

# WOODSTOCK SCHOOL

## PRESS RELEASE

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> August 2009  
Subject: Woodstock School Welcomes the Darpana Academy for Indian Culture Week

“Woodstock School bolo ‘Jai Hind’!” screamed out a multinational and multicultural crowd of students, staff, and guests as the Indian National Flag was raised in the school’s Parker Hall, marking India’s 62<sup>nd</sup> Independence Day. Woodstock’s colourful community celebrated Indian Culture Week from the 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> of August, and the celebrations were highlighted by a special visit from Mrs. Mrinalini Sarabhai, Dr. Mallika Sarabahi, and 17 members of the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts (Ahmedabad). Woodstock alumnus and Padma Shri actor and writer Mr. Tom Alter was also present at the school for the eventful week.

The Darpana Academy has been dedicated to spreading its mission of education in the arts across cultural boundaries. Their programmes offer training in music, dance, martial arts, theatre, and puppetry.

While in Woodstock, members of the Darpana Academy held workshops for students from Grades 4-12 in dance, music, and kalari, which is a form martial art from the state of Kerala. Several Woodstock students and even some staff enthusiastically participated in these workshops, bouncing along to the traditional

Their visit was highlighted by two performances of the ‘Dance of Life’ for the Woodstock community on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of August. This performance is a dance/play, inspired by the history of Indian science, from Brahmagupta and Aryabhata to Charaka, Bhaskara and the scientists of the 20th century. The Dance of Life creates in dance visual meaning from abstractions. Sequences include the discovery of the place holder zero, the early development of algebra, the discovery and development of Ayurveda and the first nose surgery, Emperor Jehangir’s research into the physiognomy of birds, and the work of J.C Bose, Homi Bhabha and Vikram Sarabhai.

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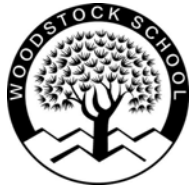
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Dr. Mallika Sarabhai joined the 12 other members of the Darpana group in these special performances.

Another feature of the Indian Culture Week at Woodstock School was a special reading of the 'Poetess and the Mahatma' by Mrs. Mrinalini Sarabhai and Tom Alter. This reading was of a selection of letters between Sarojini Naidu and Mahatma Gandhi. The letters were conversations of a congenial nature between two close friends, which were clouded under the activism and struggle for independence made by both legendary figures.

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