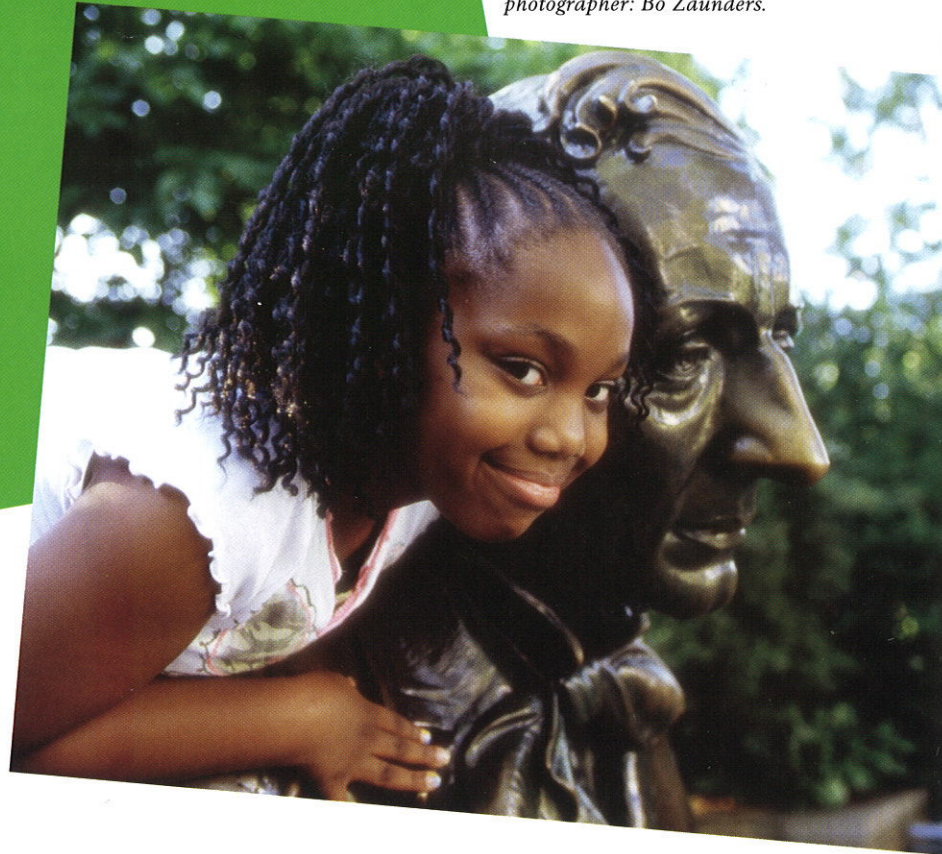


From Denmark With Love

Fond embrace by Conservatory Pond in Central Park, at 72nd Street and 5th Avenue in New York City. The girl: Reagan Walker, the statue: Hans Christian Andersen, the photographer: Bo Zaunders.



In March this year, when Crownprince Fredrik of Denmark and his bride Mary attended a stage performance at the Hans Christian Andersen School in Harlem, NY, 8-year old student Reagan Walker dazzled the audience with her rendition of Andersen's famous fairy tale "The Princess and the Pea." Her award: a roundtrip ticket to Denmark—as part of the Hans Christian Andersen's 200th birthday celebrations.

So what did Reagan think of Scandinavia? To find out, I met her at the Andersen Statue in Central Park, which, as it happens, just turned 50.

Q. So what was the first thing you noticed when you came to Denmark?
A. The streets have cobblestones, and the trains are red, not silver like in the US. I like red more.

Q. Did you like the food?
A. Oh, yes. We ate Swedish meatballs.

Q. I understand you traveled with your mother and your older sister, Ashley, and that you visited Odense, where Hans Christian Andersen was born. What was that like?

A. Stupendous. We learned that he couldn't talk because he had bad teeth. So he danced instead.

Q. Did you make any Danish friends?

A. Yes. Lone Ricks. She was our guide, and very, very nice. She made you feel happy even if you were sad.

Q. Did you learn any Danish words?

A. tilykke med fodelsedagen. It means Happy Birthday.

TEXT & PHOTO: BO ZAUNDERS