

ANNUAL FUND APPEAL 2021



Dear Community,

Last Thursday evening, Studio's Circle of Friends gathered in celebration of our fifty years. The gym room was alive once again with people of all ages, connected to our school in many ways, and their ongoing support and generosity, spanning the decades, were as vibrant as their devotion and commitment to the essence of The Studio School.

Memories washed over me as I spoke with everyone, and the most outstanding one was how we would always gather in a circle and connect. The value of each person being seen and heard within the group was foundational. From our beginnings at Studio in 1971, I remember sitting and being a part of many groups, learning from our founders and my cherished mentors, Robert and Dolores Welber, and the power of connecting thoughts and feelings through group discussions.

Together, we saw how meaningful it is for students to sit in a circle, to speak their minds and be their authentic selves in any circumstance, sometimes including a difficult discussion. Ms. Rotter always envisioned how great it would be for humanity if we could make it possible for everyone to be part of such a circle. With supreme dedication, and an exceptional gift to reach each person and group at every stage, Ms. Rotter continues to grow and cultivate the circle.

“Everything that happens at Studio happens because it was well thought out and considered.” ~Parent

Even at the start, the Studio group was always a diverse one – children from a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and interests would meet and connect in the circle. We would have many talking groups a day, some with children, some with parents or teachers, and others with the whole community. Even Ryan, the school dog, was part of every talking group and Mr. Welber deftly had him speak for the group when needed. Now Bruno, with Ms. Rotter, has learned to talk, and relates with our community, showing all the facets of human nature.

Similarly, through the curriculum, the focus was on the individual and the group, as well as relationships, with the premise that the individual need not be sacrificed for the group, nor the group for the individual. Whenever Mr. Welber was at the piano, his music called to the children, and they moved with pure joy as they found their inner rhythms and learned what it meant to be part of a group. Now whether it be in Morning Group, Tutorial, Chorus, or our community sing-alongs, Ms. Rotter's sensitivity, expertise, and passion inspires and furthers their creativity and desire to know themselves, each other, the group, and the world.

We believed and continue to believe that for children to fully evolve as students and human beings, they must be engaged in experiences that integrate both facts and feelings. Learning results from a child's natural curiosity, accepting that everything is in everyone, and knowing our effect on one another.

“We are given many opportunities to work in a group, so everyone gets to really know each other. This means that we build relationships with all of the students... not just based on our age or what grade we are in, but who we really connect to.”

~Student

While much has changed over the last fifty years, what remains constant is the human experience we have with our community, reflecting the astonishing and complex world we inhabit. A community, with all members of the group, takes commitment and work to thrive. These pandemic years have tested us, and the global community, in ways we could not have imagined. Yet, with persistence, trust, and open communication, Studio has found, through this adversity, new ways to connect, create, and become stronger.

This year has been extraordinary in a fiscal sense as well. In a normal non-COVID year, tuition alone covers about 70% of the school’s annual budget. We rely on meeting the remaining 30% through donations and fundraising events. Each year, your generous contributions support all areas of the institution, including academics, the arts, teacher training and development, operations, and financial aid, all of which are essential for maintaining and augmenting the invaluable experience that comprises a Studio education. We hope you will renew your commitment to The Studio School once again this year.

We have shown that with clear vision, and community support, we can thrive through change and imagine a path forward for progress and well-being. We are so grateful for all the families and friends, throughout the years, who have cared and partnered with us in sustaining our mission. From the day the doors opened in 1971, we followed our vision, and created a school that connects selfhood with intellectual inquiry, building a foundation for living a productive, compassionate, and meaningful life – an education from the Inside Out. This quality of education is so needed in our world, in these times, and all times. It is truly moving to see the lasting impact it has had on so very many lives. Sharing the essence of our mission is something wonderful to celebrate as we turn 50!

Thank you for your continued support of The Studio School.

With fond memories and warmest wishes,



Janet C. Rotter

Head of School
Teacher
Volunteer



Josh Welber

Studio Alum
Past Teacher
Founders’ Son

