

# The Speech Sound Etudes: Feeling the Gestures and Finding the Figures<sup>1</sup>

*A detailed research report on evoking the movement  
of the Logos through intensive speech-work with poetic  
miniatures on the speech sounds, offered in honor of  
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An essential companion to  
**THE SPEECH SOUND ETUDES**  
speech-work and the work of eurythmy

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## PROLOGUE

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## PROLOGUE

It has come time for me to share the fruits of my re-approach to eurythmy<sup>2</sup> after having put it aside for over two decades. I have been laying a fresh foundation for my artistic activity by means of intensive speech-work. This report will share in detail how I've unfolded this work and what treasure has emerged from it. Before studying eurythmy, my background had been in music and English literature. While attending the eurythmy school in Spring Valley NY, I served as a pianist for the other classes; and I worked with third and fourth year students on their tone eurythmy solos and had wonderful experiences performing these pieces with them. My class was the ninth to graduate from the school – we were 'I' Course.

During my first three years out, I taught lay speech eurythmy; but although I knew that I was a good teacher in what I offered, I wasn't able to embody eurythmy at all well enough to command the respect for it that I felt it deserves. This situation was upsetting for me, because my background suited me for engaging with adults in the public and in colleges where I might have been able to do my best work; but I simply couldn't continue.

### The burning questions remained

Two questions ached in me all these years: What is missing here? And even if I knew what is missing, what would satisfy that need?

I always carried the idea that if eurythmy was for some reason lost we could find it again. Inasmuch as we are transferring the 'eurythmizing' of our larynx into the movement of our limbs and the whole of our being,\* we will always have the means of recovering eurythmy from within and of discovering ever-fresh possibilities. (\*See *Curative Eurythmy*, Lecture 1, Dornach, April 12, 1921, pp. 1-7. NOTE: Page count is usually indicated here rather than page numbers because editions can vary.)

As it happened, in late Fall 2012 I was looking toward eurythmy again. The course of my life had allowed me to come into a clearing. Many other times I had turned toward eurythmy only to find it unmanageable and fraught with debris from past experiences and uneasy impressions that couldn't be quelled, that had to be digested before anything new could begin.

But now, as I surveyed this clearing, I saw many things. Of course I was acquainted with the Figures that Rudolf Steiner had drawn in 1922 for twenty of the speech sounds; I had tried to find my way into working with them while in school. I was acquainted with their general nature, with their three colors and their odd veil shapes and character zone hatchings. I felt an unrequited longing to find sense in them, as I think many eurythmists do.

In more recent years I had studied the lectures that Steiner gave us in 1924, the last full year of his life: *Eurythmy as Visible Speech (EVS)*. I knew what he had said about the individual sounds, and about how they unfold as words, as sequences of sounds, such as 'rascheln' – rustle, or 'Leim' – glue (*EVS*, Lectures 4 and 2). He had said that "*eurythmy can be made deeply interesting when one gradually learns to lead one sound over into the next. Thus we see that the truly spiritual element in eurythmic movement is brought about by the way in which one sound arises out of the other*" (*EVS*, Lecture 8, 2<sup>nd</sup> page). With the Figures and with this lecture cycle it seemed to me that Steiner had planted seeds for fresh growth: this was not just a reiteration of what had unfolded to that point.

In a lecture to speakers and actors that same year, Steiner spoke of the sculptural nuances to be found in the shapes of words. A word beginning with a firm sound, such as **D**, where we let it run into flow with **L**, is completely different from a word that begins with a living flow, **L**, but where we "*carry it into the earth element, letting it become fast and firm*" with **D**: 'Diele' – a plank, a solid thing that unfolds itself in length, and 'Lied' – a song, something that "*lives in the soul*" and is given form (*Speech and Drama, SpD*, Lecture 17, p. 6). There would be such fulfillment in being able to sculpt in movement the living word-shapes that hold and clothe their meaning with a power that in our time suffers a hidden existence – words that are each a piece of our own etheric body (about etheric formative forces, see ENDNOTE 2).

In my library I had the precious lecture by Steiner, "The Lost Unison Between Speaking and Thinking" (July 18, 1915). He said that through the gift of the Deed of Christ we are given the means and strength to heal the rift between the sounding of the words of our language and the mental pictures and conceptual meanings that belong to them. "*The Spirits of Form [Exusiai] had intended for the human being a loving living-within speaking, a speaking that bears thinking itself on its wings, you could say, and not a kind of speaking from which the sap of thinking has been pressed out.*" In hearing even a foreign language, the human being "*would not have heard merely the husk of the sound of the word; in the word, in the sound, he would also have heard the mental image, carried on the wings of the words; the words have been peeled away from*

the mental images” (“Lost Unison,” pp. 4-5; see also *SpD*, Lecture 1, p. 4ff; see my ENDNOTE 4). My conviction is that eurythmy must act with potency to restore this ‘lost unison’ between sounding and meaning, so that the Logos lives again in everything we express through language.

To my great joy, my personal study of *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity (PSA)* gained companions in a small study group. My entrance to anthroposophy had been the lecture, “The Work of the Angels in Man’s Astral Body”<sup>\*</sup> and Chapter 13, “The Act of Cognition,” in *A Theory of Knowledge*. These readings belong together and represent the second, “more sure” and “above all more exact” path to sense-free thinking that Steiner laid before us (*Occult Science*, Ch. 5, third section, 2/3 in). I now took hold of this path anew. I felt supported by both Steiner and the group in my new direction in eurythmy, and I embraced what it means to be a ‘free spirit’ in these contexts. (\*Zurich, October 9, 1918. Regarding ‘free spirit,’ see *PSA*, Ch. 12.)

In Chapter 8 of *PSA*, at the end of his “Addition to the Revised Version, 1918,” Steiner wrote (his emphasis): “One who is willing to *experience intuitively* in thinking, will also be able to do justice to what is experienced in the realm of feeling and in the element of will, whereas mysticism of feeling and metaphysics of will are incapable of doing justice to the activity of permeating existence with intuitive thinking.” In that paragraph he also wrote that when thinking “dives down into the phenomena of the world ... this diving down is done by a power that flows within thinking activity itself, the power of spiritual love.”<sup>3</sup> These statements made a deep impression on me as they relate to “diving down” into the reality that is eurythmy. And while philosophers shape and communicate ideas as “artists in concepts” (*PSA* near the end of the Revised Introduction, 1894), in eurythmy, we ourselves are our philosophy, and this shows in all that we do.

And I learned The Eurythmy Meditation, the seed that Steiner offered us the last year of his life, urging us to provide the fertile ground it needs. Through it, I receive complete freedom to engage my will, my heart and my thinking – all three to my heart’s content and to whatever extent is possible for me; and I receive complete affirmation of my determination to “seek within.”

*“I seek within  
The Working of Creative Forces,  
The Living of Creative Powers.  
It tells me  
Of Earth’s Might of Weight  
Through the word of my feet,  
It tells me  
Of Air’s Forces of Form  
Through the singing of my hands,  
It tells me  
Of Heaven’s Power of Light  
Through the sensing of my head,  
How the World in Man  
Speaks, sings, senses.”*

(Rendering by Kate Reese Hurd)

The original in German:

*“Ich suche im Innern  
Der schaffenden Kräfte Wirken,  
Der schaffenden Mächte Leben.  
Es sagt mir  
Der Erde Schweremacht  
Durch meiner Füße Wort,  
Es sagt mir  
Der Lüfte Formgewalt  
Durch meiner Hände Singen,  
Es sagt mir  
Des Himmels Lichteskraft  
Durch meines Hauptes Sinnen,  
Wie die Welt im Menschen  
Spricht, singt, sinnt.”*

## **PART ONE: MY PREPARATION AND WORK THUS FAR** **The answer to my first question**

The answer to my question, “what is missing here?” is this: I knew in my heart and mind that I had not personally verified the fundamentals of speech eurythmy, the gestures for the speech sounds. I realized that this lack was a huge stumbling block for me when bringing anything at all of eurythmy to the public. My aim, therefore, was to become fit to find the gestures and the Figures out of my own being and to corroborate what Steiner pointed to with these Figures. I know that this is a tall order; but it is the order of the day in the Age of Michael: I would try.

Without reviewing the drawings themselves, I put the twenty Figure drawings completely away after making a random listing of what sorts of colors Steiner had named. My preparations began. I worked diligently on writing with my toes and on three-part walking, to wake up my feet and be able to move easily in all directions, frontally. My dissatisfaction with how ‘lift-carry-place’ reflects only my part in the walking led me to establish instead a dynamic dialogue with the earth, now reflected in the words ‘leave-free-meet.’ The transitions came out distinctly then, and right in the fact of walking it came clear that “the art is in the technique,” just as Steiner said.<sup>4</sup> I performed the Agrippa von Nettesheim positions<sup>5</sup> jumping, calling my will to attention in my work. My upright is the first position of seven and the circle my arms can sense at the end is a completion, a kind of octave. I worked with the seven rod exercises, but now looking for every way to approach them that could help me direct my awareness to anywhere in my being and in the space around me: I had to feel where my elbows are, or where the back of my neck or my thighs are, or the right or left of my head, and etc. The all-important onlooker would need to grasp where my attention is without my moving a muscle. I would need to sense the shape of my dress and where the different parts of my veil are moving. This is ongoing work, of course, to attain sufficient mastery. (References regarding onlookers are at the end of ENDNOTE 14; and see p. 18 here, regarding my articles on walking and on the seven rod exercises.)

And then, colors! Steiner said, “*eurythmists must accustom themselves to live in the world of colour*” (*EVS*, Ch. 6, end). This statement has far-reaching implications. I took it seriously. I must be able to move from the experience of one shade of color to another instantly; and when seeking to know how each speech sound wants to move – to feel its impulse and follow it – I would have to be able to differentiate and name what color I’m experiencing, to say how light or dark it is or whether it is brown, black, white or some shade of grey.

### And an answer to my second question came

The challenge now was to find the means to immerse myself in the sounding of the speech sounds so strongly that I would be able to discern their impulses and their characteristics directly and learn to lead the inward movements of my larynx over into my limbs and my being.

I knew what Steiner had said to Lory Maier-Smits, our first eurythmist. She wrote: “*I should do speech exercises. Speak sentences which had only one vowel, and observe exactly what was happening in my throat, and this I should then ... dance! As an example he wrote: ‘Barbara sass stracks am Abhang’ [Barbara sat directly on the slope].*” But by her report, Lory was unable to find speech sound gestures through doing this. So Steiner began to give her suggestions, telling her: “*Learn to feel this as*” *i* (ee) or *ü* (ah) or *o*, etc. And he gave her mental images, whole nature scenes to depict for her what the consonant sounds are like. (See Siegloch, *How the New Art of Eurythmy Began*, p. 20 and p. 38ff; and see *PSA*, Ch. 12). It seems to me that Lory had been at a disadvantage, not knowing what to look for in her “throat.” Clearly, Steiner was enormously busy at that time. And the birthing of eurythmy was of great import: in the summer of 1912 he told her, “*the wisdom of the whole world is needed for it*” (Siegloch, p. 30). But perhaps at that time he could not formulate how to help her more, to coax the gestures forth from out of her own speech organism, so that she could grasp them in their reality and therefore not need be told what the gestures are like. But we have greater possibilities now from what he explained in his lectures and introductions to eurythmy: I would try composing vowel sentences to see if I could learn what it was that he had hoped that she – and we – would find through them.

So I began to compose these sentences, and I called them vowel etudes – studies for the vowels. For sure, I was unaware of all that my compositional activity would draw from me and draw me into. The developments in all ways have been remarkable. Gathering the words for these etudes was challenging because I needed words with only one kind of vowel sound. And composing the sentences was also challenging: the rhythms were touchy and often spondaic because most of the words were short.

But delightful images came: “*Sedge elves yelled: Help mend bells!*” “*Psyched sprites light white ice.*” As my skill increased, the sounds and words became more and more responsive to my efforts with them, as I sought to bring my sense for language and music to manifestation in the composition of these poetic miniature verses devoted

to the speech sounds. And my knowledge of words – lots of new words – expanded by leaps and bounds.

Then I began to speak the etudes and learn them, seeking to sense each vowel’s quality of movement. I drew forms to show what I perceived: one vowel insisted on rounding, while another must go straight; others wanted wide scallops or angles, or held to a narrow channel or must move in sideways lemniskates. And I tried again the next day, open to whatever perceptions came, different or the same. I began to sense the nature of the gesture that wanted to emerge. When *Rs* or *Ls* followed a vowel like *ü* or *é* (‘say’), they affected the movement; so I composed new etudes: “*Larks chart far star sparks.*” *Ng* and *ngk* needed separate etudes, too: “*Singing thinking kings bring things in sync.*” Later on, I would also find the reverse, that the vowels affect the consonants – for instance quieting, activating or firming them, etc. Brighter and darker tones and affinities between vowels came to my awareness, just as Werbeck-Svårdström suggested in her book, *Uncovering the Voice*, Ch. 6. This led me to differentiate eighteen vowel sounds to work with (see PART FOUR).

### Finding the gestures and colors for the vowels

Then the focus of my work with these vowel sounds changed: I now began looking to follow each impulse of movement from within as a color experience. Therefore, I started each practice with work on all of the shades and subtleties of the color wheel in movement. Then I spoke and moved, going back and forth between the etude verses for the same vowel, and back and forth between different vowels, comparing, sensing differences and cognizing them ever more quickly – just as I do when guiding my work in music. The Act of Cognition occurs in lightning flashes of all sizes. For contemplation one must sit down, but not for this work. (Research, practice and performance all differ in this regard.) Soon, I had to call all hands on deck! – to gather more words in order to compose etudes that were longer and even more effective. Some of my early creations had not passed the ‘road test’ in my speech-work, and for some vowels I needed a more comprehensive immersion – especially for *è* (‘let’) and *é*. And I found that having more etudes in my repertory expanded my sense of each sound and nurtured the lovely inklings that stirred in me: I was witnessing the work of the Genius of our Language as it gathered each sound in, to create words – ‘sounding-singing-meanings’ that convey concepts and mental images on their “wings.”

In speaking and moving the etudes now, what came first as color was the quality of how the sound comes into being; and this appeared, then, to be the **movement color**. This quality might be quiet, softly determined, eager or streaming, etc. I found that how my feet feel and want to move seems to reflect this aspect most readily. When I had gone as far as I could with the movement colors for all of the vowels, over and over again, I turned to the **veil color**, seeking to know what quality of the sound it represents and what it does. Independently from the fact that I already possessed the concept, ‘veil color,’ I could feel that there is something more than the movement color at

work in the impulses of the gestures – that the surrounding space is also alive somehow, and necessary through how it receives or holds the impulse of the movement, whether the air accepts it, lights up, contains it, adds gentle encouragement, quietly grounds it or adds energy to it. In this way, it is more of a feeling aspect. I would come to sense that the ‘function’ of the veil with vowels is different from its ‘function’ with consonants.

From my former acquaintance with the Figure drawings, I knew that the veils have sizes, shapes and locations. But while I might come feel that a certain veil color was ‘right’ (or nearly so), I wasn’t sensitive enough to perceive the other features of the veil all that distinctly. Working with the consonants later on, I found that their veil qualities often presented themselves more assertively.

Then I turned to the **character colors**, and indeed it felt to me that a third color or quality is necessary. The interaction of a simple two-some is not dynamic enough to provide the possibility of such a rich expression as these gesture-impulses “*from within*” bear in them. A third quality or color is also at work and must be uncovered. Continually seeking through speaking and moving, I began to understand this third color as reflecting my conscious participation in the movement color as it unfolds its impulse. It isn’t that I hold it back or speed it up: it’s how I respond in my bodily presence as I offer myself up to it in various parts of my being, as I remain quiet, hold myself for the duration, or offer a kind of witness to the process, etc.

Reflecting now on the fact of these three dynamics, they make sense to me. Because we are three-part in our soul – willing, feeling, thinking – it is natural that there be a three-part dynamic that informs each gesture, such that three color dynamics sort themselves out as **movement** – will, **veil** – feeling, and **character** – thinking/conscious attention, and that they work together as such.

One of the things that was quietly developing in me along with this color work, was a deepening sense of the nature of each vowel sound – what sort of soul experience each expresses. It has been especially exciting and satisfying to explore the twelve remaining vowels this way, i.e., the ones that have no Figures, which include so many diphthongs.

Then, finally, I turned to the five vowel Figures, to see whether I had come at all close to the reality that Steiner perceived and had revealed in them. I would now learn how to become more skillful with this work. While I was not so often ‘right on’ with the color, I had usually considered it, come near to it, or had sensed the dynamic between the movement and veil but had swapped the colors. Or I took reddish to be green or lila; and I could see why, since these colors all have a quieter sort of energy. I would work at discriminating between them better now.

What was surprising is that on the whole, Steiner’s colors suggest something rather softer for the vowels than I had considered. He indicated “*pale*” or “*very pale*,” “*light*,” “*lila*” (light violet), “*reddish*,” “*greenish-bluish*” “*very weak*.” It dawned on me that these softer shades are in keeping with vowel-ness, which does not wish to be pressed: it simply resonates – even in the case of, or espe-

cially in the case of, *i* and *é*. Amazing! And in my work ahead, I found that there is no need to press the consonants into being, either: they want a spirit of cooperation.

The best way for working with the Figure drawings has been to place the drawing upside down and then align myself either in front of it or alongside it to eliminate the mirror image that creates unnecessary confusion; my feet then go the same direction as those of the Figure. Working in this manner, studying the Figures and moving these five vowels over time, I found, for example, that when the character color in the head and upper body zones of the *i* sound is clear, the shape of the feet simply jumps into being. With *ü*, when the gently enlivening color of the veil is felt, one then senses how the two parts of it fall free of the arms in an objective sort of way. With the continued help of the etudes, I began to sense the “*uberziehen*” – drawn over – quality of the character color for *é*; and its fourth color, the overlap veil color, came to my awareness. With *o*, when the veil color is felt clearly enough, the angles at the ears appear! In my notes I wrote that if I quietly express the impulse of the movement color, then add the veil color as feeling around me and the character color as a quality of bearing in my body, then the vowel gesture ‘sounds’ most strongly. I allowed only the most subtle response of my arms to the impulse of the sounding from within. This is especially essential for the diphthongs: it has taken a long time for the inner movement to stream into my limbs more reliably. Getting the right colors is crucial, for then the gesture flows into being. But especially for the diphthongs, it has required a great deal of sensitivity to arrive at what colors feel right. Also, I found that when *äi* stands alone – when I say ‘I’ – it gains a vertical impulse that *äi* words do not usually have. Later, I learned that Steiner had observed this, too.

When I came to the stage of beginning to find the transitions between vowels and consonants, it became clear how important it is to begin this work by taking up the vowels first. The experience of the vowels has to be so immediate and strong that one can move instantly into this vowel element, the speaking-of-the-soul between the consonants: the vowels can so easily become ‘contaminated’ by the formative nature of the consonants and stop singing. I also found that my work with the vowel etudes had given me an awareness that in my own speech, for recitation, my sense of the vowels was in fact too formative; and it appears that the etudes have the power to bring about a corrective action right within the speech organization, because I witnessed my speech change accordingly. I was to find that the consonant etudes have the same corrective effect: I now participate in speaking all of the sounds in a new way.

The remaining thirteen vowel sounds kept me occupied for quite a long time. The colors I arrived at have remained fairly stable, but I have not yet detailed the veil shapes and the character color locations – though with the vowels these aren’t generally as complex as with the consonants. But I was eager to begin working with the consonants and felt that it might actually be helpful to leave the vowel work for a time and shift focus. But to do

anything with the consonants, I had to compose more etudes! This has been fabulous: they are so life-filled!

### Finding the gestures and colors for the consonants

So, after long hours of calling the consonant words together and composing etudes (see examples in PART FOUR I was ready to take on the fifteen consonants for which Steiner drew Figures. These fifteen are the twelve that constitute what he called The Evolutionary Sequence – **B M D N R L G kh F S H T** – plus **K, P** and **V**. Again my feet seemed to have a lot to say about how quickly and with what quality of energy the sound wants to form, and this informed me of **movement colors**. But what arose could be surprising, such as how **S** immediately mandated slowing down – not flying or zipping around even if the etude images involve soaring or surging. **L** was also surprising, declaring disinterest in speed and lightness despite its participation in images of light or levity. The vitality of **R** and **K** came through easily. The differences in the kinds of images that each sound helps to express impressed me: I was learning so much! Once I had laid hold of what I felt to be the movement color impulse through actively moving in colors, I often stood in place and tried while speaking to feel the impulse and the gesture of the sound in the smallest movements within my being – just as I had with the vowels – to follow and strengthen the inner connection.

Then I proceeded to the **veil colors**. I moved around a great deal for these, continually changing the color of the space around me to detect what felt right for how the space receives the movement-impulse: to assist it, dampen it, contain it, affirm or announce it, let it hang, or light up in response, ride with it, warm it, and so on. And for some sounds, the general location of the veil or the parts of it came fairly easily, like for **R, K** and **N**. The veil for the consonants seems to have more power to shape the sound gesture; and after all, the consonants are formative. This consonants work was intensive and fascinating, as was the process of working to compare and differentiate them.

And then I turned to the **character colors**. For these, it was again helpful to remain quieter and seek which parts of my being come to my awareness when I speak the etudes for the given sound, and what color will allow the sound gesture to form the way it wants to. I sought to follow what role these active or attentive areas of my being were playing as the impulse moved into my limbs.

By speaking the consonant etudes more so in standing, one of the things I was aiming to do was to quash the tendency to follow the movement patterns that I already associated with the sounds, and instead, to let the true inner promptings come through. When I did turn to the Figure drawings and began to study them, I used this more restricted sort of movement-in-standing approach a lot. I posted a note on my wall, saying: *“Always return to speaking and feeling the subtle impulse.”* It is fine to do the ‘archetypal’ form of the gesture as it is in the Figure drawing once the impulse is better-established inwardly, but what is essential is to discover how the impulses that inform these archetypal movements manifest themselves in the smallest gestures<sup>6</sup> such that the colors, veil aspects

and character zones are secure and preserved. I sensed that over time, this approach would help me to create the adaptability of gesture I would need, to be able to do anything required for the shaping of words, and to do it easily.

As with the vowels, when I looked at the Figures for the consonants I found that while I wasn’t as accurate as I hoped to be, I had in fact explored many of the colors that Steiner indicated for each aspect or had settled on colors nearby or related to them. I had to remember two things: I’m a novice at this, and nevertheless of my errors, I had already gained a profoundly deepened sense of the nature of the gestures.

### Confirming the richness of the Figure details

Now I worked to explore whether the inner sounding and gesture movements I experience when working with the etudes would support the Figure details – and they did! The etudes helped me toward ever greater awareness of the incredible richness that can be found in the Figure drawings, and helped me to in-corporate this richness more deeply – as they still do. This was especially pronounced for me with **V**. The etudes helped me to find the strength shown in the character color, and I experienced how the arms move independently, loosely parallel, with two portions of veil appearing either above or below in response, alternately – they do not surround the arms. And I found that how the arm movements of **V** come about is through character zones of the proper color and that these zones are not in the arms. These zones and this color are the source of a quiet, awesome power. With **V**, I do not simply ride the waves: I command the waves. The feeling is oceanic and the arms are pulled along by it. Now, after having experienced this elemental power myself, I’ve learned what Steiner had said concerning the nature of our consonants in English eurhythmy: we command the elements through the consonants (see in the Spring 2011 EANA Newsletter, the article written by Mark Ebersole on the Fall 2010 color workshop). Even with images of things such as vapor or velvet, one feels the source of power in the character zones, including the heels: **V** has heel bones!

The impulse for **K** also impressed me strongly. It came through as concise, tall, regal, and not initiated from or involving the lower arms and hands as character zones. And this is what the Figure shows. It was difficult to get the habit of making chopping movements with my forearms and hands out of my memory, but as the inner experience strengthened this habit fell away. Just like a king, the impulse conveys its power efficiently without the need for drama. The etudes for **N** impel the quality of finality in the gesture immediately, which is supported by the character and veil colors. That its veil has two pieces that go in two directions alternately comes out quite directly, too. With **B**, by slow degrees it came through with more and more definition that the character color does not permeate the arms or other zones. It expresses itself *“dar-über”* – thereover, or over. And the movement color reflects the prompt, matter-of-fact manner in which the **B** comes into being. **T** announces itself without fuss, piquing

my awareness awake with a fresh, direct quality that I had not felt in it before; and the head points simply pop out.

Working with the **L** etudes, I experienced the welling up quality of its impulse grow in me over time, until all seven of the bony concavities, arches, of our bodily form that are the character zones began to come into play. The forward-backward shift of weight came of its own accord. With **L**, as with **V** and **K**, it was difficult to overcome my former gesture habits, but when the inner impulse became more consistently strong these habits dropped away.

With **S**, I found that the movement color has an appropriately subtle quality, and that the color of the veil, the way in which it is divided and where it is – in front and in back, left-to-right and up-to-down – belongs totally to how **S** spreads or insinuates itself. And the character color bears that kind of ‘presence’ that is felt rather than seen, able to conduct its business with such surety that it need not actually move.

### **Ahriman, Lucifer and the consonants**

As a result of my experiences, I feel strongly that we must bring forth the distinctly formative impulses of the consonants while really giving way to the singing of the vowels between them, so that each has its right character. The power of the consonants is so great. Steiner said that in the handling of consonants in eurythmy, the earth or plosive sounds must be laid hold of (**EVS**, Lecture 7, 4-5 pages in): *“The body must show that it intends to come to rest, to fix, as it were, the movement which is indicated by the sound. ... This inner rigidity gives the consonants of force their special character. ... And the consonants of force must express this feeling: I will hold fast to Ahriman, for if he escapes me he will poison everything; he must be held fast.”* And with the breath sounds we must go with the sound: *“You must have control over the whole body, and allow it to swing with the sound, to swing in the direction of the sound. ... [And] in the breath sounds what really comes to expression is this: I will have nothing to do with Lucifer; everything that is Luciferic must disappear.”* In both cases – earth and breath sounds – I have found a strength of movement toward gesture that can make both of these intentions possible. Not only do I feel the resource of firmness in the earth or plosive sounds: I have found in the breath sounds a ‘groundedness’ that allows for and supports the bodily movement Steiner described, by merit of the fact that I myself am not blown away. For instance, there is inner strength in both **F** and **S**; and to my experience, the feet in **sh** take hold of the ground as a reservoir of strength up through the legs from which the freer body movement above is made. (Note: for many more of my findings on the gestures thus far, see the notes section of the APPENDIX in my book, *The Speech Sound Etudes, Volume I*.)

I do want to bear in mind, though, that in our work on earth we must also bring Lucifer and Ahriman along,<sup>7</sup> for they are, so-to-speak, stalled in their development and need help to get moving and to limit their activity to what is justified in earthly affairs. (About this justification, see *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*, Chapters 5 and 6.)

### **Finding the remaining speech sound Figures**

I have composed just as many speech sound etudes for the Figure-less sounds, both vowels and consonants (see lists, PART FOUR), as I have for those with Figures. And in the case of **sh** and **ch**, I’ve gone on to complete a whole set of etudes for each that include most of the words in our language that begin with these sounds, to foster a comprehensive sense of the range of images to which these sounds give birth as words. This has been stunning for me to experience. **Sh** is not only about showers, shuffling and shattering. It is also about sheds, shacks, shells; sharks and shysters; shame, shouldn’t, Schicksal and sugar.

My goal with the remaining sounds is, bit by bit, to create Figure drawings for them as best I can, to express my findings of the three color dynamics, veil shapes and character zones that belong to them. Now that I’ve been under way with this, trying to draw what I perceive and cognize of these intimately-related dynamics and the nature of the gestures, it is clear to me what a miracle the Figures drawn by Steiner really are, in the whole style of each and in the chosen vantage point that shows every detail. In my work on these remaining sounds I’ve had many painfully-stymied moments, when clarity doesn’t come. As before, I work as diligently as I can and then I give it up to Michael, who in our time serves as The Countenance of Christ: I ask him for help. When help comes, I say, *“Thank you!”* (See especially the Michael lectures by Steiner in *The Festivals and Their Meaning*.)

I’ve already done a lot of work with these remaining sounds – thirteen vowels and roughly nineteen consonants. For this work I’ve made master charts of the sounds and colors to log my progress, including a chart organized according to each color and shade, so that in my practice I can compare sounds that share the same color in any way. These comparisons have been wonderful; and they nurture flexibility. But I’ve needed to set this work somewhat aside, to begin to explore how it is that each new gesture can arise out of the last one: to begin to form words.

### **Transitions between sounds**

What Steiner said about how the spiritual element in eurythmic movement lives in the transitions (see p. 1, above), resonated constantly within me. How was I to honor and express this element? To form the word ‘und’ – and – Steiner explained: Begin with the **u**, then, *“before the movement for u is really completed, let it pass over into N: u-N – and from this immediately make the transition to D: und”* (**EVS**, Lecture 4, 8<sup>th</sup> page).

All right: if I do this, a word gesture arises fairly naturally and it does feel like ‘und.’ For quite a while I worked toward trying to do this with the words of poems I chose. I also tried using the etudes for this. However, even though all of the gestures were more living and real for me now, I found it confounding when I tried to sense when and how to leave an initial consonant and how to enter the vowel fully – never mind the rest of the word! Some consonants, like **M** and **S** yielded more easily, but many did not, especially not **B**. And **L** was disturbingly harder than I ever imagined it would be: I could not detect

when in its process it was enough of an **L** to let go of it to enter a vowel. And I found that every vowel presented a different challenge because the forming of the **L** must accommodate the particular vowel that follows: you have to ‘see’ where you’re going in advance. But I wasn’t fluent enough; I couldn’t express **L** in nuanced and varied ways sufficient for this. **T** was (is!) consternating as well – it is so definite. ‘Und’ was a cinch by comparison! It’s no wonder I fumbled through these transitions in school and ultimately left out what I couldn’t do or took single sounds to stand for whole words that needed expression. That had been an unhappy and unsatisfying experience: like a young child, I could not speak properly. My piecemeal approach of practicing on words and lines in poems and the etudes yielded haphazard results and often left me feeling bewildered.

It is a terrific challenge to move from one speech sound gesture to another. It isn’t firstly a problem of negotiating how to be ready for the next gesture as a kind of physical consideration. What informs every aspect of our readiness is our inward transition, in which all three colors must change. This is a consuming and demanding task; but once the gestures are strong from within, it can be done with unfailing integrity and beauty.<sup>8</sup>

As frustrated as I felt with my inadequate skill, it was still true that the work I had done had put me in a better position, and I had moments of illumination when I succeeded in unfolding the flow of sounds sufficiently: the word-shape jumped alive! The smaller parts found their proper places and the vowels sang out from between the consonants. In reflecting on this, I realized that all of the speaking and moving work I had done with the etudes thus far had worked back on me and into me. I now possessed an intensified sense for the musical contribution of the vowels also – and I grasped the reason why: for the consonants to shine in the consonant etudes without a repeated vowel causing distraction, the vowel sound had to change from word to word as much as possible, intentionally. And because of this, the string of changing vowels springs out like music between the rhythmic repetitions of the consonants, creating an unexpectedly strong poetic sound experience; and this had worked upon me all the while, as I immersed myself in speaking the etudes.

These developments, that arose through the working of the etudes back upon me, suggest that the etudes possess the power not only to awaken us to inward perception of the movements of the larynx: they actually stimulate the activity of the entire speech organization so that it begins to achieve a truer resonance with the speech sounds themselves. As this resonance grows, one can perceive and follow the inner movement more and more easily – just as I have been experiencing. We are drawn to eurythmy in part because we sense a need to strengthen our dwindling etheric forces. It appears that the etudes offer help toward beginning and supporting this renewal process.

But as regards transitions, I needed to reconsider my approach. I thought: well, if consonant-to-vowel transitions are so difficult at this stage, and I can’t see my way with transitioning gracefully into the vowels, why not

begin with the vowel, embody it strongly, and then lead over to the consonant? That way, the vowel would for sure be expressed singingly, too. This appears to be the solution, or at least my solution and my means of getting a grip on this. Once I’m fluent with going vowel-to-consonant, finding my way the other direction will no doubt be easier (and it is!). It’s essential to master frequently-occurring words, as Steiner suggested; but I want to be ready for whatever combinations might come, just as I as a pianist had worked to be ready for whatever a musical piece might require: that’s why musicians have etudes.

Because the speech sound etudes have provided me with such a wonderful context for my work with the Figures, I wanted to have the same kind of poetic context as a support for this new work. I have begun mobilizing toward the composition of the vowel-to-consonant etudes, some of which I had already written on account of the effects of **R**, **L** and **ng**. The words all have the same transition: “*Gorse thorns forced Gord’s torn forlorn horse north.*” “*Hale gales railed: pale frail whale tails flailed!*” “*Quandong gongs bong wrong songs long*” (a quandong is a type of tree). And the vowel can come out even more powerfully if it’s right at the start: “*Ida, ideally I’d identify ‘n idolize identical Idahoes*” (Idaho is Idaho potatoes).

This body of etudes will be large: each of the eighteen vowels must give way to each of about thirty-four consonants. Practicing these etudes might seem to be unnecessary and way too complicated; but this is not so. I’ve experienced how powerful the orderly, engaging and inspiring etudes context can be. And I’ve recalled to mind that Goethe had attributed his great productivity to the order in which he kept his papers; for at any moment he could turn to any one of his projects. In that same way, bringing a certain order, livingly, to this unruly matter of the meet-ups between vowels and consonants could enable me at any moment to have help in conquering any aspect of these that concerns me. And my early work with doing the vowel-to-consonant transitions in these etudes (not doing whole words) suggests that my hunch is correct: they provide a potent means of slowly-but-surely mastering this delicate business of transitions.

My hope is that with this growing mastery, I will be able to clothe mental pictures beautifully and securely within the stream of sounds, to express the “*loving living-within speaking ... that bears thinking itself on its wings,*” that Steiner spoke of in “Lost Unison” (as above). This is a special challenge – and joy! – in English because of the wealth of homonyms, where the “*husk of the sound of the word*” doesn’t change, but the meaning does: ‘cleave’ can mean split apart or cling together – opposites – therefore, which mental picture is carried on the wings of the sounds must come clear through how we unfold the gestures.

### **Working on the Combination-Consonant Etudes**

I’ve also begun to address what happens when two or more consonants team up at the opening of a word. Once one has a good sense for **B** and **L** separately, **BL** repeated in etudes is impressive. Neither the **B** nor the **L** act quite like they do when alone, e.g., “*Boiling buckbean bubbles bulge ‘n burst!*” “*Lanky lizards like leisurely lolling.*”

With **BL**, the **B** takes a slightly different character and both sounds tumble out: “*Blowing blustering blinding blizzards blanket bleak bluestone bluffs.*” Or when **S** and **N** join up for **SN**: “*Snide snollygosters sneer, snarl ‘n snipe at sneaky snakes*” (snollygosters – self-serving politicians). For these two, **BL** and **SN**, I’ve completed sets that encompass the majority of such words. They are tremendous fun. My hope is to complete sets for all of the sounds we use as well as for the combination-consonants; and I am on my way toward that goal. Doubled consonants need attention, too: ‘egg,’ ‘copper.’ I sense in them a depth and intensity that the single consonants do not have: “*Immense immaculate immortals immobilize us immeasurably, immediately!*” “*Efficacious effort effervesces effortlessly – ineffable!*”

### **My vision does not end here**

All of my work with the Figures and etudes, and the work I’ve begun to do with the transitions that give shape to words, has been so rich and life-filled. But the materials I’ve been creating also serve my intention to do what I can – as possibilities open up for this – to help set our entire language in motion toward restoration of the lost unison between speaking and thinking, such that our language can evolve in tandem with our soul-spiritual development; and that must mean that the Latinate words are included, to get them moving, too. Even these words can reveal charm. The gentle humor lurking in some of them can be found out when their etymology and meanings are learned. For instance, the sounding of the word ‘funnel’ can express a worthy mental picture of the thing; but we miss out if we don’t know about ‘infundibulum’ – a funnel-shaped thing, like a part of an organ in the body, or a flower. What a fine, lively, musical word! You can picture things being loosened and sucked into the narrowing spiral of the shape, or bees being drawn into the flower. The etymology of the words in our language that stem from the older English can speak volumes to us just as it can with German words. About the word, ‘Fuss,’ Steiner had said, “*we take the foot and name it by what it does, namely making a furrow.*” (see *Practical Advice for Teachers*, lecture 2, 8<sup>th</sup> page). Knowing this, our eurythmy can show the living history of the word that fits it so pictorially.

## **PART TWO: A PAIR OF QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS**

### **Is it all right to speak and move at the same time?**

I have found that for the sake of learning to perceive this eurythmizing of our larynx that Steiner spoke of (see above, p. 1) – to follow the inward movements that we normally lead only into speech – one must actually, simultaneously, speak and move, and allow oneself to do so for a long time. This is because the impulses that are to be led into the limbs as movement, rather than through the larynx as speech, are delicate and complex, and they must be summoned to full consciousness again and again<sup>9</sup> – and as Steiner said, eurythmy begins with “*penetration] into the being of speech-formation*” (see ENDNOTE 4). Regularly, of course, I cease speaking and rely only on the inward impulse in forming the speech sound gesture. I can instantly sense how far I’ve come toward achieving strong eurythmy movements that stand securely on

their own, and I can sense where more work is needed. It varies day to day; there’s always more to master.

This has led me to understand that the urge to speak while forming gestures means that the inner experience is not strong enough to proceed on its own without the support of hearing and feeling our own voice: we are as yet reliant on our speaking to make the gestures feel real. By respecting this signal, creating these etudes and deliberately speaking and moving, I satisfy this urge openly. I’ve found that over time the urge and the need to speak subside; then all vocal activity is quiet and gives over completely: one enters the realm of pure eurythmy movement. In my experience, attempting to ignore this urge only ensures that gestures and gesture-sequences will be built up with reliance on rote practice rather than through clear, compelling inner experiences in every moment. When gestures come “*from within,*” making the ‘wrong’ gesture and/or failing to form it in concord with the speaker will feel so striking as to become impossible for us, unless we do it by intention; and our preparations will unfold with quite a different quality and focus than when the habitual association of gestures with sounds forms any part of it.

### **To confirm the gestures why not start with color?**

The question arises: If color is the medium and the means of the creative origin of the formative forces, of the speech sounds, the movements of our larynx and the gestures we seek to express in eurythmy, why not make color our starting point when we want to know and confirm the eurythmy gestures?

It helps to understand this in the same way that we can come to understand how we can secure our foundation for knowing the world, both natural and spiritual. For this – as Steiner suggested – we must begin with what is closest to us and in us: with our own thinking activity. No secure foundation can be found through inquiring into how the Creator God provided us with consciousness and the ability to think in the first place. (See *PSA*, Ch. 3, 3 paragraphs before the Addition; and Ch. 12, paragraph 9.) As regards making pure color our starting point, to create gestures, that approach would be well and good from the viewpoint of the Creator God – the Logos – Who no doubt knows how fashioning these things out of color was and is done. But I am not in the mind of the Creator God, nor can I witness and copy this process of the Doer: I am at the periphery of that Creation and I must begin where I am with what is nearest-at-hand for me: with my own speaking and my own speech organization, my own larynx.

In seeking certainty regarding the gestures, we cannot derive them directly from the world of color, as we might imagine the Creator God to have done, any more than we can derive reptiles from the proto-amniote (the first living organism) – that is, so long as we hold no preformed conceptions of what these gestures are supposed to be like. About the reptiles, Steiner wrote: “*But it should not occur to any evolutionist to maintain that he can extract from his concept of the proto-amniote the concept of the reptile with all its characteristics, if he had never seen a reptile*” (*PSA*, Ch. 12, *ibid*). The same holds true with extracting gestures from pure color.

If one sets out with the idea that in the Beginning the formative forces and the gestures corresponding to them were created through color, and one attempts to follow that imagined process in order to create eurythmy gestures, nothing really jells. Always one needs to have an idea of what such a gesture might be like, just like we'd have to have an idea of what a reptile would be like to bring it forth out of the undifferentiated proto-amniote. If I take three colors chosen randomly, and I'm honest with myself, I find that I have no hope of coming up with a gesture corresponding to human speech as we know it. Comparing what we know from Steiner concerning **B**, **H**, **R** and **é**, we see that the same colors or nearly the same colors can work together in very different ways. I do not know what dynamic to assign to each of the three colors: I do not possess the concepts 'movement,' 'veil' or 'character.' And even if I take the three colors for a specific sound in the order given by Steiner, I still have little hope of forming a definite gesture, because I do not know the specifics of the veil and I have no areas of focus for my awareness, i.e., where the character zones are: I simply cannot find these governing factors out of the simple conflux of three colors. Only with outside direction – to define the behavior of the colors and where to feel them – can something begin to arise; but that's not fair. And even if I know how **B** is formed, if I had never heard of a **P** and had no concept of it, I could not derive a **P** from the **B** that I know, as does in fact happen through the Germanic Consonant Shift, as Steiner described in "The Realm of Language" (Dornach, July 18, 1915, a lecture he gave along with "The Lost Unison"). Only after the fact of the shift can I cognize the path of evolution from **B** to **P** – and to **F** – and the pattern. (Again see *PSA*, Ch. 12, *ibid.*)

Thankfully, we can rely instead on what is nearest-at-hand. While we have no such concepts as 'movement,' 'veil' or 'character' when we start with pure color, we do have the possibility of divining these concepts which govern how three colors do emerge, sort themselves out and interact to create gestures when we "seek within." Through this nearest-at-hand path to knowledge of the gestures, our own speaking of the speech sounds – bearers of the formative forces – which sets our own larynx and speech organization into creative motion, we can begin to feel the character zones directly and can by slower or quicker degrees differentiate the colors and dynamics that inform each gesture. In the same way that our own thinking is our individual "corner of the universal process" (*PSA*, Ch. 3, paragraph 25) located at the periphery of that process, which we can take firm hold of to make sense of our existence and know the world, our speaking and our speech organization activity is that sure place to take firm hold of to ground our eurythmy. My sense is, that if we do both of these things, then we, in our little "corner of the universe," can each become the bearer of a new center of harmonious creation. By becoming 'free spirits' in the sense of *PSA* (see p. 2, above), this creative center can be ours – and in our activity we become our philosophy.

This is why the path of knowledge of the spirit in our time is called 'anthroposophy,' not theosophy (or any-

thing else). We "seek within:" we establish a sure foundation for our activity as human individual knowers through what is closest-at-hand, within our thinking activity; and when eurythmy is our concern, we establish our sure foundation within our own speaking and the movement of our own larynx, actively.<sup>10</sup>

### PART THREE: INNER SUPPORT FOR THE WORK

#### Knowledge of what we do matters

Our thinking activity is not only our means of bringing forward and guiding our soul-spiritual development and our artistic deepening in eurythmy. Steiner indicated that the knowledge we achieve has far-reaching consequences for the dead and for the beings of all of the Hierarchies. These souls and beings are depending upon us for what we can provide to them during our sojourn on earth. Steiner explained this in the following passages, as quoted by William Lindeman in his book, *How Do We Know? Epistemology: A Gateway to the Christ*, Chapter 6: "It is now the case that certain thoughts can only be grasped – even by supersensible hierarchies – if and when human beings here in earthly existence grasp these thoughts." (See Steiner's lecture, "Henry VIII and Sir Thomas More: The Education of Man Through the Materialistic Conception," Dornach, October 1, 1916, contained in the lecture cycle, *Inner Impulses of Evolution*, GA 171.) And Steiner explained that bodhisattvas need to teach while incarnated because "...the content of earthly Anthroposophy can be attained only on earth, in a physical body. Then Anthroposophy can be used in the spiritual world, but it must be acquired in a physical body. ... Anthroposophy does not arise through the spiritual world itself; it arises only on earth and can then be carried up into the spiritual world by human beings. That makes sense when one reflects that animals, for example, see everything on earth as human beings do, but are unable to understand it. In the same way, supersensible beings can only view the supersensible world, but not understand it. Concepts and ideas of the supersensible world can arise only on earth, and from there they shine forth like a light into the spiritual world. From this one can rightly understand the significance of the earth. It is not merely a transitory passageway nor a vale of tears; it exists so that here a spiritual knowledge can be developed that can then be carried up into the spiritual worlds." (See Steiner's lecture, "Life After Death," Strasbourg, May 13, 1913, Lecture 16 in the cycle, *Life Between Death and Rebirth*, his emphasis.)

Lindeman then queried: "Does this mean that spiritual beings act *instinctively*? By grasping the concepts inherent in their actions, do we reflect back to them the significance of what they are doing?" (his emphasis).

Clearly, what we do here on earth has the power to transform not only ourselves and our world on earth, but the spiritual world also. How we go about our eurythmy matters. When we apply our thinking actively, to cognize and therefore know every aspect of our inward feeling-experiences in eurythmy, we are developing priceless gifts of knowledge to be shared with the whole spiritual world. And our thinking activity opens out to embrace that entire

world, as Steiner so beautifully described in his Introduction to *Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age* (8<sup>th</sup> page in, Steiner's emphasis): "There outside stands a tree. I take it into my mind. I throw my inner light upon what I have apprehended. Within me the tree becomes more than it is outside. That part of it which enters through the portal of the senses is received into a spiritual content. An ideal counterpart to the tree is in me. This says infinitely much about the tree, which the tree outside cannot tell me. *What* the tree is only shines upon it out of me. Now the tree is no longer the isolated being which it is in external space. It becomes a part of the whole spiritual world living within me. It combines its content with other ideas which exist in me. It becomes a part of the whole world of ideas, which embraces the vegetable kingdom; it is further integrated into the evolutionary scale of every living thing." If we replace the tree that is perceived outside of us with a feeling-experience that is perceived inwardly, such as in eurythmy, what thinking is doing when it is applied to feeling-experiences becomes clear: the spiritual power of love within thinking activity (see above, p. 2) unites the "what" that comprises our feeling-experiences with all other ideas that are related to them – such as language, color, movement, rhythm – placing them into their rightful, resonant context, to bring them into communion with the entire "evolutionary scale," with the whole cosmos into which our thinking opens. And if we as individuals will actively engage this power of love that lives within our thinking, to do this, we can join with each other in that communion, lifting ourselves and our eurythmy to a higher level indeed.

#### **But what about the development of the heart center?**

The heart center is not at all left out. In my experience the normal role of the heart is to feel, to perceive; for as Steiner points out in *PSA*, feelings are perceptions. Without the mediation of thinking and the completion it provides, these feeling-perceptions show us only one half of reality (Ch. 8, paragraphs 2-4; Ch. 4, especially paragraph 10; see my ENDNOTE 14, and see *Truth and Knowledge*, Ch. 4ff). Our hearts give us awareness of many things; it can give us a sense for truth as we near it; and most importantly, it is a "need of the heart" that leads us to anthroposophy. (See the first Leading Thought in *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts: Anthroposophy as a Path of Knowledge; The Michael Mystery, ALT.*)

It has always been my heart that has urged me toward anthroposophy; and I accept this paradox and follow the urging of my heart to tread this path of knowledge so that I might know with clarity what I think, feel and do.

#### **A center prepared in the head descends to the heart**

In *Occult Science*, Ch. 5, Part 7, Steiner stated: "Under a properly regulated training this centre in the neighbourhood of the heart does not however develop right at the beginning. Preparation has to be made for it. A preliminary centre appears first in the head, is then transplanted into the region of the larynx and finally comes to rest in the neighbourhood of the physical heart." With good reason, it is the head point that points upward

in the pentagram that represents our human form and being. My sense is that this properly-regulated process, under the guidance of Michael, is the means by which "hearts are beginning to have thoughts" (*ALT*, first Michael Letter, last paragraph, August 17, 1924). However, Steiner went on: "If development is irregular, it may be that this organ is formed in the region of the heart from the outset. There will then be a danger that instead of attaining calm and objective supersensible perception, the pupil might develop into a fantastic dreamer."

This issue of the potential for improper development of the heart center is so important that reiteration and elaboration of what Steiner wrote is helpful. In *Knowledge of Higher Worlds and Its Attainment (KHW)*, he explained that the twelve-petalled heart center is the central organ through which currents flow both upward and downward to the other centers; and he wrote: "It is for this reason that the very greatest care must be devoted to the development of the twelve-petalled lotus, for an imperfection in the latter would result in the irregular formation of the whole structure [of the centers]." He then explained that through adhering to proper esoteric instructions, the student "introduces into his etheric body currents and movements which are in harmony with the laws and evolution of the world to which he belongs. ... A simple start is made with a view to the deepening of the logical activity of the mind and the producing of an inward intensification of thought. Thought is thereby made free and independent of all sense impressions and experiences; it is concentrated in one point which is held entirely under control. Thus a preliminary center is formed for the currents of the etheric body. This center is not yet in the region of the heart but in the head and it appears to the clairvoyant as the point of departure for movements and currents. No esoteric [self-]<sup>11</sup> training can be successful which does not first create this center. If the latter [this center] were first formed in the region of the heart the aspiring clairvoyant would doubtless obtain glimpses of the higher worlds, but would lack all true insight into the connection between these higher worlds and the world of our senses. This, however is an unconditional necessity for Man at the present stage of evolution. The clairvoyant must not become a visionary; he must retain a firm footing upon the earth. The center in the head, once duly fixed, is then moved lower down, to the region of the larynx." And then Steiner described the further developments to be achieved from there, which lead to the settling of this new center in the region of the heart, at which time, "the student becomes gifted with the inner Word. All things now acquire a new significance for him. They become as it were spiritually audible in their innermost self, and speak to him of their essential being. ... He acquires a new understanding for all that the great teachers of humanity have uttered. ... For the tone of their words follow the movements and rhythms which he has himself formed within himself." (See Ch. 5, "Some Results of Initiation," a bit under 2/3 in and following. This will be Ch. 6 in some editions where the material in Ch. 2 is divided and the section on initiation forms Ch. 3.)

In the notes that he supplied for his 1924 edition of *A Theory of Knowledge (ThKn)*, Steiner described this new center in its function as a new “*mystical organ*” established within us, which from then onward supplies us with true mysticism: “*But one must carry full clarity of concepts into one’s experience through the mystical organ if knowledge is to come about. There are persons, however, who wish to take refuge in the ‘inward’ for the purpose of escaping from clarity of concepts. These apply the term ‘mystical’ to that which would lead knowledge away from the light of ideas into the darkness of the world of feeling – the world of feeling, not illuminated by ideas. Against this mysticism\* I have expressed myself throughout my writings. On behalf of that [true] mysticism which holds fast to the clarity of ideas, and makes of the mystic sense a perceptual organ of the soul which functions in the same region of the human being where otherwise obscure feeling is dominant, every page of my books has been written.*” (See the 6<sup>th</sup> Note at back of *ThKn*, referring to a passage 6 pages from the end of Ch. 16. \*In his 1901 Preface to *Mysticism*, he called this type of inner activity “*the mysticism of muddled heads.*” It is also known as the Philosophy of Feeling – see *PSA*, Ch. 8, p. 3 especially.)

The possibility of an aberrant soul-spiritual development stemming from the premature opening of the heart center must be reckoned with. For me, such an outcome as this – and any shade of it – is not what I seek. I am in no hurry. And my experience indicates that the practice of eurythmy is not an alternate or substitute path to the correct development of the heart center. Eurythmy depends upon the proper treading of the path of knowledge that is anthroposophy, which is both its origin and the soil in which it grows and flourishes – if it flourishes.<sup>12</sup>

I believe that this preliminary center that we must establish in the region of the head is that center made possible by the work of Archangel Gabriel during the Age of Materialism, which ended in the late 1800s. “*During that period delicate structures arose within the front part of the brain, and were gradually implanted into the reproductive system,*” so that all of humanity would possess them. When we consciously work to develop these “*delicate structures*” – as we should during this present Age of Michael – we can prepare ourselves to receive spiritual knowledge directly into ourselves, with clarity, from the “*tidal wave*” of spirit that Steiner said is now “*flooding*” into our earthly realm. (See *Festivals*, Michael Section, Lecture 4, Part 1, pp. 3-5, and Part 2, p. 2.)

And these must be the same faculties that Steiner referred to in *Occult Science (OS)*. He wrote that we must say to ourselves: “*The wise guidance of spiritual Powers has given me certain faculties. It has not bestowed these faculties on me for me to leave them unemployed, but rather that I may put them to use. The wisdom of the guidance is to be seen in the fact that seeds have been planted in me of a higher state of consciousness; and I fail to understand the guidance aright if I do not regard it as a duty to set before me the high ideal: that whatever can become manifest to Man through the development of his spiritual powers shall become so manifest*” (Ch. 5, p. 3).

And throughout these developments, the heart is not at all neglected: the ‘six basic exercises’ are meant to foster the balanced development of the heart center<sup>13</sup> (and I’m making no claims concerning my own success – I just try). A full description of these is contained in *Esoteric Development: Selected Writings and Lectures... (ES)*, Ch. 5, “*General Demands...*,” GA 245. I’ve found it helpful to compare these descriptions with those found in *OS*, Ch. 5, 9 pages from the end of Part 2; and *KHW*, Ch. 5, almost 1/3 through the chapter (or Ch. 6 in some editions). But one of the things that’s different in *ES* is that following these six moral requirements or General Demands are the “*Further Rules in Continuation of the General Demands*” in the next chapter (also GA 245). I have always felt deeply provoked when reviewing these four Further Rules – and perhaps I’m not alone! These rules are: 1. “*No unproven concept shall enter my consciousness;*” 2. “*There shall stand before my soul the living obligation continually to increase the number of my concepts;*” 3. “*Knowledge will come to me only about such things, the yes or no of which I regard without sympathy or antipathy;*” and 4. “*I must overcome my aversion to the so-called abstract.*”<sup>14</sup> I feel particularly struck by the first one, with that absolute “*no*” in it. But I believe that these four Further Rules are essential for the properly-regulated [self-] training that Steiner described, that will prevent the precocious and aberrant formation of the heart center. My conviction is that they ensure a right development in eurythmy, also. Because of this first rule, I feel it as an imperative to regard all gestures and laws in eurythmy as being “*unproven concepts*” so long as I have not completely grounded them in my own independent experience. Hence, my present commitment is to surmount any sense of overwhelm and directly seek to prove them as best I can; and with this, my work takes on even greater meaning. For me, there is no other way to proceed. (Also see the Four Habits which Steiner discussed in *KHW* beginning two pages after he described the settling of the new center in the region of the larynx, before it arrives in the region of the heart. The third habit consists of the set of six exercises.)

I believe that one of the things that holds us back from these tasks that depend upon thinking – tasks which are part and parcel of unfolding the Consciousness or Spiritual Soul – is that the Spiritual Soul gives the appearance of coldness at the start. Because of this we shun it. But Steiner wrote in “*A Christmas Study: The Mystery of the Logos,*” that “*in its essential nature the Spiritual Soul is not cold. It seems to be so only at the commencement of its unfolding, because at that stage it can only reveal the light-element in its nature, and not as yet the cosmic warmth in which it has indeed its origin*” (*ALT*, December 28, 1924). Truly, we must take heart, summon our courage and dare to forge ahead, trusting in that warmth.

In eurythmy performance we do not express any sort of thinking process; instead, whatever we have come to in our own being and in our eurythmy via our inner development – whatever conscious knowledge we have achieved – shows: it is communicated through how we go about what

we do in every detail. Our onlookers perceive whether we have hold of the cosmic ‘garment’ for real or not (see *Mysticism*, above). The good news is that further help can come to us in eurythmy when we attain the level of Imagination (and higher); for then we would actually behold the etheric formative forces at work. I believe that through this direct beholding, at that time, we would be able to bring our eurythmy gestures into full accord with the activity of these etheric forces – activity which we had perceived and known thus far only through the movements of our larynx, if we have done that work. With this correction and this new resonance with the etheric forces we would achieve an entirely new level in our artistic expression.

Steiner gave inspiring descriptions of the work that is required in order to enter into the higher levels of cognition known as Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, in his lecture, “Knowledge and Initiation” (London, April 14, 1922). Five to six pages in, Steiner said that upon entering the realm of Imagination we attain to a “*new way of thinking ... a pictorial, formative thought filled with inner life and possessing a quality of strength and intensity comparable with the sense impressions of the ordinary life;*” and that through this we perceive “*a new human being that we come to know within us ... ‘an organism in time.’ ... We have come to experience ... the ‘formative forces of the body’; not the full human being ... but its formative forces ... the etheric body.*” In his lecture, “Paths to Knowledge of Higher Worlds,” he also gave a helpful and concise overview of the requirements on the path to the first two levels of higher cognition (Christiana/Oslo, November 26, 1921).

When I am so keenly aware of these features of our time and the extensive soul-spiritual potentials we possess within us during this Age of Michael – when I experience how my own thinking activity makes it possible for me to lay hold of the whole “*evolutionary scale of every living thing*” bit by bit (again see *Mysticism*, above, p. 9) – then I know that my feeling-perceptions in eurythmy are but the tip of the cosmic garment. They remain in isolation within me as only one half of their true reality unless and until I bring the power of love within my own thinking to meet them, to illuminate them and reunite them with the cosmos. When I know that my thinking activity provides the opening to all that is, I cannot possibly be content to rest within the confines of feeling-experiences un-illuminated by this power of thinking with which I am blessed. Steiner said: “*When he himself brings life into his thoughts, then, giving and receiving communion through his own being, he allies himself with the element of Divine Spirit which permeates the world and assures its future. ... [And] as he quickens the spirit in himself, he charms it also into the dead and dying matter that surrounds him*” (see *The Spiritual Communion of Mankind*, Lecture 5, 5-6 pages from end, New Year’s Eve 1922-23). And meeting each other through this activity, in eurythmy and in everything we do, is then the highest communion possible for us in our time. Let us be on our way there, earnestly and cheerfully!

## PART FOUR: THE SPEECH SOUND ETUDES

### Etudes for the twenty Figures: A sampling

Here is a selection from the *Speech Sound Etudes, Volume I*, one for each of the twenty Figures. The phonetic letter forms that I use are mostly from the American Heritage Dictionary.

#### Vowel Etudes:

- ä** Ah! Skalds watch Nanna’s wan swan squads waft.  
(skald – medieval Scandinavian poet; Nanna – god of the full moon)
- é** Bathed, fey-babes brayed: “Hey hey! Say nay! Stay ‘way!” (fey – fairylike)
- i** Pete’s breezy heath bees streak freely – he’s pleased!
- o** So: bonobos chose soaked poached rolled oat groats.  
(bonobo – a friendly type of ape)
- u** Sleuth Luke snoops tomb room gloom; Zulu spooks flew through – Oooo!

#### Consonant Etudes:

- B** Bold bears bang bins of balls, basins, buckets ‘n barrels of baubles ‘n bells.
- kh** Hugh’s humongous hubris humoresque humiliates humans humanely in humid Houston. Ach!
- D** Dim dew-dots dapple dusky dank dales.
- F** Foaming fountains fascinate funny feminine fairies.
- G** Goofy guppies gobble gulps of gooey gummy gooky gunk. (gooky – pronounced as in ‘book’)
- H** Help! Heavy hail hammers hillside huts hard!
- K** Capable Celts cut copper-colored caps ‘n cowled coats of cotton.
- L** Large lobsters lurk and linger along low ledges.
- M** Misty moonlit mizzle makes marvelous moss mounds moist.
- N** Neat nimble Naiad nymphs need nifty nests.  
(Naiad nymphs preside over brooks, springs and fountains in Greek mythology)
- P** Powerful pops ‘n pings petrify puzzled panicky ponies.
- R** Reckless rats run rampant racing ‘round rocky rubble.
- S** Soft silky seals sink and surface silently.
- T** Tentative turtles tiptoe to tall turreted towers.
- V** Virile vengeful Visigoths vanquish invading Vinland Viking vandals.

#### The other sounds I’ve been working with are:

- Vowels:** *ô* – awe *öu* – ouch *ö* – sock *ä* – cap  
*è* – get *ĩ* – zip *äi* – nine, kite (long, short) *oi* – toy  
*ə/ü* – above *öo* – look *û* – her *iu* – few *ui* – sweet
- Consonants:** *C* – certain *J* – jiggle *zh* – Asia  
*ng* – sing *nasal N* – bonbon *Q* – queen *sh* – shy  
*glottal t* – kitt’n *ts* – tsar *ch* – chew *th* – thank  
*th* – the *W* – water *wh* – why *X/ks* – axe  
*X/gz* – exist *Y* – yes *Z* – zany *dz* – kudzu

## CLOSING WORDS

Speech-work with the etudes as a doorway into the eurythmy movement-impulses has been a continual source of joy and enlivenment for me. I've also had the blessing of having a colleague in eurythmy and in speaking living nearby. We have met regularly to do foundation work; and through our combined experiences and insights, more and more has come to light regarding the power of the etudes to help us in our art – both in our speaking and in the work of the eurythmy gesture-impulses.

Like all poetic works, the etudes have a life of their own to unfold in the world and I am sending them forth to do their work with others, just as they have been doing so beautifully with me and my colleague. My first book of them, which includes concise sections on speech-work and on the gesture-impulses, came out in May 2016: *The Speech Sound Etudes, Volume I, Revelations of the Logos*. On page 18 below are some details concerning it and concerning the articles that I have been presenting in the Newsletter for the Eurythmy Association of North America (see at [www.EANA.org](http://www.EANA.org)). My first four articles are also available as a booklet: *A Quartet of Articles on Eurythmy and Speech-Work*. Please feel free to contact me if you'd like to include the etudes and/or any of my writings in a publication, to ask for my agreement and make arrangements.

I am continuing my composition of etudes for *The Speech Sound Etudes, Volume II* and *Volume III*, for the combination-consonants and vowel-to-consonant transitions; and I have been giving presentations of this speech-work and of poems framed by etudes that evoke the key sound-moods of each poem. (Details on the nature of these presentations are in my third article, "Etheric Bodies are Moving to the Speech Sound Etudes.") And I am continuing my work with eurythmy itself, "from within." There is much to do! Let us all work in communion with each other toward finding the remaining Figures which Steiner left for us to explore and complete, and toward bringing eurythmy many steps forward in its unfolding as a vigorous and inwardly-grounded expression of speech made visible through movement. Much more about these matters is contained in my book.

Let's be in communication!

Kate Reese Hurd

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Note for p. 1, regarding the Figures. These Figure drawings, which Rudolf Steiner gave as indications for twenty of the speech sound gestures as done in eurythmy, may be found in *Eurythmy and the Impulse of Dance, With Sketches for Eurythmy Figures by Rudolf Steiner*, with text by Marjorie Raffé, Cecil Harwood and Marguerite Lundgren, 1975.

<sup>2</sup> Note for p. 1, regarding the name 'eurythmy.' The etymology is: 'eu' – good, well or true, plus 'rhythmos' – proportion, measure, recurring motion, rhythm. The name is therefore taken to refer to harmonious movement. But many forms of movement can be characterized as being a kind of eurythmy when they are harmoniously coordinated, such as in modern dance and ballet. But the art of movement which Rudolf Steiner began to usher into being in 1912, that bears the name eurythmy, is not this kind of eurythmy. Its harmony is to spring from a different source altogether, as is pointed to in this report. The harmony to be expressed by the performers of this eurythmy is to have its origin in the nature of our own being and of all living things. It is to spring from the fact that each performer has been able, independently and together with each other, to grasp in spirit the movement-impulses of the speech sounds, which are also expressions of the life forces, the formative etheric forces through which the Logos continually creates and re-creates our being as human beings and every living creature. The aim in eurythmy is the harmonious expression that is possible when, through direct inner perception and cognition of this higher reality which is all around us and in us, eurythmists grow to meet each other within the moment-to-moment necessities of this reality as it expresses itself in poetic speech (and in music). Therefore, this eurythmy is not self-expression, nor is it coordinated, agreed-upon sets of movements or a catalog of inherited gestures, no matter how pleasing or personally meaningful these might be. Nor is it a kind of mime. In expressing the gesture-impulses of the sounds themselves, from within, we are one with the processes at work in the natural world and in our soul experiences, and we do not physically imitate anything as is done in mime.

<sup>3</sup> Note for p. 2, regarding how thinking "dives down." Here is the full passage from *PSA*, the "Addition to the Revised Version, 1918" at the end of Ch. 8, "Factors of Life," (Steiner's emphasis): "...*But one who really penetrates to the life within thinking will reach the insight that to experience existence merely in feeling or in will cannot in any way be compared with the inner richness, the inwardly at rest yet at the same time alive experience, of the life within thinking, and no longer will he say that the other could be ranked above this. It is just because of this richness, because of this inner fullness of living experience, that its reflection in the ordinary life of soul appears lifeless and abstract. No other human soul-activity is so easily underestimated as thinking. Will and feeling warm the human soul even when experienced only in recollection. Thinking all too easily leaves the soul cold in recollection; the soul-life then appears to have dried out. But this is only the strong shadow cast by its warm luminous reality, which dives down into the phenomena of the world. This diving down is done by a power that flows within the thinking activity itself, the power of spiritual love. The objection should not be made that to see love in active thinking is to transfer into thinking a feeling, namely love. This objection is in truth a confirmation of what is said here [about its apparent coldness in recollection]. For he who turns toward the living essence of thinking will find in it both feeling and will, and both of these in their deepest reality; whereas for someone who turns away from thinking and instead turns*

toward 'mere' feeling or will, for him these will lose their true reality. One who is willing to experience intuitively in thinking, will also be able to do justice to what is experienced in the realm of feeling and in the element of will, whereas mysticism of feeling and metaphysics of will are incapable of doing justice to the activity of permeating existence with intuitive thinking. They all too easily come to the conclusion that they have found reality, whereas [to them, wrongly,] the intuitive thinker produces in abstract thoughts without feeling, and far removed from reality, a shadowy, chilling picture of the world."

<sup>4</sup> Note for p. 2, regarding "the art is in the technique." In his Report on the lecture cycle, *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*, which he gave in 1924, Steiner described the demands of the work of eurythmy (see the "News Sheet," "Nachrichtenblatt," No. 28, July 20, 1924, also published at the front of *EVS*, 1984 edition): "Whoever wishes to do eurythmy must have penetrated into the being of speech-formation. He must, before all, have approached the mysteries of sound-creation. In every sound an expression for a soul experience is given; in the vowel-sounds for a thinking, feeling, willing self-revelation of the soul, in the consonant sounds for the way in which the soul represents an outer thing or a process. This expression of language remains for the most part quite subconscious in the case of ordinary speech; the eurythmist must learn to know it quite exactly, for he has to transform what becomes audible in speech into gestures which are quiescent or in movement. In this course, therefore, the inner structure of language was revealed. The sound-significance of the word, which everywhere underlies the meaning-significance, was made visible. By the eurythmy gestures themselves, some aspects of the inner laws of language ... can be visibly manifested. ... // The eurythmist must devote himself to the gesture down to the smallest detail, so that his performance really becomes the self-understood expression of the life of soul. He can only give form to the gesture in its fullness when the smallest detail comes first to consciousness, that it may later become the habitual expression of the soul-being. // A study was made of how the gesture as such reveals soul-experience and spirit-content, and also of how this revelation relates itself to the soul-expression which is manifested audibly in the language of sound. From eurythmy one can learn to value the technique of art; but from eurythmy one can indeed also become deeply imbued with the way in which the technical must put aside everything external and be completely taken hold of by the soul, if the truly artistic is to come to life. People who are active in any sphere of art often speak of how the soul must work behind the technique; the truth is that it is in the technique that the soul must work."

<sup>5</sup> Note for p. 2. The Agrippa von Nettesheim positions may be found in *How the New Art of Eurythmy Began: Lory Maier-Smits, The First Eurythmist*, by Magdalene Sieglöcher, 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Note for p. 5, regarding smallest expressions. See ENDNOTE 4.

<sup>7</sup> Note for p. 6, regarding Ahrimanic and Luciferic beings. These are fallen members of the Hierarchies known as the Archangels and the Angels, respectively; therefore the gifts of knowledge that we bring to the spiritual world through our work, as pointed to at the beginning of my PART THREE, might be of special value in providing what is needed in order for these beings to come along in their development also. For a description of them, and of their role in bringing about the rift between speaking and thinking that we now seek to heal, see Steiner's lecture, "The Lost Unison."

<sup>8</sup> Note for p. 6, regarding the intensive inward activity that is required for making these transitions. I believe that this intensive activity is in harmony with what Steiner explained about

meditative practices that are appropriate in our time. In his lecture, "The Change in the Path to Supersensible Knowledge," he said (his emphasis): "It is not right that modern man should strive in the same way as in ancient times to find the path into the spiritual world. Modern man must rise into the spiritual world not by way of the breath but by way of an intensified life of soul. That is why it is right for us today in meditation and concentration to transform what is otherwise merely logical content into something that in the thought itself is of the nature of music. ... we, in our time, must try – let us say for the sake of example – to experience the colour red, by means of intense concentration. We thus remain in the realm of thought. Then we do the same in order to experience blue. Presently we feel the rhythm: red, blue : blue, red : red, blue, and so on. It is a rhythm of thought – not the rhythm that is present in logic, however, but the rhythm of a much more living kind of thinking (Dornach, May 27, 1922, almost half way through, paragraphs 19-22).

Steiner went on to explain the effect of this (his emphasis): "All modern exercises in meditation aim at entirely separating thinking from the breathing process. Thinking is not on this account torn out of rhythm, but only out of an inner rhythm, and is then gradually linked to an outer rhythm. By setting thinking free from the rhythm of the breath – and this is the starting-point of modern meditation – we let thinking stream as it were into the rhythm of the outer world." He said, for example, that when contemplating the germination and growth of a plant, we can "let the soul be completely absorbed in the growth-forces of plant-life itself. ... [And when] we have succeeded in freeing thought from the physical functions, emancipating it from the breathing process and letting it swing into the outer rhythms of the world, it dips down, not into what is perceptible to the senses, into the physical qualities of the objects, but into their spiritual essence."

It is said that eurythmy is a kind of meditation, and it can be that in exactly this way when we enter the color experiences and other qualities of the gestures vividly, and when we are able to change our vivid inward focus moment-to-moment, in keeping with the outer musical rhythm of words, poetry or melody, completely independent of the inner rhythm dictated by our breathing process which is otherwise "continually surging and streaming through our nerves-and-senses process." I cannot say that I really understand what Steiner said about this 'breathing surging,' but it is evidently something that usually carries us in our inward process. The point would be that we are not to be carried by this 'breathing surging,' but free of it, through becoming the sole director of willed inward attention. We do not let ourselves be carried along by the poem or music, or by our physical impulses or momentum, but quite the reverse: we directly govern our ever-changing, moment-to-moment focus and expression in eurythmy. And as would-be initiates in the Age of Michael, we are not to be initiated; instead, we are to engage our initiative in everything we do, gaining new capacities with every step.

<sup>9</sup> Note for p. 8, about speaking the etudes. See *Practical Advice to Teachers*, Lecture 2, pp. 5-6, about the essential difference between expressing speech and hearing the speech of others. It is our own impulse to express speech from within that matters in eurythmy.

<sup>10</sup> Note for p. 9, about beginning with what is nearest-at-hand in thinking and in eurythmy. My work has shown that the Figures are not this essential starting point for the speech sounds in eurythmy. Someone outside of myself – in other words Steiner – gave testimony to these Figure facts. From what I see in them I can, of course, work back into myself to try to find the inner

experiences which Steiner attempted to convey in these amazing Figure details; and to some notable extent, I can succeed. But never will my efforts to re-create the Figures from the outside-in amount to the same full and compelling experiences that can be gained through beginning “*from within*,” through growing into these experiences directly “*from within*.”

<sup>11</sup> Note for p. 10, concerning esoteric training (*KHW*). I’ve added the word ‘self-’ to clarify that the role of the teacher of adults in our time, the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch, is to instruct the student how to train herself. No one is to train the adult student. As Steiner wrote in *Occult Science* (Ch. 5, 4-5 pages in): “...[A] training for spiritual development that is rightly adapted for our times ... offers [the pupil] instructions, and the pupil carries them out. ... The acceptance of the instructions, and their observance, have no need to rest on blind faith. Blind faith should indeed be altogether excluded.” He went on to state that the student can ask: “What effect will these [instructions] have on the life of the soul? Before any training is begun, this question, if approached with a healthy and unbiased mind, can receive adequate answer. For it is perfectly possible, before setting out to follow the recommendations, to form a clear and true conception of how they work. Naturally, we cannot have actual experience of their working until we have embarked on the training. But there too we shall find we can accompany the experience all the time with understanding, provided only we are free from preconceived ideas and bring healthy good sense to bear on each step we take. And a genuine spiritual science will in these days recommend for development only such means as will stand that test.”

I believe that this same spirit must hold sway in all teaching of adults, including adults in the general public, so that we encourage their independent will activity, guiding them to get below the surface of what we teach and knowingly take hold of it. I think that lessons meant to inspire sincere work could be helped by the speaking of The Eurythmy Meditation at the opening of each session: “*I seek within....*” We each seek within, and we seek within together with each other in our lessons. (See my rendering of The Eurythmy Meditation, p. 2, above. I believe I’ve been able to imbue the verses with a musical quality that to my feeling is lacking in most other renderings; it also preserves the transcendent quality of the word “*Es*” – It – in keeping with how we would go about expressing this important word through Dionysian form-making.)

<sup>12</sup> Note for p. 11, about the flourishing of eurythmy. I wrote, “*if it flourishes*” – meaning that this is an open question. It is possible that by easy steps eurythmy will slip into mime while also dissipating itself into the ongoing streaming of modern dance as yet another system of movements to be used just like any other codified choreographic system in dance. (Also see my article concerning the future of eurythmy.)

<sup>13</sup> Note for p. 11, regarding the six basic exercises. I have found the thinking exercise, the first of the six, to be wonderful for plumbing the depths of words, seeking to know their “*loving living-within speaking*” nature as sounding-singing-meanings, to experience the life in the sounds as they contribute their qualities to the task of carrying mental images, concepts and ideas on their “*wings*” (see “*Lost Unison*,” p. 1, above).

<sup>14</sup> Note for p. 11, regarding the fourth and second Further Rules. It seems to me that this fourth rule applies to both of the paths which Steiner placed before us (*OS*, Ch. 5, third section, 3<sup>rd</sup> page). Concerning the first path, he said that we must not merely read spiritual science and become acquainted with the concepts: in order for this first path to be effective we must make these concepts our own by really thinking them through

– as he pointed out in several places in the beginning chapters of *OS*. A help toward understanding and practicing what he means, to go much more deeply and prove these concepts for oneself, is the set of examples he gave in the “*Eight Meditations*,” contained in *A Road to Self-Knowledge*, 1912.

When Steiner wrote that we must overcome our aversion to the “*so-called abstract*,” I would say that he did not mean abstract in the sense of concepts that have no relevance to anything, but concepts for which we personally have no corresponding “*Practical Experience*” (see *PSA*, Ch. 6, pp. 4-5). So the task of cognition goes both ways: our perceptions – including our feeling-perceptions and experiences – must be completed by the work of thinking in order to become knowledge within us and constitute a grasp of reality; but the same is true the other way around: our learned concepts must be completed by laying hold of the actual experiences that belong to them, for only then do we have a complete grasp of reality and can say that we know these things. Knowledge of reality requires both percept and concept. Therefore, what is completely real to one person as something he can speak of honestly because he possesses the corresponding mental images or representations built from experience, another person will consider to be ‘abstract’ – for the simple reason that this other person has no corresponding experiences: it is ‘abstract’ for that person, but not abstract as regards reality. If I experience a musical interval, know what I experience and refer to it using the name we’ve given to it for the sake of communication (i.e., communion through speaking), someone who does not experience it can readily say that my word clothes an abstraction. Not so. But if that person used the word, it would indeed be an abstraction!

And the second rule presents difficulties also, especially for those who as yet remain at the philosophical level of consciousness which Steiner called Naive Realism, which includes the Philosophy of Feeling – as he discussed in many places in *PSA*. This rule presents difficulties for the Naive Realist and the Philosopher of Feeling because any conceptual activity that goes beyond what occurs naturally is viewed by them as just so much winding around of the mind. Since concepts arrive in the consciousness of the Naive Realist without conscious effort, all unobserved, and because the Naive Realist has not inquired into and fully examined how these explanations of the facts of experience come about within herself, such a person can easily believe that the concepts are given to her together with the percepts, all balled up with the experience; and she believes that she ‘knows’ things directly, without the aid of thinking, which to her is a mere ‘add-on.’ But she does not. If any explanation or knowing arrives for her, she has been thinking – she just doesn’t grasp that. And the sorry side of this is that since she is not aware of her thinking, this exceptional power within her cannot become for her something to be valued and developed far beyond this naive level. The truth is that even at this naive level it already unfolds as a spiritual activity – as our first, everyday gateway into direct spiritual knowing, if we would but know it. (See *PSA*, Ch. 5, pp. 6-7; Ch. 4, pp. 5-6; Ch. 3, 7 pages in; and Ch. 8, pp. 3-4. And see *A Theory of Knowledge*, *ThKn*, Ch. 11, “*Thinking and Perception*,” and Ch. 12, “*Intellect and Reason*.”)

About this remarkable spiritual gateway, Steiner wrote: “*Nobody could think abstractly and have real thoughts and ideas if he were not clairvoyant. Ordinary thoughts and ideas have always contained the pearl of clairvoyance. All such thoughts and ideas owe their origin to the very same process that generates the loftiest faculties, and it is of the utmost importance to*

realize that the first stage of clairvoyance is actually something perfectly commonplace. We just need to recognize the supersensible nature of concepts and ideas to get clear on the fact that they come to us from supersensible worlds. This puts them in the right perspective.” (See *Rudolf Steiner on his Book, The Philosophy of Freedom*, by Otto Palmer; pp. 78-79 include this quote from Steiner’s lecture cycle, *The Occult Significance of the Bhagavad Gita*, Helsingfors, May 28-June 5, 1913.)

However, it is important to understand the difference between the spiritual act of thinking which grasps separate concepts (often naively) – i.e., Intellect – and the spiritual act of thinking that finds the connections between concepts to grasp whole ideas – i.e., Reason (as in *ThKn*, Ch. 12). It is only when we halt after doing the necessary work of the Intellect that we create a soul-spiritual impasse that can be deadening. We must complete our act of knowing, to integrate each isolated concept into its true cosmic context so that “it becomes a part of the whole world of ideas” (again see *Mysticism*, p. 9, above).

But it is natural that the process of thinking in general is overlooked – not only because while we do it (naive or not) we cannot at the same time observe ourselves doing it, but also because, just like walking and speaking, we begin to learn to think when we are still very young, and we don’t think about it thereafter. This is also why doing three-part walking as an adult is so phenomenal: it takes what was learned without conscious participation and brings it into the realm of consciously-guided activity, bringing with it a wealth of insight. (About standing/walking, speaking and thinking, see “Pre-Earthly Deeds of Christ,” Pforzheim, March 7, 1914, Lecture 7 in Steiner’s lecture cycle, *Background of the Mystery of Golgatha*.)

So the remedy for Naive Realism is to become aware of what has been going on within us without our tending to it, to bear witness to this precious capacity of thinking and take charge of it actively, to engage in and develop this life-filled, love-filled faculty we possess, through which we can unfold the deepest interest in all that confronts us as experience, feeling-experience included; and that interest is where love begins (*PSA*, end Ch. 1). Then our thinking can open into the “evolutionary scale of every living thing” that Steiner described in the passage quoted above from his Introduction to *Mysticism*. Contrary to thinking being dead, each new manifestation of active thinking is a new creation. And consciously engaging in this creative activity is what can move us away from passivity and limitation as ‘unfree spirits’ toward a spiritually-active and transformative unfoldment as ‘free spirits.’

Working our way toward surmounting the philosophical stage of Naive Realism is also crucial if we are to transcend the level of “naive art” in our work and become capable of achieving what Steiner called “critical art.” In *Truth and Knowledge*, [or *Truth and Science*] Ch. 3, last page, he wrote (his emphasis): “In all of our activities, two things must be taken into account: the activity itself, and our knowledge of its laws. We may be completely absorbed in the activity without worrying about its laws. [Such an] artist ... does not reflect about the laws according to which he creates, but applies them, using feeling and sensitivity. We may call him ‘naive’. It is possible, however, to observe oneself, and enquire into the laws inherent in one’s own activity, thus abandoning the naive consciousness just described through knowing exactly the scope of and justification for what one does. This I shall call *critical*. ... Critical reflection then is the opposite of the naive approach.”

Clearly, to Steiner, this critical approach to art is no weary, dried-out matter: it is the goal for all artistic activity in our time. He was advocating that our work be exactly this well-founded.

The good thing about what he advocated is, that when it is that well-founded, it is deeply satisfying and hugely surpasses anything that naive art can offer. Naive art can only lay hold of more-or-less interesting fragments, isolated collections of fragments of the cosmic ‘garment’ – as I’m calling it – that Steiner described in *Mysticism*; but critical art can lay hold of that cosmic garment itself, made of whole fabric, because only engaged thinking has the power to supply us with that opening. And through our art, in performance – when we are not at work plumbing the depths seeking “the wisdom of the whole world” that is needed for eurythmy (as Steiner told Lory, above, p. 3), but instead, through the very way we move we are wholly expressing what we know of these depths – our onlookers can see and know that we have in fact laid hold of it, and not merely laid hold of its ‘husk.’ Then doors can open within them also and we are a great help to them, spurring their soul-spiritual development through the fruits of our own. So much good can come from this, that every effort and success in this direction is of value. We should all feel impressed by that challenge, and impelled to action by everything that Steiner communicated to us concerning what the onlooker is to experience through our eurythmy. See especially these lectures: “Veils, Dresses and Colours,” Dornach, August 4, 1922; and “The Eurythmy Figures,” which contains material drawn from two lectures: one given in Dornach, August 4, 1922, and the other given in Penmaenmawr, August 26, 1923. These can be found at the end of the 1984 edition of *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR-COMPOSER

Here is a glimpse into the author-composer’s background and the life path that has led her to undertake this body of work in speech and eurythmy:

Reese Hurd was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and grew up in the Hudson Valley of New York in a family of five children, raised by parents who spoke ‘general’ American English well. Her young life included plenty of music, art and physical activity. She began to play the piano at age eight, though only as an adult did she have serious lessons on the instrument. She played the clarinet and violin in school band and orchestra, tried the cornet and took up the flute, guitar and recorder. She also played string bass for two summers at an arts and music camp where she taught hand-work and thrived on the remarkable synergy of the staff meetings that infused camp life. Her musicality played a crucial role in essays for school: by circumstance she missed the lessons on grammar and diagramming sentences, so she did her writing not by the force of rules but by cultivating a musical sense for the structure of language, where the sounding of the words is heard inwardly and the parts of speech and phrases meet and work together to form a rhythmic flow of ideas. Working through the relationships and processes of mathematics had always given her joy, but she did not pursue math at the college level. Instead, her degree was in English literature with a focus on dramatic works, including Shake-

speare. Her minor was in drama, and she sang in choruses and chamber groups throughout all of her college years. One of her striking childhood memories is the sense of shock she felt at finding that the school books in second grade no longer contained pictures – that these images were now to be found through the words alone. But she found the pictures and the sounds inwardly, and she has always felt this as a need: to see the images and hear the words inwardly while reading. In grade school she read as many books of Grimm’s fairy tales as she could lay her hands on.

Reese Hurd took a second bachelor’s degree, in music. Though it was wonderful to have the chance, finally, to study music earnestly, she found that the student’s deeper experience of the nature of music – intervals, harmonic progressions and so on – was not actively fostered. No particular means were provided for this beyond what might develop through playing and singing music and becoming skillful at sight-singing. For example, little attention was given to the qualitatively-distinct feeling-experiences of the scale degrees, the melodic intervals between them and the much different character of the two tetrachords that make up the scale, none of which can be accounted for through music theory analysis and measuring half steps or pitches. With disappointment, she finished this degree and let music lay dormant for a few years.

In the period that followed, Reese Hurd had the opportunity to join a group of people who were studying Rudolf Steiner’s book, *A Theory of Knowledge*. They were taking up Chapter 13, “The Act of Cognition,” and she dove in and swam. Soon after beginning this study, she was invited to attend a lay eurythmy class as a guest on the bench. At the close of the lesson, the teacher performed a short poem in eurythmy movement. Even though it was not music that Reese Hurd saw, she immediately grasped that within this new art were the means of evoking, clarifying and strengthening the inner musical experiences that were neglected or taken for granted in traditional musical studies. She soon moved to Spring Valley NY, and enrolled in the four-year program in speech eurythmy and tone eurythmy there. During these four years, she served as a pianist for the practice classes and solo work of her school mates and performed when these solos were shown to the public (pieces by Chopin, Beethoven, Kodaly and Liszt, etc.).

In the eurythmy program, attention was given to the qualitative characteristics of the elements of music and of the spoken word; but here again, as in music studies, there were insufficient means for awakening the student’s direct, inward experiences of these deeper facts. She graduated and taught speech eurythmy to the general public with some amount of success in the work, but found that she was limited to leading her students as they more-or-less accepted and followed her learned movements and descriptions. She felt ill at ease with this approach, but knew that she was not equipped to get to the heart of the matter: she had no means of guiding them toward experiencing the movement-impulses of the sounds themselves. After a number of years, she stopped teaching and let eurythmy lay dormant.

The body of speech sound etudes referred to in this report is the result of Reese Hurd’s recent efforts toward renewed work in eurythmy, which began in late 2012. To lay a secure foundation for herself, she found it essential not only to re-master basic exercises in eurythmy, but also to find the means to be able to enter the speech sounds deeply enough to find the resonance and characteristics of each one of them through percep-

tion of their gesture-impulses as direct, inward experiences. The need for these means led her to compose the etudes, which in May 2016 she began to share with the public in her book, *The Speech Sound Etudes, Volume I, Revelations of the Logos*, subtitled, *Poetic Miniatures for Sounding Our Language: A Body of Speech-Work for Speakers, Actors, Eurythmists, Poets, Writers, Singers, Teachers, Therapists and Philologists*. In the book, the etudes are accompanied by detailed sections on the nature of the etudes, the sounds and their migrations, poetic speech, how to work with the etudes, the importance of our hearing activity when speaking the etudes, and perceiving the inaudible, unspoken and invisible aspects of the spoken word. A pithy APPENDIX addresses the gesture-impulses of the sounds – i.e., the work of the art of eurythmy – and includes a section that gives many of her findings thus far for the roughly fifty-two sounds that we utter in English, to support the reader and student’s discovery process.

Since the posting of her report, *The Speech Sound Etudes: Feeling the Gestures and Finding the Figures*, at the EANA website in the Fall of 2014, her articles have been appearing in the EANA Newsletter. They are: “‘The Word of My Feet:’ The Three Parts of Walking” (Spring 2015), “The Seven Rod Exercises: Honing the Agility of our Conscious Awareness” (Fall 2015), “Ethereic Bodies are Moving in Response to the Speech Sound Etudes” (Spring 2016) – which reports on her preparations and success in bringing the fruits of this speech-work to the public through poetic recitations – and “Eurythmy as a Critical Art: What This Means for Its Future” (Fall 2016). These are available as a booklet also: *A Quartet of Articles*.

For Reese Hurd, the etudes she has composed and works with are an expression of her sense of the musicality and joy that lives in the spoken word. She will be continuing the composition work she has already begun on *The Combination-Consonant Etudes* (to be *Volume II*) and *The Vowel-to-Consonant Etudes* (to be *Volume III*), while also turning outward to share this speech and gesture work in lecture-demonstrations, workshops, classes and individual lessons. Her artistic presentations of poems together with these poetic miniatures, the etudes, at poetry forums are ongoing. She will, of course, continue her work in the art of eurythmy, which includes the seed-beginnings of an inwardly-secured foundation for renewed work in tone eurythmy. Her hope is that in partnership with able speakers and musicians, the performance of eurythmy will form a part of her unfolding activities. At some point, she might publish the larger sets of etudes that she has composed, plus the special collections she made of the words she gathered for their composition – others could then make use of them to plumb the depths of the sounding-meanings of our language. These collections cover the single vowels and the single consonants, the combination-consonants and the vowel-to-consonant transitions. She would like to bring out a children’s volume of etudes as well, perhaps with illustrations, though the published etudes in *Volume I* can easily be used with children or adapted for them.

Reese Hurd has also created sculptures on an intimate scale using wool yarns and knotting techniques. These works are complex and organically-developed, each with its own textural, color and form dynamics that appear to speak in warm and friendly tones to those who make their acquaintance.