

## Anthroposophical Society

in the Western Cape & the Basil Gibaud Library  
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## Editorial

Here we are in mid-Winter when the Sun completely draws in its breath, opening in new life at this time of deepest darkness. How we need these renewal forces when we experience the world trembling—ripped open by war, injustice, and planetary upheaval. I find my soul challenged not to become weighed down but to strengthen myself, aware of the spirit realm that accompanies us.

Words of Friedrich Rittlemeyer in his book *Meditation* stir me: -

May we not think of the future with fear or even with hope but rather bring our will into activity and create the future. Only we through our “I” (as striving to be permeated by the “I AM” of Christ) can resolve to do this.

Also moving for me, while gathering these wonderful contributions for this Newsletter, I came across this invigorating advice from Rudolf Steiner on what kind of reports were of most value for the Goetheanum Supplement:

We need to hear how each individual feels in his heart of hearts, for we want to deal with human beings and not schedules. Let everything remain a motley mixture; this will bring us the individuality of the writer in question and that is what interests us. .... human impression with their all too human weaknesses. Just write down what is in your heart of hearts. For us here the most interesting thing will always be the people themselves. We want to cultivate a human relationship with human beings and out of these human relationships we want to create something that will shine out.... spoken on Sunday morning 30 Dec 1923, at the Christmas Conference.

My hope is that the Newsletter serves to grow our interest in one another, that we as a community shine and can become active in connecting with the spirit, then we can represent anthroposophy. The world needs to know that there exists a path within this science that gives access to the truth of the complete human being, which will sustain and strengthen the person in the face of the challenges of untruth in our time.

Caroline Hurner

## Winter Issue – 2025

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# School of Spiritual Science Class Retreat

January 2025

Twenty-six people met from the 9th to the 12th of January for our annual Class member's retreat. It opened on the first afternoon with three individual contributions by Caroline Hurner, Martin Wigand and Cyril Coetzee, that gave context of how reincarnation and karma appear in the Class Lessons and of how Rudolf Steiner brought both his Karma Lectures and these Lessons concurrently during the last year of his life.

The karma of the anthroposophical movement was spoken of and how we each through becoming a Class member have linked with this destiny and consequently during the time before birth we had each woven our hearts with intentions and forces with which to be active in this life to meet and serve the challenges and potentials of our times.

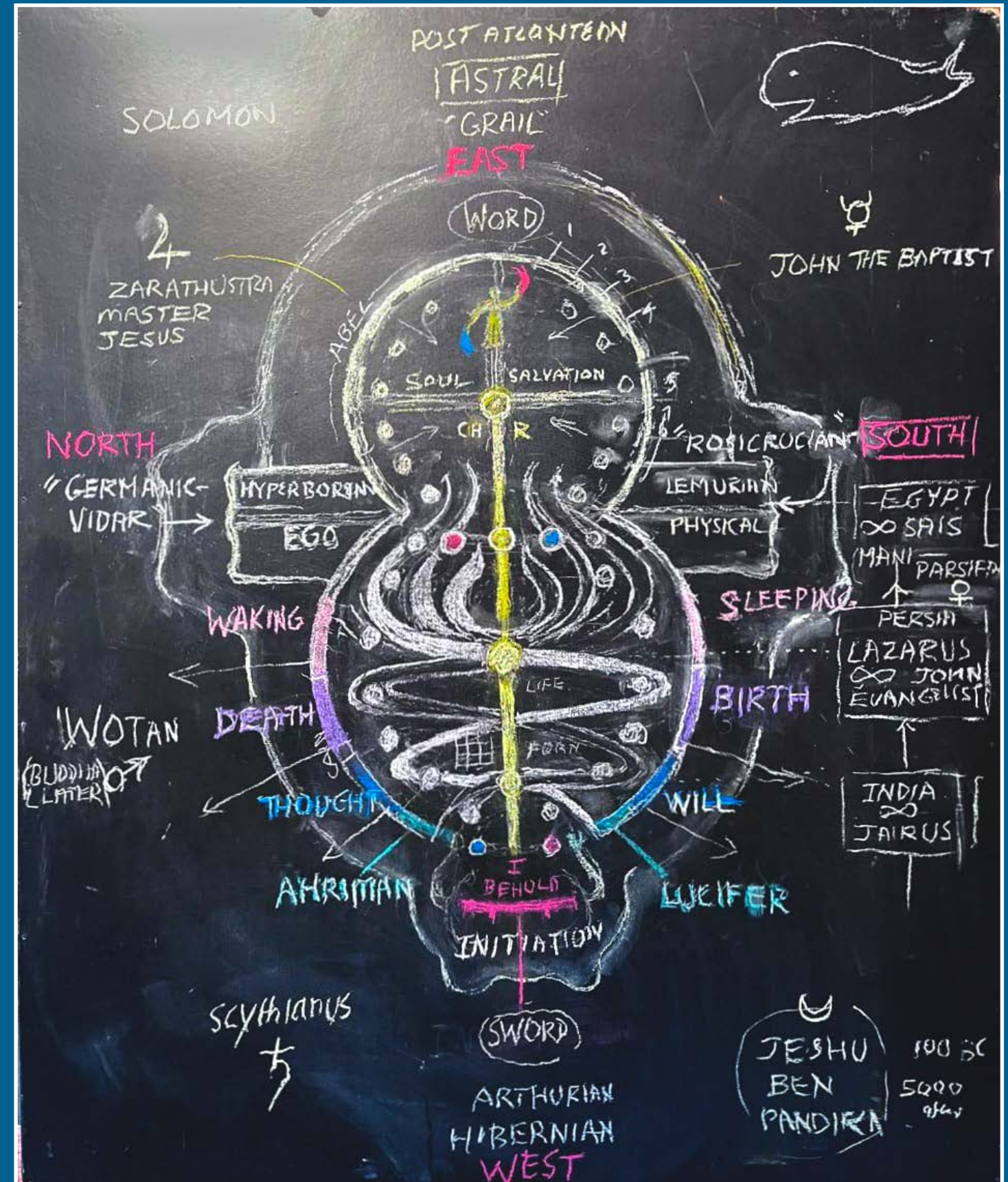
Our aim for the retreat was to find ways of working together, with the understanding of the web of Karmic streams that weave within our community and the world – a call for the streams to join in the New Mysteries. This was beautifully illustrated by Cyril Coetzee's remarkable presentation of the many spiritual streams coming together and made apparent in the geometry and the art of the whole unified building of the First Goetheanum.

From here on the conference had a new approach: Instead of treating participants to well-prepared lectures and Lessons, we wanted them to be more active themselves, not just talking about the topics. As somebody said: Let's start cooking and not just discuss the cookbook! We did this in two areas: Firstly, with the Class Lesson. On two mornings a Class holder, Judith Tabberner, introduced Lesson 10. Directly afterwards participants split into small groups and entered a conversation about the Lesson. We had chosen Lesson 10, because it can be understood as the "Great Karma Lesson". More about that a bit later.

Secondly, we established small "Karma Groups" of 4 people each plus a facilitator. In these groups participants shared the stories of their personal spiritual development which led them to Anthroposophy. Based on Rudolf Steiner's Karma exercises we then explored a possible karmic background.

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The streams to join in the New Mysteries. illustrated by Cyril Coetzee



This did not mean pinpointing a specific past incarnation, rather just a sense for the person relating either more to the knowledge of Anthroposophy or more to one of its practical applications like farming or curative education.

Here Lesson 10 provided a profound starting point: In the introduction to the Lesson Rudolf Steiner explains, how the first two stanzas lead us unconsciously back to the time before we were born, and the last 4 lines speak to our will and lead us back to our past incarnation – unconsciously at first. The karma exercises intend to raise such unconscious knowing to our consciousness. Further Rudolf Steiner explains, that our “I” actually consists of two “parts”: There is the one part which acts in accordance with the will impulses of our past life. This we can observe within ourselves and others as the typical, spontaneous behavior or response to our social environment. But these impulses from the past will lead us again and again into some difficulties. They challenge us to change. This second part of us Rudolf Steiner calls the “becoming I”, which will be fully developed only after death, then forming the foundation for our next life. This provided a very inspiring topic for conversation: To distinguish in us the part from our past and the one striving to be born! In the review participants were full of praise for this new approach.

Supported were these conversation groups with “word meditations”, led by Christiane Wigand. This method has been developed by a group in Germany, who are researching into the realm of the life forces under the leadership of Dorian Schmidt. (He has been a Camphill gardener for decades.) They recommend the following steps:

- Sit upright, center yourself, rest the palms of your hands on your knees,
- Calm down
- An inner soul space will open, you can turn the palms of your hands upwards
- Then you start with a word of your choice: think it, feel it, grasp it with your will forces. Colours and forms may appear, enlivening the soul space.

Thus, our inner ‘seeing” can be enhanced. The aim is to become aware of the ever present, moving life forces, within and without.

Then there were the artistic activities: Painting with Cyril Coetzee, Eurythmy with Christiane Wigand, Projective Geometry constructions with Martin Wigand.

And daily communal singing gave us joy and renewed breath for our gathering!

One evening we were given a very special gift by the 5 eurythmists of the Sophia Project Eurythmy Group. They presented us with an amazing, very gentle and captivating performance on the role Man could have and become aware of, with the Earth as our host. As a core they had chosen Rilke poems and texts, which carried their subtle message into our retreat. We were all very moved and elated by this beautiful contribution, so much so, that they offered to bring their performance, She Speaks Earth, to us again the next morning!

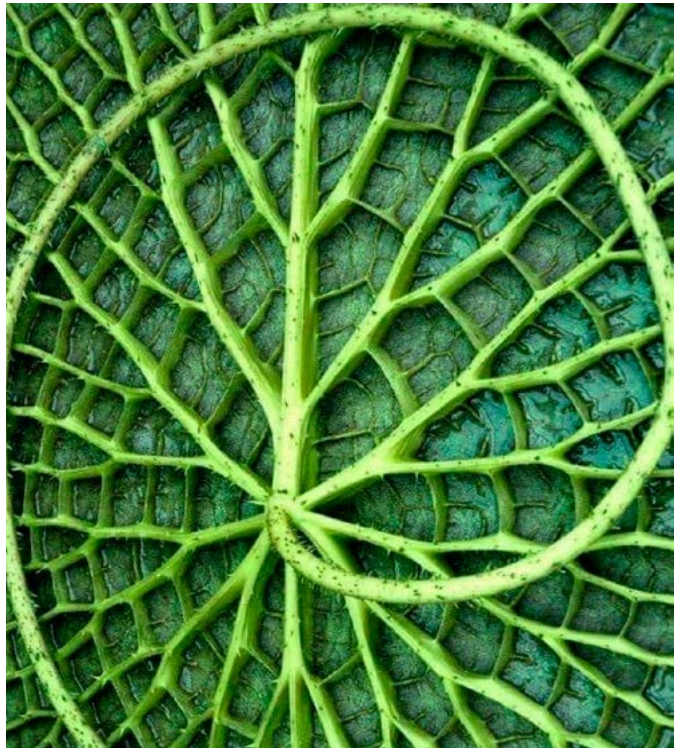
Caroline Hurner, Christiane and Martin Wigand



The Sophia Project Eurythmists: Cobie, Alison, Tonja, Asia and Megan who performed at our retreat.



# She Speaks Earth



*Earth, isn't this what you want: to arise within us,  
invisible? Isn't it your dream to be wholly invisible  
someday? – O Earth: invisible!*  
*What, if not transformation, is your urgent command?*  
*Earth, my dearest, I will. Oh believe me, you no longer  
need your springtimes to win me over—one of them,  
ah, even one, is already too much for my blood.*  
*Unspeakably I have belonged to you, from the first.*  
*You were always right, and your holiest inspiration  
is our intimate companion, Death.”*

**Rainer Maria Rilke – Ninth Duino Elegy**



From placid mountain brow, so solemn, old,  
The mysteries of days long fled unfold.  
There in time's far-distant dawning morn  
The word of worlds in trinity was born.  
The word of worlds in trinity was born.  
Its first faint echo, rising from this hour,  
Bespeaks primeval harmony of power  
And strives in white of quartz and  
dark-blue gneiss  
And golden mica like rosin bound in ice  
To spread forth pure the altar-table here,  
Presented long ago to that first year.

**Frederick Hiebel**

Translated by B Betteridge

The world soul reveals itself  
On the cross of the world body.  
She lives brightly with five rays:  
wisdom, love, will-power,  
Through All-sense and through Self-sense,  
And finds so  
the spirit of the world within.

**Rudolf Steiner**

# World as Lover World as Self

**Joanna Macy**

In the first movement, our infancy as a species, we felt no separation from the natural world around us. Trees, rocks, and plants surrounded us with a living presence as intimate and pulsing as our own bodies. In that primal intimacy, which anthropologists call “participation mystique”, we were as one with our world as a child in the mother’s womb.

Then self- consciousness gave us distance on our world. We needed that distance in order to make decisions and strategies, in order to measure, judge and to monitor our judgments. With the emergence of free-will, the fall out of the Garden of Eden, the second movement began - the lonely and heroic journey of the ego. Nowadays, yearning to reclaim a sense of wholeness, some of us tend to disparage that sense of movement

from nature, but it brought us great gains for which we can be grateful. The distanced and observing eye brought us tools of science, and a priceless view of the vast, orderly intricacy of our world. The recognition of our individuality brought us trial of jury and the bill of rights.

Now, harvesting these gains, we are ready to return. The third movement begins. Having gained distance and sophistication of perception, we can turn and recognize who we have been all along. Now it can dawn on us: we are our world knowing itself. We can relinquish our separateness. We can come home again - and participate in a richer, more responsible and poignantly beautiful way than before, in our infancy.

*“Everywhere transience is plunging in  
the depths of Being ... It is our task to  
imprint this temporary, perishable Earth  
into ourselves so deeply, so painfully and  
passionately, that its essence can rise again,  
‘invisibly’, inside us.”*

**Rainer Maria Rilke**

To his Polish translator about writing the Duino Elegies



The Sophia Project Eurythmy Group, presented us with a very gentle and captivating performance on the role Man could have and become aware of, with the Earth as our host. As a core they had chosen Rilke poems and texts. We were all very moved and elated by this beautiful contribution, so much so, that they offered to bring their performance, She Speaks Earth, to us again the next morning!



# Reports on the karma drama workshops

led by Michael Chase at Sophia House – Angela Mac Pherson

I attended the two Karma Drama workshops created by Mike Chase a Psychodrama, Psychotherapist, mask practitioner and researcher, who was assisted by Art therapist Angela Katschke, to run these powerful and life changing workshops, that were hosted at Sophia House and coordinated by Caroline Hurner in late January and early February 2025

Multiple layers of knowledge and understanding have been opened to me through my personal experiences, while engaging in this remarkable body of work, which includes lessons, practices and maps as described by Rudolph Steiner as well as Destiny Learning and karma exercises developed by numerous others subsequent karma researchers, and now given new depth and embodiment by Mike Chase in this series of workshops entitled Karma Drama.

Mike brings to the tradition of Steiner's Karma research, his rich knowledge and experiences gained during his lifelong practice as a psychotherapist and drama therapist, as well as his deep love and practice of mask making and embodied theatre to develop this extra ordinary series of Karma exercises, he calls Karma Drama.

Mike has come to this work through contemplative and dedicated creative exploration of his own life. Using the maps available to him and tapping into the active global karma research community, he has navigated his own challenging youth in South Africa and his adult working life amongst serious male offenders in the prisons of the UK, to unearth his own karmic destiny.

He brings new insight, playful authenticity and real time experience to show and enact a series of methods and pathways to access our greater Karmic personality, through past life experiences. Using these methods, we begin to understand the karma we bring into this life from past lives, the roles we play for each other, and the work we are being called to do in this life for the soul evolution of us all, individually and collectively.



Mike's stated intention was to teach us, through enacted experiences, several methods of karmic research. This process kicked off in 2024 with an online course facilitated by Angela Katschke and assisted by Mike Chase, introducing us to Rudolph Steiner's **Biographical karma exercises**.

This was an amazing process in and of itself, during which we explored our biographies, working with Steiner's map of the seven-year cycles. Working backwards through our lives, we identified key moments and mapped them through drawing, poetry and interviews. Following Steiner's signposts, we looked for the patterns, the karmic relationships and reviewed our life's journey backwards to find the very first memory. During this process we came to meet our "double", our shadow self, the hidden, undeveloped, shamed part of ourselves that holds so much karmic information for each of us.

The online biography process acted as a wonderful preparation, and build up momentum for the Karma Drama workshops held in Cape Town early 2025, but was not a pre requisite for attending the in-person weekend workshops.

## Weekend 1: The Biographical-Karma drama exercise:

In the first Sophia House workshop, we followed this momentum backwards, stepping over the threshold of our births into this life time, exploring the planetary spheres and spirit world, and then with protection of our Guardian Angels, guides, ancestors and the assistance of Guardian of the Threshold, we stepped back into a previous life time to meet one of our karmic personalities.

Through the guided meditation, we tapped into a previous life experience and circumstance, and identified the karmic relationships we now carry from that incarnation. This was a beautiful heart expanding journey for me, in which I came to know myself on a very deep level, connected firmly with my

Angel, reconnected with my Sun sphere's heart family and came to understand deeply how we all support each other in our soul's evolution through these lives.

## Weekend 2: The Double Karma Drama exercise:

The key route used in this second workshop weekend was through our "Double". Identifying and developing the characteristics, sensitivities and expressions of a shadow aspect of ourselves. We grappled with some of our least attractive and least loved parts of our character. Through images, stories, mask enactment and vocalization, we came face to face with these characters.

Then with a clearer sense of the shadow's essence, we tracked backwards through the spheres to find the source or initial manifestation of this 'Double'.

In which life and what circumstances formed these deep wounds or traumatic experiences that still rob us of our freedom today? This workshop was intense and at times excruciating, but extremely valuable. I personally have come out of it with a whole new relationship with my shadow. This character that previously, repeatedly sabotaged me, now stands by me as an ally. Understanding where it comes from, I now hold not only great compassion but sincere admiration and great appreciation of what it brings me. I realize that it is a vital part of me, who, now accepted and integrated, can bring peace rather than chaos into my life.

Mike also led us through **Steiner's four-day Karma exercise**, starting online and culminating on Sunday morning at Sophia House. This is a simple process of investigating the karmic bond with people in this life. A process that very effectively brings back memories of previous karmic engagements that lead to the present entanglement.

Angela Katschke's gentle solid holding of space, organizing and sound boarding for Mike's, grounded the workshops with a reflective feminine wisdom that softened the process. Her therapeutic drawing exercises left us with some beautiful recorded imagery of our journey, snap shots to remind us of the way.

Having been on my own personal Karmic research solo journey previously, this collective work, the therapeutic wisdom of the processes shared and the gift of all the souls present, served to illuminate the newly found access to the wealth of Steiner's wisdom, the library of resources to be found at Sophia House and the incredible Anthroposophical community.

These workshops were truly life changing for me on various levels. New worlds have opened up to me, the layers of my own soul's karmic character reveals a depth only previously sensed. I come through with a greater sense of my own majesty and a very real sense of support from the spirit world, my soul family and the rock-solid support and protection of my Guardian Angel.

Angela Mac Pherson



*He brings new insight, playful authenticity and real time experience to show and enact a series of methods and pathways to access our greater Karmic personality, through past life experiences. Using these methods, we begin to understand the karma we bring into this life from past lives, the roles we play for each other, and the work we are being called to do in this life for the soul evolution of us all, individually and collectively*



# ... karma drama workshops

Michael Chase at Sophia  
House – Shelani van Niekerk

*There lives in me an image of all that I can be,  
Until I have become it, my heart will not be free*

After attending last year's Karma and Reincarnation Conference at the Sophia House, I felt drawn to the Karma Drama workshops and saw it as a wonderful opportunity to deepen my understanding of this spiritual truth. I especially resonated with the embodiment and practical aspect built on a map inspired by Anthroposophy.

Once again, the wonderful Caroline created a heart-centered space to welcome us in at the Sophia House. With Mike Chase's strong, grounded presence and Angela Katschke's gentle compassion, this environment became a nurturing space and a haven for spiritual investigation.

To introduce ourselves, Mike used a quote, that still rings in my inner ear: "Don't tell me who you are, tell me what you long for and I will know who you are." We got to know each other through our longings and the longing to free my heart unfolded and deepened throughout the process of the first weekend into the second.

Beginning each day with a verse, in this case Rudolf Steiner's gave us a strong center from which to start our work. There was a delicate and steady rhythm of exploring the harvest of the night before into new avenues, each one leading smoothly into the next steering us consciously to sense the cosmic word. I appreciate the wide variety of materials and options we had for experimenting with movement, gesture and in art with colour, or black and white, shapes and textures that might help us delve deeper, awaken something new and bring more clarity.

In such an open-hearted way Mike took us through exercises that embody concepts, some of which I am familiar with and recognized. In these exercises theories went from an intellectual understanding and dropped down into the will. In this way the theory became living words.

In both workshops, Mike and Angela invited us to choose a partner to be the angel person who will bear witness and help us reflect throughout the weekend. They also invited us to explore these guardian angels through exercises and in this way, I believe, we consciously invited our angels to take part in

the process. We were made aware of the spiritual hands that take part in weaving our relationships on earth.

## WEEKEND 1 JANUARY 2025

The first exercise Mike guided us through on the Friday evening delved into 3 different ways of being: From my viewpoint I understood it as: The observer (always on the outside), the experiencer (losing yourself in another), and then the 'I' of a character that meets another 'I'. I especially resonated with the final part of the exercise that invited us to go in between these three, stepping into the character of the other, being observed and observing my own character.

Most of the next day we spent with our angel-person working through our biography in 7-year cycles. Using experiences from his own life as an example, Mike explained the invitation is to choose moments where you made a strong choice in your life. Sharing in more detail he paved the way for us all to trust not only him, but also the process and the community of people around us.

We shared (with our angel-person) the context, the art expression on paper and then made a gesture for each moment we chose. Being asked to stand and gesture from our drawings further intensified the investigation and it became such a nourishing experience to witness the life story of another unfolding in front of my eyes under the trees on a very ordinary day. To embody my own life in this way: I'm not sure I have ever felt so seen before. This was healing.

We built what I am inspired to call an artistic community bio-map as a group with all our drawings. Then separately we were guided through our lives backward beyond the first memory, journeying with a cosmic picture of the planets, our moon karma to our sun agreements to our destiny of this life even further back to the midnight hour where we made our intention to return to earth.

Adapting as we went, Mike and Angela together showed a real sensitivity toward what we needed as a group to help us engage more fully and feel like we truly experienced something—and in the end, we did.

From the beginning of this workshop, I couldn't help feeling that I am exactly where I am supposed to be. I left it with a vast expansion of inner seeing, my soul warm with connection and many more wonderful questions.

## WEEKEND 2 KARMA DRAMA 7-9 FEBRUARY 2025

With a delicate reverence of spiritual realities and an authentic dignity, Mike guided us in a process of exercises, contemplation and reflection to identify a Karmic Double, a shadow part of ourselves that wishes not to be seen. These exercises helped us experience how this hidden being might manifest in our life. We created a persona, gave this being a voice and were invited to journal and draw. It was especially powerful to observe in this conscious process, using masks, how this being shows up in the world and how we lose our own 'I' and forget the other when the double rises unconsciously in our interactions.



In what Mike called a karmic womb; we were offered the opportunity to discover the origin of this double from a previous life. I volunteered with one other person to embody this process and be an example for others how it can be done as a meditation. With the warm and reassuring guidance from Mike, the comfort of my angel-person and the heartfelt support and feedback from the sacred circle of witnesses, it was a potent balm that is still inwardly moving through me, nourishing the ground beneath my feet. The moment anchored in me a vast open sea of possibility. It felt like I had come home.

Somehow this experience has brought me wholly present. It has brought me into an embrace with my angel, a deeper respect and reverence for the lesser guardian and greater guardian of the threshold. I am so moved by this body of work. I noticed how inspired I felt and how this new vitality influenced and still influences my expression, my teaching and has encouraged me even more to pursue the healing and transformational power of drama.

By the end of these powerful workshops, after having explored profound new avenues and with an understanding that it is a continual process of tending to a spiritual organism, I felt gestures root more deeply as a key approach to creating an inner clearing and open what is underneath the surface. I feel the embodiment path or 'putting conscious drama into karma' being a 'walk the talk' of spiritual science. I felt gifted with practical tools to meet my own being more deeply, to recognize my rising double and respond with more liberty. It has been a step toward making peace with the agreements I have made for my life, and what will surely still come my way. I feel immense gratitude for the deep connections and the community. In this world of uncertainty, I have more faith in myself to navigate where I need to go, I trust more deeply in the divine workings of cosmic beings and can find comfort in the relationship of sun souls.

## A vessel of hope dawning

*There is something different in me*

*And it moves me differently*

*As I weave into my destiny*

*I gently meet my past.*

*There is a whole world inside my heart, one that crosses*

*The cosmos and reaches beyond time.*

*I move with inspiration like waves echo forward, I am moved forward*

*I navigate the spiritual waters that reflect reality in my life*

*Like a mirror I am reflected back to myself through you*

*In balance I try to find my true north*

*Even when the shadow falls and my compass is misdirected, I anchor among the sun*

*And meet my sun brothers and sisters beyond,*

*Together we hoist the sails and charter our course anew*

*Toward freedom.*

Shelani van Niekerk



# In remembrance of Rudolf Steiner

Event at Sophia House on the  
100th anniversary of his death day

This event, filled with music, poetry, eurythmy and speech, was just the right length and equally beautifully balanced in how it made a mood and place for the fine art of conversation to happen within it.

Here all 33 participants listened attentively, and I was aware that sensitive nuances could be shared which allowed the essence of spirit to come close, as the contributions built one upon the other.

*“When human beings as knowing beings, summon a place  
of will and feeling we can become sacrificing beings.... we  
become a temple where we see the highest in each other”*

Rudolf Steiner

I cannot capture this conversation in words so easily but here are some of the threads that were shared:

To open Martin Wigand asked a question “What would Rudolf Steiner wish of us now?”. He brought before us two gifts that Steiner gave us late in his life: the Foundation Stone Meditation and the Last Address. Martin emphasized how this Foundation Stone of Love was placed into our hearts, that we may together be able to bring warmth and light into the world. From the last address, Martin drew our questioning as to why Novalis was brought as such a significant being? Was it that in his writings he brings with enthusiasm the theme of love and joy, as in his Fairytales?

Another gave the picture that Novalis presented to us, of the true nature of the human being – that we are of spirit and that we each have a spark of magic within us. It is therefore essential to cultivate this in our times so weighed upon by intellectualism and materialism.

The gift of Fairytales was then highlighted as showing the path of self-development towards achieving the true goal of LOVE.

This thread was further opened by seeing how Rudolf Steiner brought a new element to esoteric life through the Arts which so deeply serves this most essential task we have as humanity now: to develop the faculty



of Imagination, exact Imagination. The threat from AI and transhumanism only serves to emphasize this need.

Then another participant wisely followed by pointing out that, without the faculties of Imagination and Inspiration, we cannot hope to understand what Love truly is.

Then an insight was given into how Novalis’ Hymns to the Night opens the idea of awakening our love for ‘the night’, for the unknown, providing an opening to the spiritual realm and bringing magic realism which Steiner speaks of in his Last Address.

Then it was said that our task lies in recognizing the spirit in each of our fellow human beings and humbly recognize it in oneself, that this may lead us to love and ultimately the recognition of the ‘I Am’.

To close the conversation, we were reminded to take seriously Rudolf Steiner’s words - that he will always be available to be called upon.

I wish to express deep gratitude to 6 people who came together, over the weeks, to craft this programme: pianist Tim Hyslop, eurythmists: Christiane Wigand and Michelle Kaplan and the four speakers: Michelle Kaplan, Martin Wigand, Andreas van Breda and Richard Cox.

Thank you for your unique collaboration that brought about an event that left everyone with a glow and gentle lingering amongst one another at the close. This together with the quality of the conversation shared, I feel are symptoms that we are gradually approaching what the Last Address asks of us - to sense what it is to bring about a Michaelmas Festival.

This event was a collaboration of the arts with spirit substance, directed by our united clear will. Could I even dare to say, using a fairytale image, that we are working towards bringing about a bridge, as the Green Snake gave of herself, that we may cross and return from one side of the river to the other in the ‘right way’, so deeply needed for Our Time.

Caroline Hurner



*I would enkindle all human beings  
From out of the Spirit of the cosmos  
To become a flame  
And unfold in fire  
Their being’s very nature*

*The others, they would take,*

*Out of the cosmos, water  
To quench with it the flames;  
And dampening all being,  
Lame it from within.*

*Oh joy, when the human flame  
Is aglow, even where it rests;  
Oh bitterness, when the human thing  
Is bound there, where it longs to be active.*

The verse that Rudolf Steiner wrote from his sick bed,  
two weeks before his death



*“He spoke  
and as he spoke  
there appeared in  
him the Zodiac  
the Cherubim and  
Seraphim,  
the Sun Orb.....”  
from “Who heard Rudolf Steiner speak”  
by Christian Morgenstern*

Image “The Sun” by Edvard Munch created in 1911

A QUIET REMEMBRANCE OF RUDOLF STEINER  
on the 100th anniversary of his death day with impulses for the future.

All welcome

Music, Eurythmy, Poetry, Conversation and a short extract from one of the Mystery Dramas

Sunday 30 March 5pm in the Group Room at Sophia House, 18 Firfield Rd, Plumstead



# Kufunda Village Learning Festival

Zimbabwe 28 April – 2 May 2025

Pulling my suitcase containing 83 wooden balls I walked out of the arrivals hall at Harare International Airport and looked around expectantly. "Someone will be there to meet you and bring you back to my place," Maaianne Knuth had said. Sure enough a young man with a board marked "Kufunda Village" broke into a big smile when I introduced myself. He ushered me to a dusty bakkie filled with various items necessary for the smooth running of the 5-day Learning Festival where I was to offer eurythmy each morning to the whole group of participants hailing from initiatives and communities across Zimbabwe. Enock was part of the logistics team tasked with catering to their needs, no mean feat when the exact number of those needing to be fed and housed, somewhere between 70 and over 100 at this point, would only be known in all likelihood on the first day. I marvelled at how relaxed he seemed and open to any eventuality.

We soon left the smooth tar road and bumped our way into the glorious dark of an African night. Suddenly, at a crossroads, I was surprised to enter a vibrant space of light, music, traders and joyous revellers as we passed through "a type of mall" with open air shops and pubs (it was Saturday night after all) only to be quickly swallowed by the quiet bush dimly illuminated by our headlights as we bounced over the potholes. My first surprise in a week and a land that continued to amaze and challenge my perceptions. Like walking through the village the following day with its flat, red, sandy soil and fine-foliaged forest and suddenly spying a huge, rounded piece of granite towering above the trees, yet hidden by them, and balancing precariously one atop the other as if a giant had just finished playing marbles. For my daily 'sit-spot' which during the week we were invited to retreat to, to reflect on our experiences and observe nature, I found a smaller version of such a rock. Rising gently in its roundness from unfathomable depths it offered its ageless support, endurance and lessons of patience amidst all the coming into being and dying away of the trees, grasses, insects and birds that encircled it. Thus helping me to still my busy thoughts, sink deep into the weight of my body and truly experience "the resisting might of earth."

The intention of the Kufunda Village Learning Festival was to explore, teach and share with their wider community the principles of the Art of Hosting in an embodied, participatory and dynamic way. What does it take in practice for me to host myself? To be open to being hosted? To take leadership and initiative in order to host the other? And in so doing to co-create something new together? And how do I learn to look with an appreciative eye, rather than only at what is lacking? Alongside this intention was the aim to explore how Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Science weaves together with the above principles which form the bedrock of the Kufunda Village practice.

The learning festival was loosely structured along the lines of the All Africa Anthroposophical Training which inspired its inception, with all participants gathering in the mornings and then breaking into specific work-related workshops in the afternoons after a delicious lunch of stew and sadza cooked over a fire and salads from the village BD garden. Evenings were kept free to socialise or have an early night.

Each day started outside the meeting room in a very large circle of over 70 people, plus a few dogs, where we sang and danced our way into the day followed by 45 minutes of social eurythmy. My aim was to give participants an embodied experience of the intentions informing the learning festival. Over the week we built up a complex, interweaving form based on the gestures of 'I', 'you' and 'we', making these relationships visible in space and time. We did this through the physical giving and receiving of wooden balls while performing ever more complex and interweaving movements. This awoke participants to the challenge of what it takes to pay attention to oneself while interacting with numerous others in the hurly burly of life - how to consciously host myself amidst the clamour of outer demands, and how to overcome my need to control when chaos threatens. This required coming back to oneself time and again, and striving to see, in the moment, what is needed to help others do the same. We deepened the movement by becoming aware not only of what we were doing but how we were





moving - taking personal responsibility for inwardly following my own movement before moving it outwardly, following each other's arm movements while we were contracting and expanding the circles together, becoming aware of where our neighbours were even when moving in opposite directions to them, striving to see not just my movement but the movement which is wanting to become manifest. We asked ourselves, am I moving just out of my own will, or am I listening with my whole being for the bigger 'Will', to consciously align my movements and actions to this infinite flow of movement and thus be of service to the world?

To strengthen this inner activity we ended with an individual exercise connecting us to our own centre, verticality and 'pillar of Light' - to that which is highest in us - while simultaneously connecting to that which is highest in and moves through us from the living world. We did this to a verse by Rudolf Steiner:

*I feel my fate,  
My fate finds me.  
I feel my star,  
My star finds me.  
I feel my aims in life,  
My aims in life find me.  
I and the whole world,  
Are one.*

What so impressed me was that despite the enormous size of the group and the wonderful presence of small children moving amongst us as we moved in the sunlight, despite the complexity of the form and the passing of over 70 balls between us, there was a strong capacity to move from expansive laughter and moments of chaos into immediate inner stillness and self-containment. This ability of the group to engage so earnestly with the eurythmy spoke to me of their capacity for making meaning of the movement and all that it was requiring of them, of how it had a relevance for their life and work in their own communities. This all contributed to those magical moments where the eurythmy really came alive and together we experienced the living spiritual substance between us, created through our collective, conscious awareness.

My one regret was that on the last morning, after we had all mastered the form and could move it harmoniously together, I did not re-introduce the giving and receiving of the balls to challenge them one last time. It was my own

fear of potential chaos and lack of faith in the group's ability to work through it in a short time that prevented me from taking this risk, thus depriving them of the opportunity to rise to the challenge which now, on reflection, I am certain they could have. From this I take away a deep learning that it is how I see the other, together with how I face my fear of chaos and need to control, that either limits the other or sets them free.

We reflected on the eurythmy each day through art facilitated by Angela Katschke. This resulted in a beautiful wall-mounted collage arranged by us all from the many individual, richly coloured squares that had accumulated over the week. After this reflection we were very ready to listen to and integrate the ideas and concepts of Appreciative Inquiry and the Art of Hosting that Maaianne brought, as well as the often-controversial Anthroposophical input from Trevor Button which stimulated much interest and many questions and drew a large group around him during the Open Space Technology session held on one of the days.

The afternoon workshops ranged from Bio-dynamic farming and Waldorf teaching (both kindergarten and primary) to Community Building, Community Healing through Art, and Healing Community Trauma through family constellations. The vibrancy and depth of engagement with the content and process of each workshop was evident in the often very creative sharing by participants at the end of each day. Angela shared how moved she was by the deep impact the opportunity for artmaking and the richness of colour of the oil pastels made on her workshop participants and we heard from many of them how inspired and resolved they were to include this form of healing into the work they were doing in their own communities. The Kufunda kindergarten teacher and her colleague from a nearby school shared their joy at the number of men who joined the workshop they facilitated together and how knitting was rather a challenge for them. All the teachers expressed how valuable it was to share what they do with each other (and it looked like a lot of fun) and resolved to invite more mainstream teachers to the next learning gathering, because another one there surely will be. On the final day the Community Building group very practically transformed their discovery of a community need of the little Waldorf school by setting to work and building a semi-circle of simple log benches for the children to sit, balance and play on under the shade of a large tree.

On a few afternoons I joined the large group of men and women doing the BD workshop where horn manure was made and the cow-dung-filled horns were buried to mature. We also learned to use the newly made 'broad fork', an enormous fork with tines 50cm long and made to spec in the village from recycled car shock absorbers. A favourite memory is of watching the strong and determined women in their beautiful dresses and jewellery, dancing back and forth and side to side on the fork to plunge it into the rock-solid soil and crack it open so the air can enter bringing with it its life-giving forces. This too was one of my biggest



learnings – to use all my senses to listen to, trust and inwardly follow the thread of Life all the way. As in a compost heap, where is it warm, where is it cold, where is it merely stagnating or rotting and where truly metamorphosing into new, life supporting substance? And most importantly, to dancingly learn to crack open the hardened spaces in ourselves and our communities and so doing, let the transforming power of the 'air of consciousness' to enter. To truly host 'Life'.

Thank you Maaianne and your wonderful Kufunda Village team for affording me the opportunity to work together with you all. It was a very rich and fruitful experience.

By Liz Smith



# Michael Grimley's 80th Birthday

"No big parties" was Michael's loud and clear instruction when preparing to celebrate his milestone birthday.

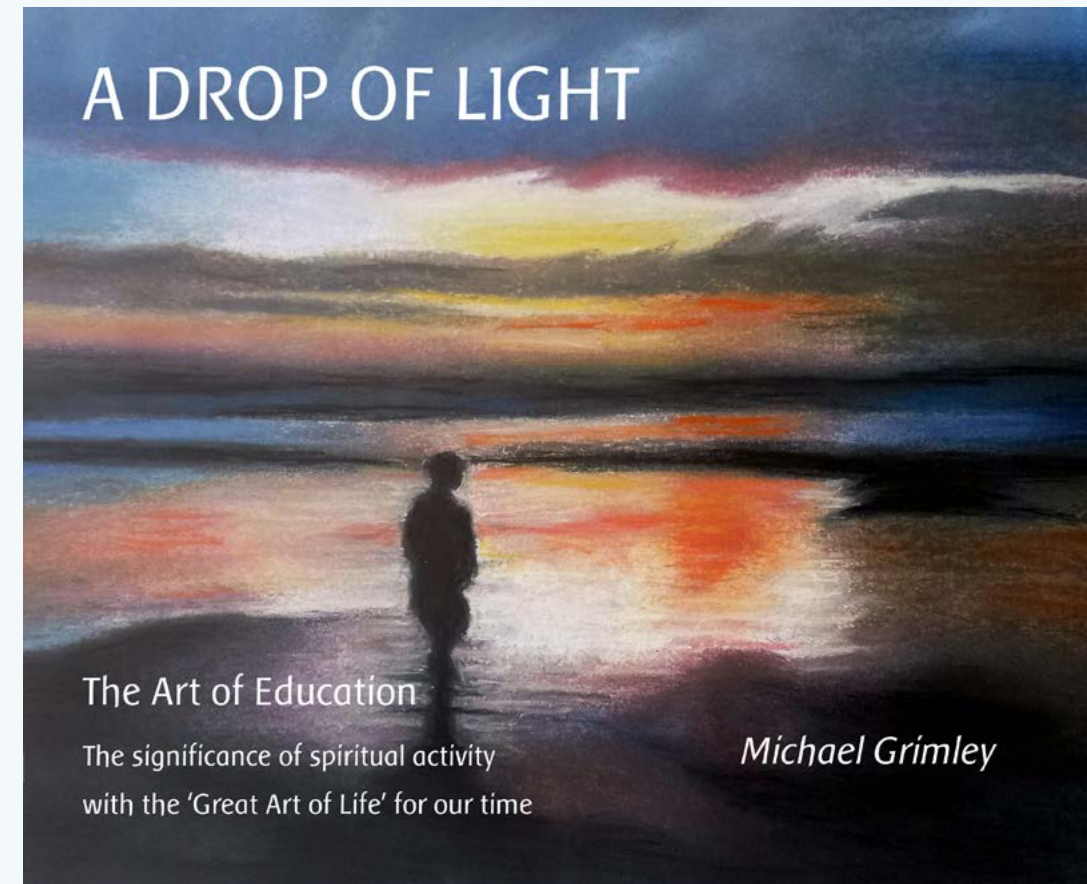
So, we had lots of little ones... spur of the moment ones, surprise ones, long anticipated organised ones... McGregor, Cape Town, Franschoek, Melkbosstrand... His sister from Johannesburg came, his daughter from England, my son from Canada (coincidence that he was here ). I lost count of how many dinners we had out, how much cake we ate, how many gifts and cards he received – he was well and truly celebrated.

Angela Katschke and Caroline Hurner organised his surprise party at Sophia House. We took his name off the members WhatsApp list, Angela designed the inspiring invitation, Caroline and Debbie collected names, and Caroline and Angela waved their magic wands in the library. Michael was completely taken by surprise when he entered the room full of people. We put him in a corner with two vacant chairs on either side of him, so that friends could join him individually... he loved that. Friends spoke, he spoke, his sister spoke, we all spoke to each other, we heard about his childhood, mainly from his sister, others added, he spoke about how he came to anthroposophy. He cut the huge amazing birthday cake made by Angela, we all participated in the magnificent spread that everyone had brought, we all had opportunities to connect with each other and with him. He felt so warmed, so celebrated, so connected. He is still talking about it.

Thank you to all of you who made this such a special occasion for him - for the gift of your presence, other gifts, cards, messages from those of you who couldn't be there. Thank you for acknowledging him – he is feeling content and peaceful.

Thank you.

Briar Grimley



## Drop of Light – The Art of Education

This is the title for Michael's latest book which was published ready for the Country Wide teachers' conference and his 80th birthday on 17 April 2025!

It has the most wonderful subtitle: *The significance of spiritual activity with the 'Great Art of Life' for our time*. In this sentence those of us who know Michael can feel what a culmination this book is of his life's work. Twelve chapters full of living wisdom and relevant for our time.

From the gifts – the seeds - which Rudolf Steiner gave for the Waldorf Movement, Michael leads us toward developing our further capacities to penetrate the boundaries of a spiritual reality, which are called for when we address what faces us in the present and look towards the future.

We salute you Michael, for your courage, your determination, and sensitivity in all you have brought to the Society, to this movement, to our country that *Drops of Light* have

been received from the Spirit of our Time. You have served so that we become a more living community with heart, to carry out the 'Great Art of Life' that "builds a chariot upon which Michael can enter our outworn dragon civilization" – an image from R Steiners XIII lecture of 'The Younger Generation' 15 Oct 1922.

Caroline Hurner

*Drop of Light* is on sale at Sophia House Library together with his two other books: *Consciousness and Truth- a Story of how the First World War began* (2014): *The Fog of Untruth – a view of why the First World War began and its consequences* (2023)



# The Plett Annual Land Art Event

Spring 2024

In Spring 2024 I took part in the Plett Art Residency, an annual Land Art event, that runs alongside the Plett Arts Festival.

Land Art is a powerful instrument that connects people to nature and to each other. During the whole week invited artists were encouraged to work with sensitivity and playfulness in response to the elements, as they selected materials found on site.

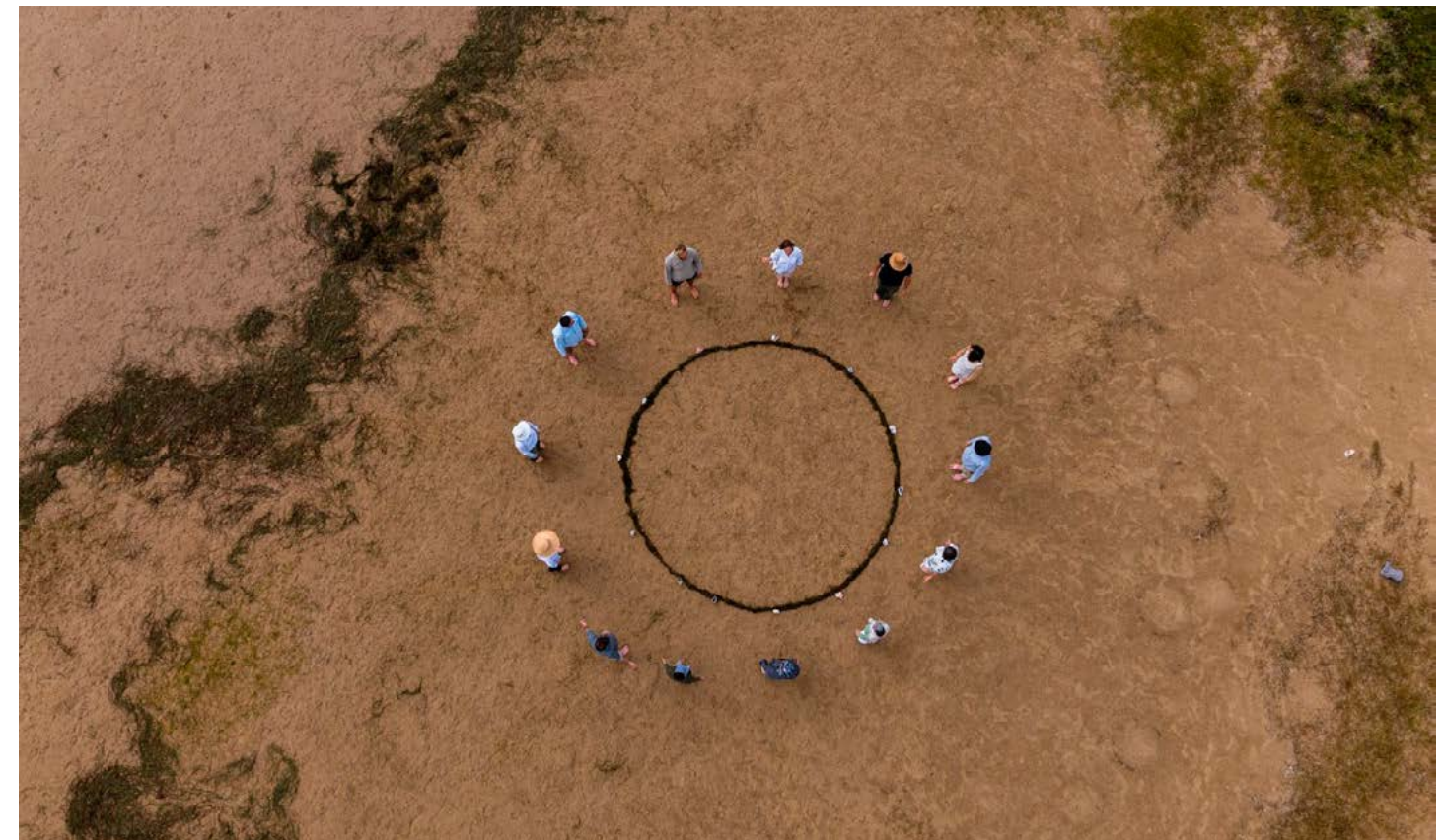
In the 4th edition of the Plett Land Art artists have been invited to participate in three exquisite locations on specific days to enable them to focus together on each area and to allow visitors to find them making magic at these three locations. Ephemeral by its very nature, some works were fragile and quickly reclaimed by the wild. Others gently lingered, with zero impact on the environment, dependent on materials and the landscape. Some artists included in their work elements of poetry, performance and ritual, enabling new perspectives and ways of embracing nature. My offering included eurythmy performance, sound installation and eurythmy movement meditation.

As a gift to the Earth I performed an extract from R.M Rilke's "The Ninth Duino Elegy" at the Robert Leggat's Bronze Fields Foundry. At Brackenburn Private Nature Reserve I created a sound installation that was available to visitors who could compose their own melody. Poortjies Beach Estuary emerged as a perfect landscape for a participatory movement meditation "Earth Heart Art" in which those who gathered could express reverence and gratitude for the Earth.

It has been an incredible journey and I am very grateful to the Plett Land Art for creating a space for creativity and deep connection.

by Asia Bass

Asia teaches at the Kairos Eurythmy School and at Constantia Waldorf.





# Letter from Geralyn and Julio Laset

to our community -

We will depart from South Africa back to the Philippines after 19 years of deepest service at Camphill Community Hermanus.

On this day, Steiner's 100th death anniversary and because of your communities deep commitment in carrying Anthroposophy into the world and imbuing and inspiring others like us, we would like to express our heart-felt gratitude for all the love and support we have received through the years. Though we may not have been active in the events of the society here in SA, we were surely doing our own bit here at Camphill Hermanus.

Now it's time for us to move on and try to carry Anthroposophy ourselves into the world especially in our own country. We will also carry with us all the good memories, the things we learned, the fulfilling life and work we had, the friendships we made, etc. into the future which is now calling us.

May you continue to be blessed in all the good work that you do.

Farewell!

with love and gratitude,

Geralyn and Julio Laset together with their son Emmanuel



Geralyn and Julio arrived in 2006



Geralyn and Julio leave SA in 2025

# In appreciation of Geralyn and Julio

Apart from their faithful and loving service as House Parents, Doctor, Teacher and Therapeutic Eurythmist to Camphill Hermanus, they have also given for wonderful support to the Southern Cross Eurythmy Therapy Training – SCETT.

Geralyn, while completing her Eurythmy Training entered the SCETT training to further her Eurythmy in Eurythmy Therapy. She was a diligent student and became a Eurythmy Therapist. The fruits of this training she brought to Hermanus Camphill school and many children were helped to overcome the obstacles in their lives.

Julio continued to support SCETT through helping with the financial reports and financial statements keeping track on all the expenditure and income. For this I was most grateful.

I will miss their warmth and goodwill and lovely messages from their son, Emmanuel, received for all the festivals.

I wish them every success in their new endeavour to bring Anthroposophy and Camphill Community to the Philippines.

Julia O'Leary

*If the world is to be healed through human efforts, I am convinced it will be by ordinary people, people whose love for this life is even greater than their fear. People who can open to the web of life that called us into being....*

*You don't need to do everything. Do what calls your heart; effective action comes from love. It is unstoppable, and it is enough....*

*The most radical thing any of us can do at this time is to be fully present to what is happening in the world.....*

*To be alive in this beautiful, self-organizing universe -- to participate in the dance of life with senses to perceive it, lungs that breathe it, organs that draw nourishment from it — is a wonder beyond words.*

Joanna Macy



# Letter from Dankbaar Farm

– formally Afrikara.

Dear friends all,

I am in the process of moving onto the land again. By his month of June, I will be part of the 'Earth Community' at 'Dankbaar'; the farms' original name (former Hoekiesdam) former Dairy Co-op, 'Afrikara'.

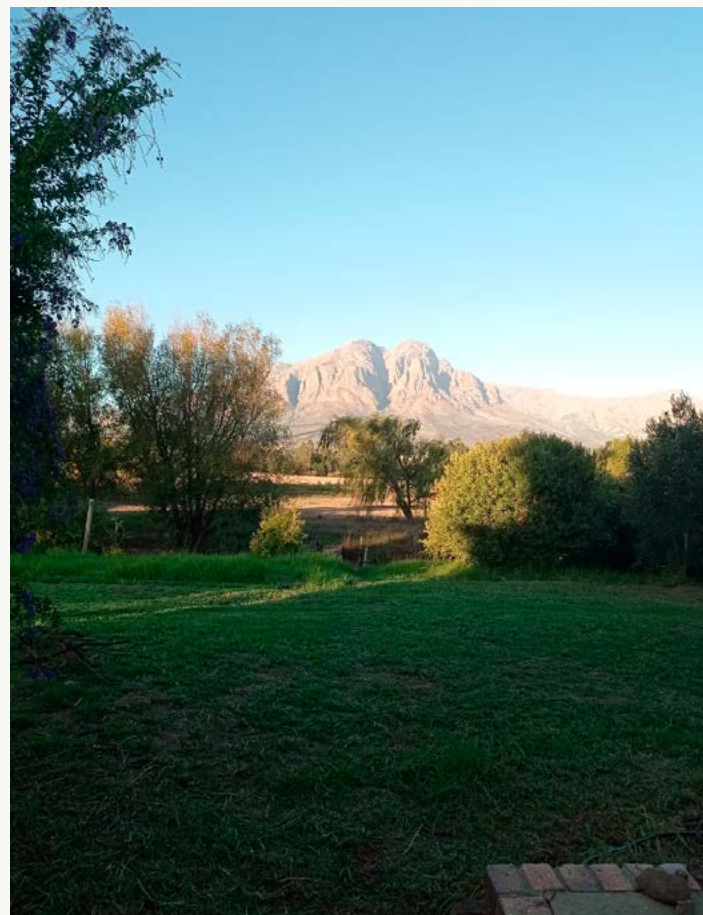
I have been visiting over the last year and witnessed a committed spiritual renewal through reconciliation of society and clearing of spaces, hearts and gardens to grow community, herbs and other food plants,

Indigenous Bee Forage will be a special and intensive work focus towards creating a Bee Sanctuary.

Visitors, campers (up to 6) and overnighers are welcome.

Contact me at +27 82 830 1758 for more information.

Eastlynne Nelson-Tansley



# Miha Pogacnik's Violin Concert

at Novalis Ubuntu Centre on  
5th March 2025

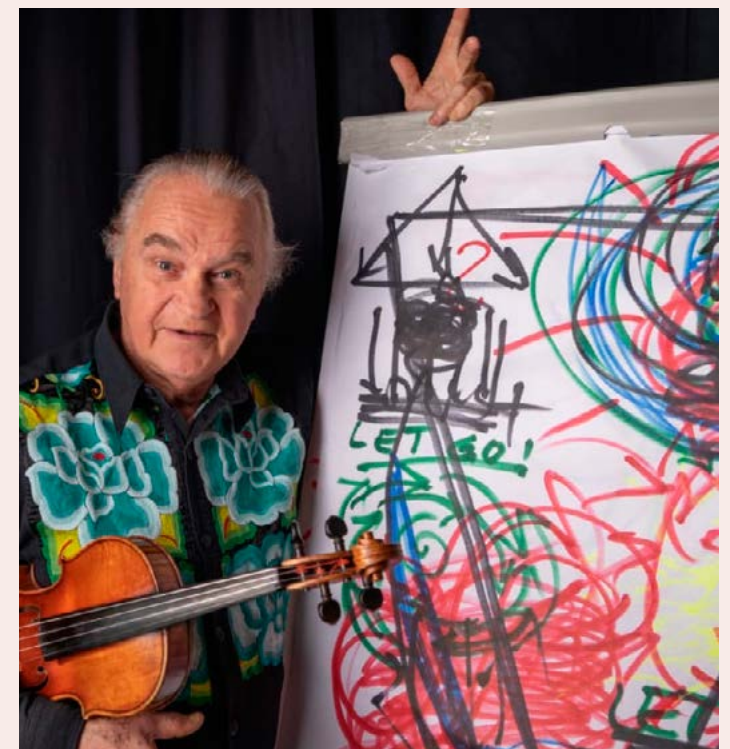
What an intense experience we were all gifted with! Miha walked in from the back playing Bach's Chaconne for Solo Violin which one can only describe as monumental. He led us through its 35 variations, verbally opening a mighty vista for us: "perhaps we will hear when Noah lands on the mountain"; "see the star shine over Bethlehem" and so the piece became as a biography of an extraordinary being

Miha vehemently proclaimed art is not entertainment, rather it brings you to a place of spirit and Miha uses his violin as a key to this place.

He helped us awaken to what is happening in us when we hear a piece of music, using several masterpieces, with their archetypal timeless quality. At the hand of a Schubert Movement he demonstrated the unfolding of the music - swiftly drawing the dynamics of the phrases with koki pens on a flip-chart - he showed us the process of the piece, how elements pull apart, raise and expand, become frailer, experience pain, then a crisis, and transformation and on through new gates till finally arriving at the chalice of the grail.

Miha Pogacnik we experienced as a creative genius, an exceptional musical virtuoso, and we learnt that he is also a master on management platforms. His audiences include parliaments and top Universities in search of societal solutions. This Whitsun he led a journey following the geographical trail of the Parsifal saga with the aim to build bridges, to meet the diversity of generations, cultures and disciplines. Within this was facilitated a personal journey where through biography work one could align with one's pre-birth intention. What vision this man has! We were privileged to experience his passion here in the Cape and thank Anne-Lise Burer and the Novalis Ubuntu Institute for hosting him.

Caroline Huner





# Dialoguing with Our Inner and Outer Waters –

An immersion into etheric  
fluidity through eurythmy and  
the nature of water

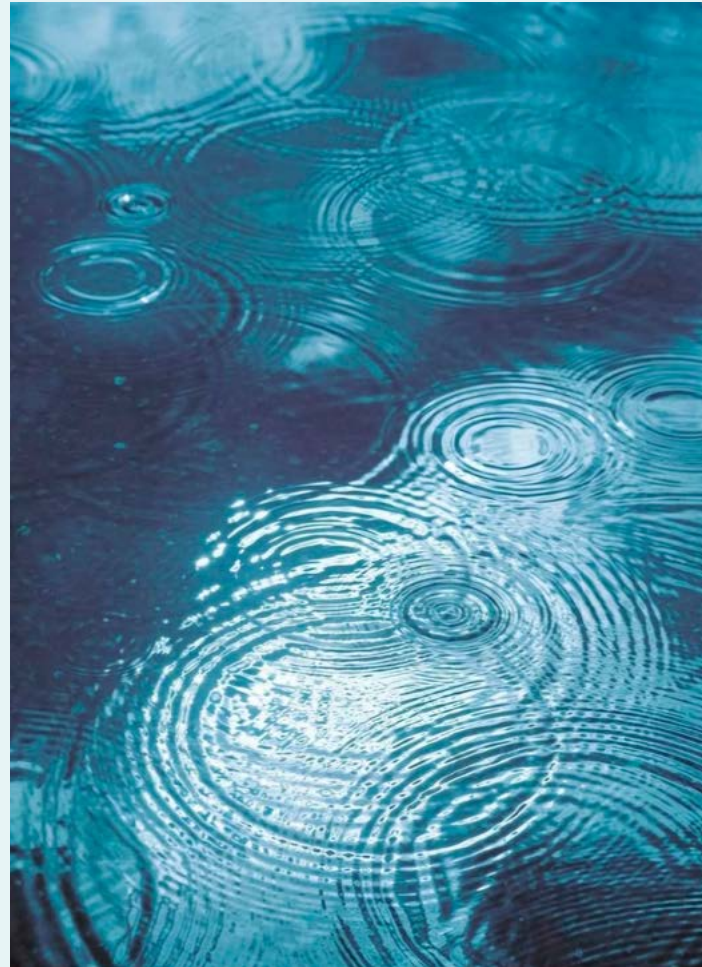
We all received a generous invitation to gather on World Water Day, 22 March, to explore water. This day was conceived by Liesl Haasbroek as a gesture of gratitude to the ASWC for helping her attend the Science Section of Great Britain and North America conference Formative Fluidity.

Thank you Liesl for what you enabled to happen when we gathered at the Noordhoek Studio "Quella". You brought such a creative group of colleagues together: Allette Venter, Liz Smith; Cobie Roelvert; and Howard Dobson to help us dive into and explore inner and outer fluidity. Thank you each one of you for giving so freely of your time, allowing us, the participants, to experience a day so pure, so refreshing and life giving.... just the qualities belonging to water!

For the last artistic activity of the day we were led by Cobie using only the one eurythmy gesture for "L" - the consonant epitomising water. We became so gently sensitised in our hands, to our touch, flowing this gesture around our knees. This space of sensitivity and life force was gradually expanded, growing as a heavenly halo over our day. It was a sacred activity.

It happens that Liesl's name begins and ends with "L", surely not a coincidence. For she serves to enable that life is awakened, lived in all aspects of those she meets.

Caroline Huner



# Country wide Teachers' Conference

Held at Michael Oak in May

What a delight it was to attend the 2025 Connect Conference! From the first step into the foyer one could feel the deep thought and loving and meticulous care in every detail of the organisation. As we stepped into the first gathering from our own separate worlds, parallel realities and the daily challenges we meet, the feeling of a shared commonality and a universally human experience was striking and a soothing, comforting, healing balm.

The gift of an exceptional eurythmy performance and Wilfried Böhm's opening address with surprising threads from history, architecture, literature and art drawn together formed an apt introduction for all the work of the following days, inspiring reflection on our own connections as teachers and our own inner transformation.

The lectures, discussions, self-care groups and practical workshops were carefully planned to highlight and build on the content received in Tessabella Lovemore's morning talks, encouraging us to find new ways to connectedness with one another and the children we teach, overcoming barriers and discovering, in Tessabella's words, our ability to love and connect with everyone.

Grethe Botha

ASWC member and teacher at the McGregor Fountain Waldorf School

# Commemorating the centenary of Rudolf Steiner's death at the Goetheanum,

At the conference commemorating the centenary of Rudolf Steiner's death at the Goetheanum, Linda Williams from the United States spoke about her relationship to Rudolf Steiner through a letter she wrote to Brother Dr. Steiner which touched many hearts.

Here is a brief extract:

"You walked with me Brother Steiner and I learned to teach – mainly because I learned to learn through the path of anthroposophy. When my nephew was born with Down's Syndrome and was able to experience Camphill Beaver Run, you showed me through our anthroposophical community how to care for our most vulnerable. When my loved ones crossed the threshold, you taught me how to hold them and remain in relationship with them.

Through study groups and artistic work and my meditative life, I stayed in conversation with you and you brought me into conversation with the Divine Sophia and the Cosmic Christ. And as I studied further and joined the community of the School of Spiritual Science and the Pedagogical Section, I met you again through fellow seekers."





The important thing is to have the courage to move forward and not to become fearful or cowardly. Given the current world situation, human beings are threatened by a distressing passivity. However, Rudolf Steiner taught and lived the opposite - and the building of the first anthroposophical institutions was carried out energetically against all resistance. These forces must be rediscovered in the present so that they can accompany anthroposophy and the Anthroposophical Society in the future.

“Rudolf Steiner saw man with increasing clarity at a point in evolution where only his will could still bring about a favourable change. He also saw knowledge as dependent on this will. His work became a unique effort to encourage man.” (Michael Bauer)

The text above appears on the back cover of the work  
“The Will for the Future”, by Peter Selg