

Participant Reviews of Tone Eurythmy Therapy Courses with Jan Ranck

Report on the Course in Beaver Run, PA, USA (July 2017)

How can we keep alive and nurture the inspirational legacy of Lea van der Pals? This question I have lived with and continue to live with as I strive to continue my own development as a eurythmist in addition to further developing my teaching capacities and insights.

My summer was a very busy one, but lo and behold, a course was being offered by Jan Ranck in therapeutic tone eurythmy, and furthermore it was taking place right in my neighborhood. Most importantly, it was bringing Lea's genius and research to those there for the taking, as it were! Somehow, I would have to make space for this in my life.

Through this intensive 9 day course, we were masterfully guided by our intrepid Jan into a deeply resonating experience of the profound and powerfully healing nature of the fundamental elements of tone eurythmy. We worked hard to tune ourselves in such a way that we could really discern the subtleties underlying these elements and we had to work hard too, to digest the wealth of content and material that needed to be covered.

This course was attended by mostly eurythmists, but two lay-people joined us: an opera singer who brought her musical riches to our dialogue and an early childhood educator who connected very deeply with the work and had so many pertinent questions to ask. These two proved so valuable to our work and in some way (which I can't yet fully articulate) allowed us and the process greater depth and reflection.

Lea was very 'present' in this work, and as a graduate of her school, I recognized and felt buoyed by the unmistakable imprint of her genius! There is no doubt but that I was flooded with memories of the extraordinary training I was privileged to undertake in Dornach back in the mid 70's!

Sequences and exercises, inspiring in their shaping, overwhelmingly real in their content and musical selections, and so designed to work on specific diagnoses; the mark of the consummate artist so evident in their design: this was our daily diet, and Jan deftly guided, prodded, encouraged and challenged us. Time was given to hear and respond to many of Steiner's words and content relevant to a deeper grasp of the complexities of the various conditions where specific tone sequences would be relevant.

While the course was thorough, so well organized, articulate and artistic (with a very able young pianist playing for us), it was so full that I would have wanted a couple days rest and then a continuation or resumption in which again, we would review the therapies.

The question with which I opened these words has in part been answered! Lea's work and legacy is being carried forward and I am hopeful that this can grow. I feel so privileged to have been able to attend this course and am grateful to Jan for her unstoppable commitment to the task. I highly recommend colleagues to attend this course if and when it is offered again. For those of you – therapists, pedagogues and artists -- who wish to deepen and broaden your knowledge and skills in tone eurythmy, this is where that can take place... And last, but not least: you will be able to experience Lea van der Pals in the process! A heartfelt thanks to Jan Ranck!

-Raymonde van der Stok, Eurythmist, Kimberton, PA

I left Jan Ranck's Tone Eurythmy course feeling like a well-tuned instrument. The relationship she helped us develop to each aspect of music penetrated my form deeply and transformed me on every level. Because we are all created out of the music of the spheres the content of the course is accessible to anyone of good will, regardless of their previous training. I see the exercises from this course meeting my high school students' needs for help with incarnating healthily. Jan's warm, demanding, and enthusiastic teaching style is an inspiration to me as a teacher. I cannot wait to take this course again!

-Lilith Dupuis, Eurythmist, Costa Mesa, CA

Reports on the Course in Peredur, GB (April 2017)

Although study-blocks of eurythmy therapy material were included in my eurythmy training [Zuccoli School, mid- 1970's], I am not a eurythmy therapist. I am a eurythmist and was very happy to attend, with twelve other participants, the Tone Eurythmy Therapy Course at Peredur Centre for the Arts in April. Led by Jan Ranck of the Jerusalem Academy of Eurythmy, the course was a ten-day study of the deeply insightful work of Lea van der Pals in this realm, who together with anthroposophical medical doctor Margarete Kirchner-Bockholt, developed tone eurythmy therapy exercises in response to Rudolf Steiner's repeated promptings that further work of this sort would be necessary.

I found the material of the course, the elements of Tone Eurythmy, to be 'simple' (as in based in what is essential), though never easy. The task was always to bring these movement elements of life, to life. In her fine and light-filled style, Jan Ranck has a gift to convey and to call for and forth through exercise both 1) technical integrity and discipline in body movement and 2) clear experience and understanding of each subject area of the work. These "simple," [i.e. built on basics] exercises, however, were intensive work. One important learning experience I gained from this course is a refreshed concept of what is meant by 'schooling the etheric body.' In looking at any disorder, a very clear distinction between the existing condition and the ideal condition comes into view, as well as an increased idea or question about an origin of the problem. Precisely because the exercises we did are so simply designed, the experience of powerfully affecting the etheric body (or astral body or ego) through them stood out all the more clearly. I think this is a most essential point in learning or working in eurythmy.

Nevertheless, I cannot remember when I have laughed so much, possibly as a result of not only Jan's wonderful inclusion of humour in her teaching, but also of the health-giving effect of the exercises. It seems to me it could be potentially valuable to have a course like this, which was so thorough and clear in revealing eurythmy, as well as possibly its parallel in pedagogical eurythmy, (which I have also had the opportunity to experience with Jan), as part of new students' first years of eurythmy training, in order to give them a *compatible* experience of the *scope* of eurythmy early on in their learning. For, as we heard in the words of Rudolf Steiner, in Tone Eurythmy there is no distinction between therapy and art.

I must not fail to mention virtuoso concert pianist Michael Zelevinsky, also from Jerusalem, who not only accompanied all of our lessons for 8 (academic) hours a day, but in the evenings played Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Chopin, Beethoven (and many more) to us with an incomparable skill, talent and fervor. At the end of one of the evening concerts Jan also contributed a selection in artistic Tone Eurythmy. These days of work and transformation were surely spent with much richness, inspiration, wisdom and life force, which I can highly recommend to anyone!

-Elizabeth Carlson, Eurythmist, Cardiff, Wales.

Thanks again for the great course – It was a refreshing review for me! I got my violin out again when I returned home. I started lessons 3 years ago, which I loved, but couldn't afford to keep up at that time, but! this course with its "where there is the will there is a way" approach has DEFINITELY inspired me to take it up again to get music back into my sessions. I'm going to invest in an alto xylophone, so I can start with some of the exercises straight away!! I once even used an Irish tin whistle for one lady for 5 years with the eczema exercise, and this lady practiced faithfully at home and her eczema left her!! She could hear the music "inside" eventually!!

-Susan Harrison, Eurythmy Therapist, Scotland

This was a great course and it is wonderful that Jan is doing such a good job of bringing the important work of this impulse into the world. I have already started using new knowledge and skills with my special needs friends in Nutley Hall in simplified version with lyres.

-Vladimir Havrda, Eurythmy Therapist, Czech living in England

I feel blessed to have attended Jan's course in England. Jan is a warm dynamic teacher, sharing Lea van der Pals' exercises through her own depth of wisdom. I left feeling nourished, polished, bathed in the beauty and profound relevance of eurythmy.

-Beth Christensen, Pedagogical Eurythmist, Australia

The course has given me the insight, inspiration and the fuel to work with clarity and inner strength. The exercises with the full program of the course propelled within me, clarity of thinking and the ability to observe objectively. Suddenly there is a part of my inner self standing slightly up and behind directing into the future. I recognised from this experience the exercises have awoken other capacities within me. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and tremendous gift. Rhythm is the key ingredient and it's already providing the power and inspiration needed for my eurythmy training.

-Anna Kotanidis. Third Year Eurythmy Student in England from Australia

The course was full of information and the wisdom of eurythmy and I am fully nourished by that. The most impressive thing I experienced there was Jan's way of teaching. We were allowed to make mistakes and were corrected in a forgiving and encouraging way which I believe is the best and the anthroposophical way for teaching people. It was utterly therapeutic. Another impressive thing was that the course didn't exclude non-eurythmists and spread the wonderful knowledge without limitation. Even though I cannot use what we learnt as movement therapy, I can apply the basic knowledge in the visual art realm, so that the only difference is what medium we use, movement or visual/tactile creativity. I was very happy to find this out in the course. Also, all of the music, painting and visual images used in the course were very impressive and suited the theme well. Thank you for giving us nourishment on top of eurythmy.

-Izumi Maeda, Anthroposophic Arts Therapist, Friday Eurythmy Group, England

Reports on the course in Chicago, IL, US2A (Oct. 2016)

This was the first U.S. public course offered by Jan Ranck, who has held these specialized workshops in Europe and beyond. And the diverse and vibrant Windy City in the late autumn provided a fitting venue for this Midwest native.

While designed as an intense professional course for eurythmists and physicians, it was also generously open to all who work with and are dedicated to music and the singing soul, within and through the human instrument. Hosted in the Chicago Christian Community and the Anthroposophical Branch Center of Chicago, it was attended by eurythmists, therapeutic eurythmists, music therapists, physicians and those interested in tone eurythmy. Those from out of town, (one participant even came from Germany), were warmly welcomed and hosted by the local participants. Peter Snyder-Vine was tirelessly energetic in his care and considerate help with the organization.

Jan is a profoundly patient teacher, remaining carefully within the lawfulness of the tone eurythmy elements themselves, and true to Rudolf Steiner's tone eurythmy course. With her stringent guidance in attending to our experiences in the instrument and a healthy dose of humor she led us through specific focus to intensive engagement and new experience. Her artistry always tended towards clarifying the soul within the instrument and she guided us to mastering ourselves in the

movement, freeing breathing. She provided excellent examples for us to enter into the musical elements. Repetition and nuanced practice helped us transform our instruments, and over the time we developed strength and capacity

Intensive, challenging, and transforming for all, the course was structured in such a way as to lead us from artistic engagement into the intensive practice and then to the therapeutic application. As such it was accessible for all, while at the same time, provided a specialized development for eurythmy therapists. The 9 fundamental exercise groups developed by Lea van der Pals and Dr. Kirchner Bockholt address the medical conditions/complex of Rheumatism; skin (eczemas); heart and circulation congestions; sugar (diabetes), protein, and fat, digestion anomalies; mineral deposit tendency/gout, arthritis, deformations.

The course also allowed us to receive inspiring presentations by the attending Anthroposophical physicians Cathy Sims-O'Neal, Drs. Ross and Andrea Rentea, and Mark Kamsler. These led to lively questions and conversations with all participants contributing from their various professions. The accomplished pianist, John Paul Pendowski, who played for the sessions daily, gave two outstanding solo recitals. In the last, Jan Ranck and Christina Beck joined him to perform solo eurythmy pieces by Claude Debussy (Claire de Lune) and Arvo Part. We also had an evening to visit the extraordinary and famous Chicago Art Museum.

If you have not yet experienced this work, I would like to recommend that you take the time for this intensive practice, whether you are able to bring it to your patients or not. It is a focused discipline to reorient the instrument and thereby to reach the life stream of music that heals and renews.

-Glenda Monash, Eurythmy Therapist , Colorado

I would like to join Glenda in giving the endorsement of a physician participant to the course of Jan Ranck.

For the physicians attending it was definitely also a special treat. I was able to be present for the entire 10 days and it could not have been time better spent.

It is one thing to think, read or meditate on the astral body- it is another altogether actually to experience the musical sounds and to give them expression through one's own body in eurythmy. Unexpected was the realization of how much intensive and repetitive work it takes to have the tone eurythmy impulses "sit" and take root in oneself. I definitely recommend to any physician who is interested in practicing anthroposophical medicine to partake in such a course. Jan Ranck seems to have the destiny to bring therapeutic tone eurythmy to the world – or at least to the English speaking one. She deserves our support. Her method and the content is not always easy to keep up with as a lay person but she struggles valiantly to bring even those unfamiliar with this world of tones in eurythmy (like myself) along.

All physicians present – Cathy Sims O'Neil, Andrea Rentea, Mark Kamsler and myself – felt that we were much closer to being able to both understand our patients in their suffering and to understand anthroposophy (the astral body) as a consequence of the course.

We had a young chiropractor participating, Sorina Rentea DC, who although a Waldorf School graduate has had very little exposure to anthroposophy as such. She not only learned a lot but expressed at the end "I actually like this and want to continue exploring it."

Jan Ranck deserves a big thanks that she lets physicians participate. The cooperation between physicians and eurythmy therapists cannot flourish unless both sides share experiences together.

All in all, the course is to be recommended highly.

- Ross Rentea MD, Anthroposophical Physician, Chicago, IL

In addition to the local attendees, eurythmists, physicians and others, there were eurythmists and doctors who traveled from afar to attend this workshop. The course began on a Friday evening and ran for 10 days. I was privileged, as a lyrist with some training in anthroposophic music therapy, to be able to attend a couple of evenings and the weekends.

Jan Ranck, who traveled from Israel to give this course, introduced us to the musical elements by way of exercise groups developed by Lea van der Pals and Dr. Kirchner-Bockholt for various medical conditions. We worked with a very sensitive pianist, practicing many basic musical intervals along with musical excerpts used for the exercises. It gave me just a glimpse into the intense practice and stamina required to become and work as a eurythmist. As a person with a chronic disease, and some physical limitations, it was surprising, given how taxing the work was, that it was also very nourishing, and the musical exercises made it possible to keep working longer than I thought could be possible. As a musician, it was very wonderful to delve further into the eurythmy gestures of the intervals, working along with the elements of beat and rhythm. At the end of each day I felt it might not be possible to return the next time, yet in the morning I awoke eagerly ready for the next day's work.

We also had discussions with the eurythmists and doctors about the medical conditions covered in the day's exercises. This was also very interesting and helped to make the work more conscious. I would highly recommend this course to anyone with an interest.

An unexpected outcome of the workshop made itself felt in my next choir rehearsal the Thursday evening after it ended. I sing soprano, but usually am not able to sing above a high F on the top of the staff with ease. At this rehearsal, we were given music with a lot of high G's above the staff – and my voice just slid right up there without a glitch.

-Debbie Barford, Music Therapist and Lyrist

Report on the course in Ballytobin, Ireland, (April 2106)

This spring, a unique event took place in English for eurythmists from all over the world. In Camphill Ballytobin, Ireland, eighteen eurythmists came together from 1-10 April under the invigorating guidance of Jan Ranck, founding director of the Jerusalem Academy of Eurythmy, to learn and experience the Tone Eurythmy Therapy Course as developed by Lea van der Pals and Dr. Margarete Kirchner-Bockholt. Long held in German by Annemarie Bäeschlin, this is the first time since the 80's that it has been accessible in English. There were eight eurythmists from Ireland, five from Australia, two from Japan and one each from Taiwan, Sweden and England. Jan put us through our paces by bringing us back into contact with the basics of Tone Eurythmy—beat, rhythm and pitch, major/minor triads, ethos/pathos, scales, intervals. If one had been listening at keyholes, one might have thought we were in training for the circus as we 'swallowed our rods', swung on trapezes, and held acrobats on our arms (we even attempted to become Octopi!)—all images calling for great inner - outer activity! Having laid the basic foundations, Jan then brought us through nine sequences of tone eurythmy exercises developed in relationship to specific illnesses, emphasizing the importance of our own skill and mastery of the elements of eurythmy in order to convey them to the patient.

In addition to Jan's demanding yet entertaining approach, we had the privilege of having the concert pianist Michael Zelevinsky at the piano, also from Jerusalem. It was a great joy, especially for the many of us who work without accompanists, to move to music so beautifully and sensitively played. Every evening Michael gave a recital on the Steinway grand, a rare opportunity to feed one's soul!

We are indebted to Gina Poole for having the idea of bringing the training to English-speakers and to Camphill Ballytobin for their generosity in giving us the free use of Castalia Hall for our work. Thanks also go to the Anthroposophical Society in Ireland for their generous donation towards covering costs. Most especially we thank Jan for bringing this training to the English-speaking world. It was the deep feeling of all of the participants not only that the course be repeated one day in Ballytobin, but also that others may imitate Gina's initiative in other locations world-wide. Jan confirmed that she is open to the idea. Thank you Jan!

-Roxanne Leonard, eurythmy therapist, Ireland