

# BOOK NOTES: "Little Angel's Journey," a children's book by Dzvinka Hayda

by Myrosia Stefaniuk

DETROIT – Always on the lookout for children's books to share with grandchildren, I was delighted to discover "Little Angel's Journey," written and illustrated by Dzvinka Hayda, a classmate from my own childhood. This lovely tale that follows a little angel's trek from his dwelling place in the clouds to his birth as a child on earth, is a birthday story traditionally told in Waldorf schools throughout the world.

A Waldorf teacher for many years, Ms. Hayda explains that the book grew from a seed within the Waldorf tradition. Her rendition of the story is embellished by her Ukrainian heritage, style and creative imagination. The book's designer is John Nagridge, a Ukrainian graphic artist.

As Little Angel's journey unfolds, he makes his way from heaven across Rainbow Bridge into the loving arms of earth parents. The full-page illustrations reflect the idyllic world of the author's own childhood memories, filled with brilliant landscapes, magic, mystical heavens and vivid seasonal changes on bountiful earth.

"Waldorf schools focus on the tremendously rich and wonderful inner life of children," says Ms. Hayda, whose own children attended Waldorf schools. "The child is seen as a spiritual being, not just a person that one puts education into, so teaching is directed not only at the mind, but at the hands and heart." The Waldorf method is based on Rudolf Steiner's (1861-1925) philosophy of anthroposophy (literally, wisdom or knowledge of man), which strives to develop the innate talents and abilities of each individual child.

Ms. Hayda has carried this philosophy on numerous trips back to Ukraine, her

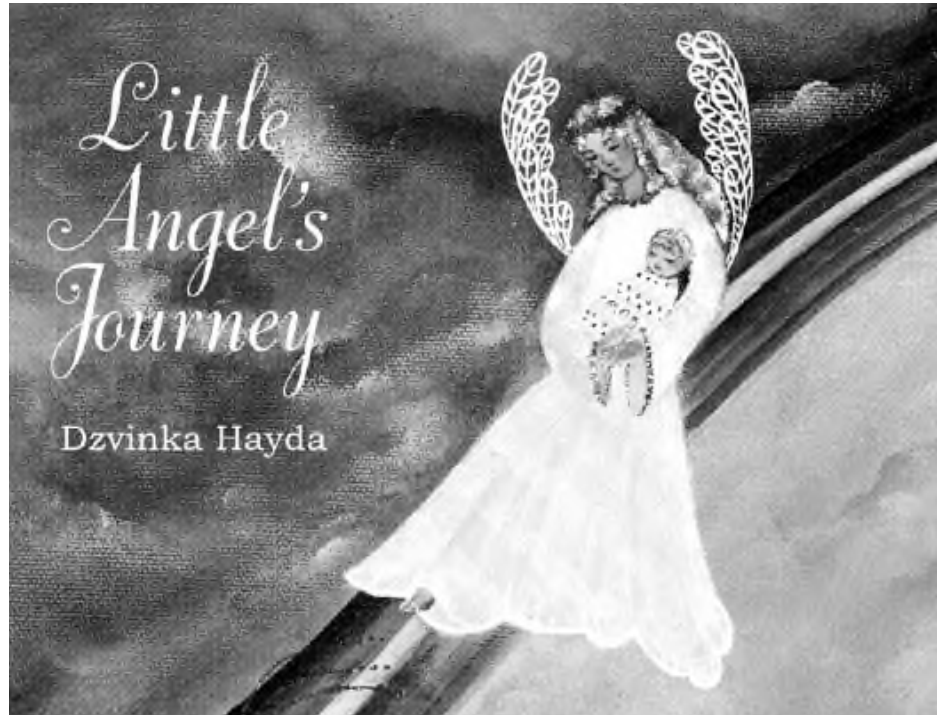


Dzvinka Hayda

place of birth. She has trained student teachers in Odesa as part of a German Waldorf Contingency, and was responsible for several Waldorf Teacher Training Seminars, which ultimately led to the opening of a Waldorf School in Horodenko, with funding coming from all over the world.

In her own metro Detroit community, Ms. Hayda has dedicated much time to promoting Ukrainian culture and organizing art exhibits. "I have always felt that our Ukrainian traditions and art are so rich we need to share that with the larger public, get them out of the Ukrainian ghetto and expose them to a wider audience," she notes. And she has worked diligently to make that belief a reality.

And, yes, there is another children's story book on the horizon. "For me, a



story is more than a mere tale," she concludes. "It's a living thing ... I see it in my mind's eye. And then I paint what I see."

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"Little Angel's Journey" has been selected as one of the top five finalists for the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards in the Picture Book Category for

4- to 8-year-olds. The award honors the year's best children's books, authors and illustrators. A total of 862 entries were received from authors and publishers in 45 U.S. states, six Canadian provinces and seven countries overseas.

For information and book order forms see: [www.LittleAngelsJourney.com](http://www.LittleAngelsJourney.com) or [www.TrilliumForestPress.com](http://www.TrilliumForestPress.com).

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