



Who was Mae Carden and what is “The Carden Method?”

“The basic purpose of the school is to awaken in each student, the desire to learn and to equip him with a solid foundation of learning skills and basic knowledge which will enable him to reach logical conclusions and to proceed with confidence through a lifetime of learning.” -Mae Carden

Mae Carden (1894-1977) was one of the brilliant educators of the twentieth century. She was born in Hawaii where she began her own elementary school education. It was during these early years that she found that her teachers did not explain the lessons completely to their students. So, young Mae Carden would take her classmates home after school and teach them herself. Her amazing organizational talents surfaced at this young age when she began categorizing words which eventually led to her own pitch based phonemic program.

Miss Carden graduated from Vassar College in 1918 and continued her studies in Europe focusing on art and music. Inspired by the art masters and great composers of Europe, Miss Carden returned to the United States set on becoming a music teacher and attended Columbia University for her post graduate work. She went on to write her own textbooks and manuals and in 1934 opened her own school, which she operated successfully for fifteen years.

In the course of her career, Miss Carden wrote over 400 textbooks and manuals. Because of the many requests for her method from both public and private schools, Miss Carden closed her school in 1949 to devote the rest of her life to training teachers in the techniques and methodology of her unique curriculum. Today there are over 90 Carden schools across the U.S. including one in Hilo, Hawaii which has been in operation for twenty-five years.

In order that the integrity of the Carden Curriculum be preserved, the Carden Educational Foundation was established in 1962. It provides basic and advanced training for teachers and has established an ongoing development program in keeping with current advancements in education.