

Dear guests, artists and Champions and helpers

for this project, the first International Symposium at the German School in Washington,



First I offer my apologies to all who had to suffer any pains in the process of preparing for this. I admit that I myself had some, but I kept the faith for all of us and the joy in this feast for the senses and Harvest Celebration for the arts. As the days are growing shorter and colder we are slowly drawn back into ourselves and into our work away from the warming sunshine and the great outdoors. It is the time for reflection, for a response of our inner world to the outer world. For six days god created the earth. On the seventh he rested and took all of it in, so to speak. And he saw that it was good.

I thank all those who have come forward to share their work with us here today, especially the children who have laid down this carpet of their expressions. It is their first public art show as it is also for some of the adults. We can thank the painter Marion Albrecht whose amazing energy ignited the fire for this idea and nurtured it since her arrival with her presence and her work with our students.

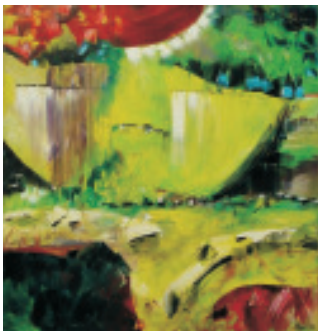
Art inspires and warms the soul like the sun - the source of all color. That is what the students are looking for in their lives also here at the school.

Giving our attention, truly looking at something with eye and heart awakens love on both sides. This earth with all that lies, grows, swims, crawls, walks or flies on it - it all wants to be loved this way.

And that is the work of the artists. With courage they go to the empty canvas, the lump of clay, the rugged rock, the instrument - and with uncountable hours of intense work they develop their skill in bringing their impressions of form and color, movement and sound into a meaningful composition, into an inner echo and Interpretation of the gifts of the world. They make peace with war and death, with pain and suffering. They bring life through the dynamics of color and form, they work with sympathy and antipathy through blending and contrasting or confronting. They work on the eternal balancing act of all qualities within one being. They give space to that which is tender, muted and seemingly invisible. Thus the artists slowly develop an understanding for the meaning of what their perceptions bring to them.

New worlds open themselves to them on their individual expeditions, each developing a unique language. This is also the work of the mothers and fathers, the teachers, everyone who is striving to participate in the art of living.

These are thoughts which came to me in meeting Marion Albrecht's work. She expresses with intensity and immediacy her inner processes, discoveries and understandings in her paintings. They are always connected to her experiences in this world, never purely abstract. Each picture tells a story, looks at the world philosophically, feels with humanity compassionately and speaks her truth forcefully.



Here we see a seer and a seeker, one whose language is made of color, whose brushstrokes dance to her inner music.

Little wonder then that our foreign language teacher, Birgit Fields, became the conduit for this exhibition to occur. Her friendship with Claudia Fry, wife to the president of Northwood University in Midland, Michigan, where Marion Albrecht was artist in residence gave rise to the wish to bring her to the German School here.

Katja Sipple who is responsible for our outreach programs was inspired by the idea and promised her full support. Our director gave the all important green light, pointing out that the working together of artists, students and teachers within the regular school day was an important theme in Germany this year.

Our school is presently trying to improve its team working ability. There is, of course, no better way to accomplish this than to actually create a project that many enjoy and care about. As a member of the quality committee I thank everybody from the bottom of my heart for doing whatever they each could do best to make this possible: Besides those already mentioned, also Claudia Bohn Spector for putting this phantastic display together and all the artists, young and old.

Before Marion Albrecht will introduce herself and her work I want to ask all the present artists to tell us their names and to show us what they have brought to the harvest. At first I want to ask one child to represent all other 80 to show us his or her picture and to tell us what one can see in it.

