
Reminiscences of Kundry Willwerth

~ Ingrid Weidenfeld



Kundry Willwerth with Marionettes from Haydn's Opera, *Philemon and Baucis*. Photo by Randi Anglin

I met Kundry about fifteen years ago at a hand gesture games meeting in Europe. For me, Kundry was always *the* representative of the games in the United States. She represented this work in the best sense of this word. She worked with the originator of these special games for children many times, not only on translation but also tirelessly practicing and refining the gestures. With untiring commitment, she and her husband worked to keep the original character of the games alive in the translations.

It was very interesting for me to read the correspondence between Kundry and Wilma Ellersiek (found in Mrs. Ellersiek's estate), which was always about translation. Kundry was tireless in taking Mrs. Ellersiek's seemingly endless critiques to heart and again and again searching for new possibilities for translation.

Kundry visited me several times when she traveled to Germany. The meetings were always cheerful and the conversations were intense and interesting. Each time we practiced some of the games. I especially remember the meeting in 2012 because together with members of the hand gesture games circle, I played the "Shepherds' Play" game. Afterwards, Kundry said very seriously, "I want to say something. This is exactly as I have always imagined this game, fluent, round, without gaps, with no interruptions. Yes, this is just how it must be, and I am very happy to have experienced it here."

Kundry had been working for nearly a year on the translation of Mrs. Ellersiek's final book, on games about elemental beings. It was unfortunately not yet published in Germany while Kundry was still alive. (Note: it is planned for publication in German and English in 2018.)

With Kundry's passing a very dear person is gone. She always worked for the welfare of others. She has a permanent place in my heart. She surely has a permanent place in the hearts of many. It is good to recall these good memories of her. She has gone into the spiritual world and from there she will surely send us her help. Let us think of her with light-filled thoughts. ♦

Ms. Weidenfeld is editor of Wilma Ellersiek's books of hand gesture games in German.