

community



Museum of Modern Yoga

A new exhibit teaches kids about the importance of movement, for everyone.

A NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM exhibit highlights yoga as a tool for kids who feel shy or are unable to engage in team sports to get active. *Run, Jump, Fly! Adventures in Action*, which opened in February at the Minnesota Children's Museum in St. Paul, features yoga along with

climbing, dancing, and bicycling to inspire kids to enjoy physical fitness. "We really wanted to emphasize just moving," says Samantha Moy, a spokesperson for the museum, explaining the motivation for the traveling exhibit.

The exhibit offers fun challenges related to balance, strength, coordination, and cardiovascular endurance. Kids test their cardiovascular endurance on a stationary bicycle that simulates pedal-powered flight through the sky, and they practice surfing or snowboarding using balance boards backed by video sequences. Another feature shows kids dance, strength training, and beginning hatha yoga techniques to try at home.

"We want the visitors to explore yoga as a fun but potentially gentler, quieter physical activity than what is often offered to

Matthew Sanford helped design the yoga component of the exhibit.

CALENDAR

MARCH

KARMAPALOOZA March 1. Miami Beach, Florida. Join the Sun Salutation-a-Thon at the beach or create a Pose-a-Thon at your own studio during this annual festival that encourages karma yoga and raises funds for charitable causes. karmapalooza.com

BALISPIRIT FESTIVAL: A CELEBRATION OF YOGA, DANCE, MUSIC, GRATITUDE, AND LOVE March 5–16. Ubud, Bali, Indonesia. This festival features a concert by Michael Franti; Nyepi, the Balinese silent New Year celebration; a four-day retreat intensive; daily yoga, dance, and music classes; and nightly *kirtan*. balispiritfestival.com

SECOND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM ON YOGA THERAPY AND RESEARCH March 6–9. Los Angeles, California. More than 30 presenters will gather to explore the challenges and opportunities in the field of yoga therapy. Workshops and discussions by Nischala Devi, Janice Gates, Gary Kraftsow, Judith Hanson Lasater, Richard Miller, Larry Payne, and others. sytar.org

APRIL

YOGA: THE CONFERENCE AND SHOW April 24–27. Toronto, Canada. Workshops with Baron Baptiste, Nischala Devi, Liliias Folan, Manousos Manos, Dharma Mittra, David Newman, Natasha Rizopoulos, Richard Rosen, Rod Stryker, and Rodney Yee. theyogaconference.com

children,” says Shari Aronson, the exhibit’s developer, who has practiced hatha yoga for 17 years.

In addition to briefly describing yoga’s origins, the exhibit introduces yogic breathing techniques, or pranayama. It also demonstrates, through pictures and worded instructions, basic asanas: Downward-Facing Dog, Cat-Cow, Tree, Half Moon, and Bridge poses.

The exhibit challenges traditional notions about who can participate in physical activities. Aronson consulted with adaptive-yoga specialist Matthew Sanford (pictured on page 125), a paraplegic yoga instructor in the Iyengar tradition and author of the book *Waking: A Memoir of Trauma and Transcendence*. The exhibit shows photographs of kids doing the poses, then children with disabilities doing adapted poses—say, by leaning on a wall or pushing against a tabletop—to get the general shape and to glean the benefits of the pose.

“What I wanted to get across—and I think kids will figure it out—is that the

adaptive pose is not that different,” says Sanford. The exhibit also depicts the experience of a blind snowboarder and a wheelchair cyclist.

Run, Jump, Fly! will travel to children’s museums in California, Massachusetts, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Canada through 2011. JILL DUMAN

PEOPLE

silent practice

Creative communication is key in yoga for the hearing impaired.

AT THE END OF MOST yoga classes, the sound of the instructor’s voice gently rouses students from Savasana. But how do you know when to come out of the pose if you can’t hear the verbal cue?

This is just one of the challenges for deaf and hearing-impaired people. And until a few years ago, there was no organized effort to address such challenges and bring yoga to this population some 28 million strong. But in 2004 Lila

Lolling, a hearing yoga instructor and former American Sign Language interpreter, decided to combine her two passions and launched Deaf Yoga. Lolling says that in order to teach yoga to deaf students, accommodations to traditional yoga instruction need to be made. In her classes for the deaf community in Austin, Texas, and in workshops around the country, she uses sign language and, when students’ eyes are closed in meditation, gentle touch, a fan, and lights to communicate. In her DVD *Deaf Yoga for Beginners*, Lolling uses sign language, subtitles, and demonstration to convey her instructions.

Through the Deaf Yoga Foundation, a nonprofit that Lolling founded, she is tackling an even bigger challenge: the translation of yoga terminology. “There’s no sign for *consciousness*,” she explains. “There is, but it [means] *to know*. [To have] ‘consciousness’ and to ‘know something’ is not the same thing. There’s no standardized sign for *yoga, meditation, enlightenment, or pranayama*.” That American

This Year
 Less Malls, More Malas

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