011

He has. I know it might sound strange, but Check also taught me about being American. I mean look at me. I’m as American as you can get. I realize I’m fortunate in that I go to a private school. I live comfortably. I’ve always had what I needed. I was born and raised here in New York, and before this program the most exotic place I had ever seen was the Texas ranch my father came from. Okay, I admit it, for a New Yorker that is pretty exotic.

Like most kids my age, I never gave much thought to the people I passed every day in this city, people like Check who came here from someplace else. Sometimes I’d catch bits of conversation in a language I didn’t understand. But it was just background noise. I never thought about who they were or why they had come here. Honestly, I never really thought about them at all, and if I did think about them, even for a second, I just assumed that what I’d heard adults say was right – things like “immigrants are a problem” or “they’re all here illegally.”

And then, when I was in 7th grade, my teacher brought us into this program. Through Facing History we learned the difference between upstanders and bystanders, and how to connect history to today. We’d read stories in the newspapers about how immigrants were treated sometimes. A kid came to our class to talk about his brother who was chased down and beaten to death on Long Island because he was from another country. It affected me. It affected all of us. Later on, the program paired each of us in my class with an immigrant.

We started by writing letters. Sort of a pen pal thing. We heard from girls who had come to America because in their countries they never would be able to go to school – just because they were girls. And we heard stories from kids who had been through all kinds of things – violence, civil wars, the kind of poverty that we never see here. But they also all talked about the hope they brought with them.

I remember how nervous I was meeting Check for the first time. He was from the Ivory Coast, a place I’d never heard of, but he was also a few years older

than I was, and I just figured that he wouldn’t want anything to do with a young kid like me.

But I was wrong. Sure there were cultural differences, but when we met, we realized that we had more in common than either of us had imagined. There was music. I shared mine with him. He shared his with me. And there was basketball. We both love the game. Once, when I was visiting him at his school we sneaked off to shoot some hoops. We found that nothing quite cements a friendship like getting in trouble together.

But there were also differences that I learned to appreciate. Check’s story may not have been as bad as some others, but he told me how he had no choice but to join a street gang in the Ivory Coast, and how some of his friends had been victims of violence. There was nothing I could really say. But I could listen. Check has changed my worldview. When I see people from somewhere else, I really see them now. When I hear adults say dismissive things about immigrants I know that when I’m an adult, that’s not what kids will hear from me. They’ll hear about Check and the other students that we’ve come to know through this program. They’ll know that their contributions make us richer, that they add to the American culture. And they’ll know that my friendship with Check has made me richer, and has made me a better American, thanks to Facing History.



Beloved Tradition Still Feels Fresh

Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair is a much-loved tradition at St. Luke's School. A search through the archives reveals why – the fair has been in existence since 1951, indeed nearly as long as there has been a school on the block! Past themes have taken us around the world and conjured up many of the feelings we all associate with Christmas. We have been dazzled by starlight, watched the snow fall in a winter wonderland and enjoyed candy canes as we stayed home for the holidays. We have been transported to Victorian and Medieval eras and visited China, Greece, Sweden, Mexico and New Orleans. This year we enjoyed a Gingerbread Christmas.

While themes and elements of the fair change from year to year, one thing remains constant – the goal to raise money for the school. Serving as the St. Luke's School Parents Association's primary fundraiser, each year the Christmas Fair raises thousands of dollars that are donated to the school's scholarship fund and to enrich our academic program. As important as fundraising is to the day's success, the fair is also the one event on the school's calendar that brings together our entire community – students and alumni, current and former parents, faculty, parishioners, and neighborhood friends. The Christmas Fair remains a favorite annual tradition here at St. Luke's as we all come together to start the holiday season.

Special thanks go to Co-Chairs Kristina Hou, Jane Lacher and Stella Um for their leadership of this year's Christmas Fair. We also wish to thank everyone who volunteered their time, services, goods and good cheer to help make 'A Gingerbread Christmas' a huge success, including all faculty, staff, parents, students, and friends of St. Luke's. In addition to creating a day of frolicking and fun, we reached our fundraising goals. Congratulations one and all!

FACULTY GRANT BRINGS ICELAND TO KINDERGARTEN

By Lauren Lazarin, Kindergarten Teacher

In August of 2011, I embarked on a brief, yet life-changing, journey to Iceland. Seeking to gain a greater knowledge of geology to enhance my kindergarten science curriculum, I found much more than I anticipated. My appreciation for having been given this unique opportunity by the Parents Association of St. Luke's School is beyond words. The time I spent in Iceland deepened my interest in geology so that it is now a fascination and contributed to my spiritual and personal outlook and insights.

Off the mainland of Iceland lie the Westmann Islands. Often referred to as the Pompeii of the North, these islands are somewhat of a hidden gem. Upon arriving in Iceland, I was told that for any geological exploration this area was not to be missed. These fifteen remote islands, only one of which is inhabited by a small, yet resilient, population of 4,000 devoted Islanders, are a geologist's playground. Even with my amateur eye, I could appreciate the vast and mostly untouched cliffside views and the evidence of active and historic, perilous volcanic eruptions.

The interest I had in traveling to an exotic location to explore rock formations and volcanoes was more than satisfied by the breathtaking topography of Iceland. The city of Reykjavik was the ideal location to immerse myself in Icelandic art, culture, and the warmth of the Icelandic people. From my base in Reykjavik I had the ease of exploring surrounding areas through daily tours guided by native enthusiasts who exuberantly shared their devotion to the rich culture and natural beauty of their country.

This spring I look forward to sharing the scientific knowledge I gained in Iceland with my kindergarten students. The children will be able to explore actual rock samples I collected from Iceland. We will learn about the characteristics of the rocks and observe the eruption of volcanoes through technology and a live, homemade model.



"I have truly been moved and invigorated by the experiences I had in Iceland, which will live in my heart and in vivid, cherished memories, and which will surely enhance my teaching in the classroom."

FINDING A MORAL COMPASS

By Susan Yao, Grade 6 Homeroom, Social Studies, French and Religious Studies Teacher

When I was a teenager, I was always up in arms about something. "That's not fair!" "That's racial profiling!" "You don't get it!" Yet despite this passion for pointing out problems, I did a lot of yelling without actually doing anything.

Then someone I knew lost his life in a fight between White and Asian American youths in South Boston. I realized that racism could be a matter of life and death. Complaining would no longer suffice. And so I began to act. I made a documentary about racial issues in my high school and wrote a speech to address youth violence.

Teenagers have a natural moral compass. They are affected deeply by the existence of injustice. Yet when faced with the world's problems, students can feel overwhelmed and doubt their ability to create a better future. One of the goals of 7th and 8th grade Social Studies is to study how individuals can be agents of change within their spheres of influence. We learn about Martin Luther King, Jr., who did not end racism but inspired people to change the status quo. We re-enact the American Revolution by playing characters who have the power to cause or prevent the Boston Tea Party. We analyze the effects of Occupy Wall Street.

As a teenager, I did not end youth violence in Boston. But I learned to put my beliefs into action, and discovered that with enough people acting locally, our world can become a much safer place.



Grade 7 Mosque Field Trip

By Rob, a 7th grader

Dear Future Grade 7 Students,

Your first field trip as a 7th grader will be to the Mosque on 96th street. To get there, you will take two trains, the trip taking around 40 to 45 minutes. If you are not one who practices the Islamic religion, and I am guessing you do not, you should not worry because it is something so different. The people at the Mosque are very nice, and you will not be required to pray. The trip is very exciting, because you get to see a different way of life and prayer than you are used to.

When you arrive at the Mosque, you must cover your hair and head with a scarf if you are a girl, as a part of Islamic tradition, and everyone, no matter the gender, must have their arms covered. You will then have to walk up a few flights of stairs, and then you will arrive at the praying hall. All must take off their shoes because the room is sacred to Muslims, and when they pray there they may put their faces on the ground. The floor will be covered with carpet, and it is about 90 degrees Fahrenheit inside, so try to wear a light long sleeved shirt and a sweater or coat over it if it is cold outside.

The praying hall is a very beautiful room, with around 100 small lights hanging from the ceiling. For the first 10 minutes or so you will probably be allowed to explore. There is a balcony hanging over a small portion of the room, and you will be allowed to go upstairs. Try not to

be too loud because the sound echoes, and even a word spoken quietly can be heard around the room. The experience may be different for you because Ms. Yao may decide to mix it up a little. The Imam (equivalent to a priest in Christianity), was sick the day we went. Because the Imam was sick, a different Imam and his friend came to meet with us, taking their own time just to speak with us and answer our questions. We asked them questions about the praying hall, about the religion, and even a few about their personal lives as Muslims. Our class did something a little bit different because of the setbacks, but after you are finished asking questions, you will eat lunch. You will probably eat lunch outside, but the people at the Mosque broke their own rule and let us eat inside in the praying hall because it was raining.

Remember wherever you are inside the Mosque be respectful and quiet because it is a place of prayer for others, and they are letting you visit a place of much significance to them. This may seem like a lot to handle, but all you need to remember when on your field trip to the Mosque is have fun!



GRADE 8 RETREAT: Students Find Inner Strength as They Transition to the Larger World

John Travaglione, Grade 7 Homeroom and Math Teacher

It is important for all of us to have the opportunity to reflect upon our lives; we need to be able to examine where we have come from, where we are at the present time and the direction we are headed. Sometimes, we can contemplate this as a community and at other times as individuals. This time for self-reflection and discovery can be even more critical at certain transitional points in our lives. It is out of this need that the 8th grade Leadership and Community Building Retreat was created.

On the morning of November 17th, the 8th grade class, along with Mother Mary, Mr. Pelegano and me, boarded a bus in order to begin a very special journey. Although the students were engaged in some important preparation work over the course of the prior few months, there was still a fair amount of anxiety and apprehension on board that charter. We arrived at Esopus, New York approximately two hours later.

Anyone who has ever been on a retreat will understand that it is very difficult to put all of the experiences that take place into words. Over the course of the next 32 hours, the Class of 2012 came together over and over again to share their hopes, their dreams, their concerns, and their gifts. They rediscovered their strengths and weaknesses both as members of a community and as individuals, and they looked forward to a time when they would be able to grow as leaders.

When the 8th graders re-boarded the bus the following day, they walked onto that charter with a renewed sense of hope about the future. Since everyone is at different crossroads in their lives, each student's experience was a bit different. The important thing is that they took the time to allow themselves to be changed. New bonds were created and old bonds were



made stronger. They arrived back at St. Luke's on that Friday afternoon with smiles that were a little brighter and broader than they were the day before. Although the actual two-day retreat was over, the process of growing, learning and reflecting continues.

I would like to close with some words that were shared with the retreat group up in Esopus: "Life isn't about keeping score. It's not about how many people call you, or how many dates you have had. It isn't about what sport you play, or what clothes you are wearing. It isn't about the color of your skin or where you live or go to school. Life isn't about grades, money, or high schools that accept you or not. Life isn't

about if you have lots of friends, or if you are alone, and it's not about how accepted or unaccepted you are. Life just isn't about that. But, life IS about who you love and who you hurt. It's about how you feel about yourself. It's about trust, happiness and compassion. It's about sticking up for your friends and replacing inner hate with love. Life is about avoiding jealousy, overcoming ignorance, and building confidence. It's about what you say and what you mean. It's about seeing people for who they are, and not what they have. Most of all, it is about choosing to use your life to touch someone else's in a way that could never have been achieved otherwise. These choices are what life's about."

Comings and Goings

By Bart Baldwin

Our Director of Business and Finance, Michael Murphy, left St. Luke's School at the end of December to pursue a position much closer to his home. Mike will be greatly missed. Under his leadership, our business office became more efficient and accurate. In addition, he led the school through many renovations and spearheaded our efforts to become more energy-efficient and green. Over and above his accomplishments, Mike will be missed for his good humor and deep care for the school.

We conducted a nationwide search for our next business manager throughout the fall, and we are fortunate to be able to welcome Linda Maxwell as our new Director of Finance and Operations. She joined us January 3, 2012. Linda has extensive experience in the field. A certified public accountant, Linda has been the Director of Finance for Long Island Lutheran Middle and High School in Brookville, New York for the past ten years. In addition to managing their operating, endowment, and capital campaign budgets, Linda conducted all of the financial analysis and projections as the school planned an expansion to include an elementary division. She upgraded the technology in the school's business office, reviewed their policies, and streamlined their procedures. She helped plan and coordinate on-going maintenance, renovations, and new building projects. As a reference commented, "Linda did everything ever asked of her and more, often with great grace, and always with good humor." Linda currently serves on the Business Officers Council for the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS). She is also very dedicated to community service and serves on the board of the YMCA of the Adirondacks. Prior to joining Long Island Lutheran, Linda had extensive experience in public

and private accounting with a variety of industries and non-profit organizations. Linda lives in Rockville Center with her husband, Scott, who is a Lieutenant with the New York City Fire Department. They have one daughter, Katie, who is a senior in college studying physical therapy. All who interviewed Linda found her to be a person of great warmth, quick wit, keen intelligence, and deep passion. We are incredibly fortunate to be able to follow strength with strength in our business officers. I know you will join me in wishing Mike Murphy a fond farewell and Linda Maxwell a hearty welcome.



HALLOWEEN DANCE

From Lady Gaga to Pikachu, this year's Halloween Dance was a blast. The costumes, enthusiasm, and energy exceeded everyone's expectations. Thank you to all parents and students who volunteered their time and delicious baked goods and drinks. We raised close to \$3,000 so it was a success all around and we couldn't have done it without the support of the St. Luke's community. We hope you all had a safe and silly Halloween!

The Jebbia family



New Faculty

Deniz Beal teaches Grades 6 – 8 science. Deniz received her undergraduate degree in environmental science at the University of South Florida and her graduate degree in science education from the University of Tampa. She started working as a marine biologist and education coordinator for the Coral Cay Marine and Nature Park in Roatan Island, Honduras. She then spent three years teaching Grade 8 honors science at a middle school in Florida. While there, Deniz was recognized as the “Middle School Science Teacher of Promise.” Most recently, she has taught Grades 6 and 8 science at a charter school in Brooklyn, New York.

Paul Russell teaches JK – Grade 8 music, including band and chorus. In addition, he is introducing strings instruction to Grades 5 and 6. Originally from London, Paul earned his BA in Music and Acting from the Rose Bruford Conservatoire of Performing Arts and began as a performer on the West End and in UK touring companies. He completed his graduate work at the Institute of Education, also in London. Paul has spent many years teaching band, orchestra, chorus, and general music to students of all ages. While in England, he taught at the Oratory School, Brown’s School, and Grafton Primary School. Most recently he moved to New York and has been the Director of Music for Grades 5 – 8 at Harlem Village Academy, a charter school.

Nicole Whitman teaches Grades 5 and 6 math, Grade 5 social studies, and Grade 5 religious education. A graduate of Skidmore College and with master’s degrees from Southern Connecticut State University and Fordham University, Nicole most recently taught Grades 5 and 7 math at Rodeph Sholom School on the Upper West Side. As passionate about the humanities as math, Nicole has also taught English and world literature in New York City Public Schools, St. Jean Baptiste High School, and Archbishop Stepinac High School.

Susan Yao, a graduate of Harvard University, teaches Grades 7 and 8 social studies, grade 7 French, and Grade 6 religious education. She was most recently the Grade 5 history teacher at Kings Collegiate Charter School in Brooklyn. In addition, she has experience teaching 10th grade history, Chinese history, U.S. history and SAT reading and writing preparation in Massachusetts and Korea. Susan deeply believes in human rights and social justice education, and she is eager to build upon that aspect of our social studies curriculum.

Joe Wood is actually returning to St. Luke’s School to take the position of physical education teacher and coach. Joe began his teaching career here in 1990. Following three years at St. Luke’s School, Joe spent 10 years at Packer Collegiate, primarily teaching and coaching middle and high school students and eventually becoming Assistant Director of Athletics. For the past eight years, Joe has coached and taught at Berkeley Carroll. Although he served as the Director of Athletics for Grades 5 – 12, he primarily taught Grades JK through 4 since teaching those grades is his great joy. As a result, he decided to return to a JK – Grade 8 program, and we are happy to welcome him home.

Leanne Kozak joins Grade 1 as Sherry Froman’s associate teacher. A graduate of Penn State University with an emphasis in elementary and preschool education, for the past two years, Leanne has worked as a teaching assistant at the Carle Place Middle School in Carle Place, New York. She has additional experience teaching introductory Spanish and working with children struggling with reading and math. We are pleased to welcome her to our two-year associate teacher program.

Karen Butler teaches drama in Grades Junior Kindergarten – Grade 8. She graduated from Sarah Lawrence College majoring in Theater and Education. She worked as a teaching artist for the Guggenheim Museum’s Learning Through

Art program and with the Creative Arts Team at NYU while working as the Education and Outreach Coordinator at Carnegie Hall. While at Carnegie Hall she devised the Link Up! Educational program that is still in place to this day, bringing music education to thousands of NYC Public School students and teachers. Karen left Carnegie Hall to found Broadway Arts Theater for Young Audiences, a not-for-profit theater group that commissioned and produced Equity level educational theater pieces to theaters and schools throughout the five boroughs. For ten years, Karen served as Drama Director at a summer camp on Fire Island, to fulfill her continuing interest in working with children. She accomplished her graduate work at NYU and CUNY in Educational Theater, earning a master’s degree with the goal of working full time with children.

Lara Laurence is our new part time learning resource specialist. She has over twenty years’ experience as a resource specialist, most recently at the Solomon Schechter School of Nassau County. She has primarily worked with middle and upper school students and in the fields of math and science. She is also strong in supporting children who need help with organization and focusing, whether, as she said, she is helping them “organize their ideas, their research, their homework, or their backpacks.” A graduate of Wesleyan University, Lara holds a master’s in school psychology from New York University and a master’s in learning disabilities from Northwestern.

Kate Jaffe joins Grade 1 as a part-time teaching assistant working with lead teacher Sherry Froman and associate teacher Leanne Kozak to provide individualized and small group instruction. Kate recently received her master’s degree from Fordham University. She has been a Grade 2 and Grade 4 teaching intern at Rippowan Cisqua School and is delighted to join the St. Luke’s School Community.

Diversity Committee Sparks Discussion, Fosters Reflection, and Builds Community

By Jacqueline Goldsby, Parent

Attending school in Greenwich Village – at the crossroads of Christopher and Hudson Streets, no less – makes the commute to St. Luke's a lesson in diversity every day for children and parents alike. From the elegant brownstone owners to the homeless men and women seeking aid on street corners; from the well-heeled cafe-goers to the legatees of the neighborhood's bohemian history (LGBTI folk, musicians, actors, poets, visual artists, political activists--young and old), we see it all. And then some.

Once a month on Friday mornings, SLS' Diversity Committee sponsors discussions where parents explore what our daily (and historical) connections to this complex world mean for adults and children. This fall, school psychologist Betsy Klein facilitated a stirring exchange about the "tough questions" our kids ask us. How do we respond to queries like, "Why are so many homeless people black?" or "How can my classmate have two dads?" National educational consultant, Tiffany Taylor Smith, led another lively discussion naming the "cultural competencies" we already possess and want to convey in self-conscious ways. How do we define what's different about us and other people in positive terms? How do we communicate those values to our children?

Following that positive note, the committee has ventured out into the city, organizing off-campus outings for SLS families. In October, the committee hosted a Family Mixer at the Cowgirl Cafe. That Friday night event drew a huge crowd of families who packed the restaurant's back room; a buoyant, buzzing time was had by all. In December, a smaller group attended a performance of the Alvin Ailey Dance Company.

The committee's co-chairs (Lewis Flinn, Kazuko Benedict, and yours truly) have an equally exciting agenda ready for Spring 2012. We invite any and all parents to join us!



Save the Dates!



Friday, March 9
Book Fair and Family Dance

Friday, April 27
Grandparents Day

Wednesday, May 9
Spring Admissions Open House

Thursday, May 24
Freyda Rapp Retirement Party

Parents Association Committees Co-Chairs: Pilar Esperon & Joëlle Duffy

<i>Book Fair</i>	<i>Halloween Dance</i>
Katy Kapetan	Lana Ogilvie
Dorothy Wholihan	Susan Petrie-Badertscher
<i>Christmas Fair</i>	<i>Outreach Committee</i>
Kristina Hou	Stacey Spencer
Jane Lacher	
Stella Um	<i>Parents League Rep</i>
	Regina Silitch
<i>Diversity Committee</i>	<i>School Store</i>
Kazuko Benedict	Alexandra Kimball
Lewis Flinn	
Jackie Goldsby	<i>Welcome Reception</i>
<i>Library Committee</i>	Katharine Harding
Misa Butkiewicz	

In Memoriam

We record with sorrow the death of the following members of the St. Luke's community and extend our sympathy to friends and family.

Andrew J. 'Pete' Connick, stepfather of Charlotte Pradié, Class of 2005, and Maxime Pradié, Class of 2006 – August 19, 2011

Elizabeth Peters, Class of 1992 – September 12, 2011

Mary Calder Rower, mother of Holton, Class of 1976 and Alexander, Class of 1977 – June 28, 2011

Jean Schoonover, mother of Katherine, Class of 1967 and grandmother of Abigail Straus, Class of 2007 – April 3, 2011

St. Luke's School Sponsors Alumni Facebook Page

St. Luke's School is now hosting a Facebook page for its alumni. Once you sign onto Facebook, search for St. Luke's School Alumni and look for our winged ox logo. The page is a great way for alumni to reconnect and post updates on their lives. In addition, it contains pictures of our graduating classes since 1949. We would love to hear from our alumni. Please contact the school either through Facebook, the alumni portal of our website, or by emailing Robert Snyder, our Director of Development (rsnyder@stlukeschool.org).



Alumni News

The Alumni Canteen at the Christmas Fair became an instant hit this year when over 80 people showed up to visit with former schoolmates and teachers, before heading off for the maze or the book room. There was a large group from the classes of 2011 and 2010, but there were also graduates from 1972, 1978, and 1979. Matt Dillon, Josh Chaffee, and Chris DiMarco (1999) found the Canteen to be the perfect place to renew their friendships, visit with former teachers, and relive some happy moments at St. Luke's. Henry Wigglesworth, who not only graduated from St. Luke's (1972) but also taught here for a year in the 1980s, brought his daughter with him, to show her his school and to introduce her to the thrills of the carnival and the maze. Henry is now with the Justice Department in Washington. The Canteen proved to be a great meeting spot, a quiet moment away from the hustle and bustle of the fair, yet close enough to make a bid on a silent auction item or pick up a few Christmas presents. Thanks to Eden Stewart Eisman who offered her space,

old yearbooks, and suggestions, Rachael Zelechow who put together a terrific multi-media presentation, and Rob Snyder who has assumed the mantle of Alumni Coordinator for this and other events. Surely the Canteen will become a tradition in years to come.



Class of 1974



Many thanks to alum Alison Collins '70 and Mark Hogan, Mark Hogan Design for the new history timeline

NICK WAGGONER '00 NAMED ONE OF NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S ADVENTURERS OF THE YEAR.

Below is a reprint of an article (permission to reprint from National Geographic), highlighting his film *Solitaire*, followed by an interview with Nick.

"In the moment, it felt like we were failing every day. We weren't good enough. We weren't strong enough. It's part of the artistic process," says ski filmmaker Nick Waggoner, director of Sweetgrass Productions. Twenty seconds into *Solitaire*, his South American ski odyssey, it's clear that the 25-year-old Waggoner has disproved the idea that the only way to make a better adventure film is with a bigger budget.

Shot on foot, horseback, riverboat, skis, and paragliders over the course of two years, *Solitaire* explores South America from the Amazon jungles to the Cordillera Blanca and from the Altiplano all the way to wind-raked Patagonia. Waggoner and his co-producers Michael Brown, Zac Ramras, and Ben Sturgulewski chose the Andes for its extreme conditions—fickle snow, horrible winds, and powerful landscapes. No helicopters. No chalets or ski lodges. Shooting the film required living and working out of tents in relentless rain and snow sometimes for weeks in a row, traversing broken glaciers just to see the peaks they would then climb and shoot, and flying paragliders from 17,000-foot mountains while filming. Each shot was earned by hiking thousands of feet in predawn darkness.

"This was complete immersion in the environment," says Waggoner. The enormity and risk of what they were about to attempt hit home on the very first day of filming on location. The New York City native and Ramras arrived in South America to the news that their friend and the film's intended star, extreme skier Arne Backstrom, had fallen to his death from 18,897-foot Nevado Pisco. "This was no longer a cute little ski film," says Waggoner. "This movie became about the dark place between failure and success."

Fortunately for us, that uncertainty makes a beautiful, intriguing film through the focus of Waggoner's lens. When it comes to the art of adventure, heart, resolve, and imagination trump a million dollars every time.

—Fitz Cahall

THE INTERVIEW

Adventure: For *Solitaire*, your third film, what drew you and your team to South America? What locations did you want to shoot?

Nick Waggoner: We wanted to push our style of filmmaking. We don't use helicopters. We hike for days just to get to a place where we can ski. South America was the most difficult but beautiful landscape we could think of. We wanted a place that had a lot of different, challenging terrain.

We filmed Peru's Cordillera Blanca with 17,000-foot peaks. The Amazon—deep in the port town of Iquitos. We rented a barge, but it was tough. In the Altiplano, in Bolivia, there were these sunbaked snow formations, penitents, literally teeth of snow. In Las Lenas, Argentina, we had 100-mile-an-hour winds. In Patagonia, it was the rain when we were horseback riding into the mountains. We had eight hours of sunshine in two weeks. Cavihue had these 2,500-year-old trees and dinosaur fossils. The landscape demanded so much. We were tiny little things.

A: The film is filled with visual poetry, but you also pulled from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, narrated in Spanish, for the film's dialogue. Why?

NW: I bought the book two days before we left for our second year of filming. I knew it mirrored the journey we were taking. The journey up the river into the unknown articulated all the elements of what we were going through.

A: The first day you arrived in South America, skier Arne Backstrom, who you were headed to meet for the first time, died in a ski fall. That's tough.

NW: I'd never dealt with something like that. I'd never

lost a friend. I never understood what that meant or how real the risk was. Arne's death brought me down to earth. Twenty-four years of love, of energy, put into Arne were just erased in an instant. I remember seeing Kip Garre, Arne's friend, who was with him that day, seeing the sadness in his face. Then Kip died the following summer. I never even had the proper chance to talk with Kip about Arne. This colored every moment of this project.

A: How do you continue from a situation like that?

NW: Our whole crew left. Zac and I were alone in South America. We didn't know what to do, just that we had to keep moving forward. We had a friend who paraglides, so we connected with him. I'd never flown. The first day we launched, and he crashed us into a wall. There was a soccer field right next to us, but he hadn't wanted to disturb the game. I thought, What am I doing? But the Raptor—that was the name of the paraglider—it became our way of getting back to filming, to searching for meaning. On my second flight, we hiked for 24 hours to launch off of a glacier at sunrise. You have to turn downhill, run with crampons, and then jump—and hope you have enough momentum to get you into the air. I will never forget that flight.

A: Are you going to keep making ski films?

NW: We started to loathe it, for a long time actually, but there would be these moments when I realized how much I love this life of skiing and filmmaking. Watching the sunrise after hiking for hours through darkness. That first light on the horizon. Or lightning storms in the clouds, firing this incredible pink. The flight of the Raptor. That stuff makes me feel alive. If I have to suffer for two years to feel alive for five minutes, then I will do that. Creating art is the biggest adventure you can take. It demands everything. It's the good and the bad.



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