



September 2014  
No. 9

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■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

January 16, 1954 • July 26, 2014

**Sergei O. Prokofieff †**

After three years of serious illness, Sergei Prokofieff crossed the threshold of death in the early morning hours of July 26, 2014—only one day before more than 300 members of the School for Spiritual Science were to meet at the Goetheanum for a week-long opportunity to deepen their work with the School (in English and German).

Intensive work with the mantras of the First Class (the subject of the last major work he completed) coincided in a special way with the commemoration of Sergei Prokofieff's life. On July 29 a throng of several hundred people passed by his coffin in the Carpentry Building where there was scarcely enough room for the many who attended the Christian Community committal service at 2:00 p.m. European General Secretaries, representatives of the anthroposophical movement, and Erzoberlenker Vicke von Behr came to the Goetheanum for the service. A written version of Peter Selg's eulogy can be found in this issue. A memorial in the Foundation Stone Hall rounded out this intensive week on August 2; it included personal recollections by members of the Executive Council and friends in the Anthroposophical Society as well as artistic contributions.

**Difficult Years at the Start of the 21st Century**

Sergei Prokofieff's acceptance of emeritus status in 2013 and his death mark the end of a particular human constellation in the leadership of the Anthroposophical Society. It was one that began when Manfred Schmidt-Brabant initiated an invitation to Sergei Prokofieff, Bodo von Plato, and Cornelius Pietzner to join the Executive Council, thereby doubling the number of members in 2001/2002 (Virginia Sease, Heinz Zimmermann, and Paul Mackay were already members). In a certain way this brought into the Executive Council a representative from the East, one from the West, and one from the Middle—younger



Memorial picture at the door to the Carpentry Hall: Sergei O. Prokofieff

individuals in their forties. This Executive Council community (together with the Collegium of the School) had to confront the difficult years at the start of the 21st century, years marked outwardly by the failed attempt at a new constitution, legal challenges, and financial worries, but also by many challenges to the operation of the Goetheanum itself—alterations in the stage, changes in the Sections, and much more. The Executive Council and the Collegium of the School often held differing viewpoints about how these developments would take place and where they would lead. Although very little of that was outwardly visible, it clearly hindered the effect of the Goetheanum in the world.

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Sergei Prokofieff participated in all these processes, lengthy discussions, and difficult decisions leading up to the serious financial turning point in 2010—even though he was principally concerned with the work of Rudolf Steiner. During the newly instituted seven-year vote for members of the Executive Council (and a no-confidence motion) in 2011 he emerged with more votes than the others—and he felt this to be a confirmation of his efforts. He became seriously ill shortly after Easter, 2011, and—no longer a participant in the discussions and decisions—he took an increasingly critical view of developments at the Goetheanum. He made this unmistakably clear in his last address in the Great Hall on March 30, 2012, during the remembrance for Rudolf Steiner held as part of the Annual General Meeting. The sense of responsibility for the Society he shared with the entire Executive Council could be clearly sensed in the course of two later conversations with them—but it was destined to be too late to allow for a new beginning. | *Justus Wittich*

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Memorial Address Held in the Goetheanum Carpentry Building, July 29, 2014

## Sergei O. Prokofieff's Life Work

Dear Friends,  
Sergei Prokofieff asked me to offer an appraisal of his work and its intent during his funeral service. I will try to comply with his wish by offering this incomplete sketch.

Three decades before Sergei Prokofieff was born, Rudolf Steiner held his lectures on the Book of Revelation in the room where we are today. In the lecture of September 12, 1924 he noted: "If we, as perceptive human beings who can interpret the signs of the time, establish our lives in the sense of these three Mysteries of our time—the Michael Mystery, the Christ Mystery, and the Sorat Mystery—we will work correctly in the realms assigned us by our karma [...]" In September 1924 Rudolf Steiner invited the members of the esoteric Executive Council and the members of the priesthood to the course on the Book of Revelation and held these lectures for them. Obviously Sergei Prokofieff did not become a priest in the movement for religious renewal, but he belonged—and belongs—to the esoteric Executive Council of the Anthroposophical Society. Sergei Prokofieff was a "perceptive human being" who knew how to interpret the "signs of the time," and who established his life in the sense of these three Mysteries. He made endless sacrifices as a result.

### Sacrificial Devotion

One week before the lecture just cited, Rudolf Steiner also emphasized in this room: "Something like what took place in the old Mysteries must come again, something referred to as the sacrificial devotion of the whole human being, as the total immersion of the human being in his task." Throughout his life, Sergei Prokofieff worked for anthroposophy with just this attitude—even doing so during the more than three final years of his terminal illness. With "courage of knowledge" and with "fire of knowledge" he worked creatively; and, as intended by Rudolf Steiner, he immersed his "whole being" in his task. We need only consider the brilliant, even ultimate works he created during this last period, elaborations of anthroposophy of the sort Rudolf Steiner had so ardently hoped for from his pupils

and his colleagues!

### On Christology

In 2011 (during the first year of his illness) Sergei Prokofieff's significant work on the Representative of Humanity —*Rudolf Steiner's Sculptural Group, A Revelation of the Spiritual Purpose of Humanity and the Earth*—was published. I can still see the draft of the book's dust jacket as it lay on the table beside his sick bed in the Basel clinic where he had undergone surgery. In this work Sergei Prokofieff demonstrated how one of Rudolf Steiner's "fundamental tasks" was to bring to the earth an image of the Christ that was "true to reality" and how it had been created through the intuitive connection between Rudolf Steiner's own I-being and the Christ-being. Sergei Prokofieff also presented significant spiritual discoveries about the sculpture, involving the "etherization of the blood," the "cosmic source of healing forces," as well as evil's battle for the human heart.

In conversation, Sergei Prokofieff indicated that he only rarely sought out a direct encounter with Rudolf Steiner's atelier and the Christ statue in the Goetheanum because the impressions he had there were so strong that their effect endured in him for weeks and months. Nevertheless, until just before his death, he hoped to find once again the strength to visit these places—which did not come to pass. He did, however, ask at the very end that Rudolf Steiner's bust of the head of Christ be brought to his death room.

In 2012, the second year of his illness, his 600-page work *And the Earth Becomes Sun. On the Mystery of the Resurrection* appeared in print. It encompasses a wealth of new insights on the resurrection body of the Christ, the Sun mystery of the Last Supper, the esoteric meaning of the Grail blood, the awakening of Lazarus, the cosmic destiny of evil, and Rudolf Steiner's relationship to the Nathan soul.

### In Touch with Current Events

During the last three years, despite increasing physical weakness, Sergei Prokofieff also continued to work intensively on other themes where Christology was not the primary focus. He

prepared new editions of his earlier works on Demetrius and the spiritual tasks of Central and Eastern Europe, and kept abreast of current events. To someone who had never spoken with him before about politics, his geopolitical understanding, knowledge, and interest were astounding and staggering. Just a few days before his death he spoke in detail not only about events in Ukraine but about what was happening in Iraq, Iran, and Palestine—which made evident that in his biography (had he chosen to) he might have used his spiritual forces to handle themes and tasks that were completely different from the ones he had pursued. He had, however, chosen the spiritual science of Rudolf Steiner.

During his illness he wrote a significant new preface and afterword to his book *The Spiritual Tasks of Central and Eastern Europe* concerning the development of a true relationship to the “folk spirit,” the future of Central Europe, and the destiny shared with the European East in the preparation of the next cultural epoch that is to begin in approximately 1,500 years. How infinitely endangered are these developments today—and how significant are Sergei Prokofieff’s works that also shed a whole new light on Rudolf Steiner’s spiritual engagement during the First World War! Up to the end, how very important to Sergei Prokofieff were questions regarding a true relationship to the German “folk spirit”—to a “folk spirit” and a “folk soul” related in a peculiar unique breathing motion and only “incarnate” in particular times. This means that special tasks as well as dangers (in their “absence”) arise in connection with them.

### The Michael Mystery

During the last part of his life Sergei Prokofieff succeeded in finishing his major, completely new book on the Michael Mystery for which he had basically done the preliminary work over the course of his life. Never before had a pupil and colleague of Rudolf Steiner worked out something so penetrating and encompassing on the various facets and activities of the Michael-being. How connected he was to this theme of the leading Sun-archangel who is related much more strongly than the other archangels to the aim of human evolution—because he is the face of Christ and represents His forces! Rudolf

Steiner says that we human beings must learn to work with Michael in the future. His last address on September 28, 1924, was an address about Michael given to Michaelites; and Sergei Prokofieff delivered his unforgettable lecture on Michael and the Michael-imagination (that led to his book) on May 8, 2011, just after he had come from the Ita Wegman Clinic in Arlesheim where shortly before he had received the diagnosis of his terminal illness.

### The First Class

And finally his new book about the First Class! You all know that in 2009 Sergei Prokofieff produced his great study on *The First Class of the Michael School and Its Christological Foundations*—a book about the path through the 19 First Class lessons that lead to a true perspective on the human I, a perspective that allows the I to appear in ever-greater clarity. There are also profound research results concerning the “Guardian of the Threshold” and other matters. Many people—the world over—have remarked during the last years that this publication is not only a singular work of research of the School for Spiritual Science but also offers substance for working with the First Class that will endure for centuries. But Sergei Prokofieff went further. One day there arose in him in a spiritual perspective that the 19 Lessons not only bring the transformation of human consciousness towards “Christ consciousness” but they also stand in a tangible relationship to the Fifth Gospel. When intensely meditated, the mantras of the First Class are a consciousness-key to opening the content of the Fifth Gospel and they lead deep into the Jesus- and Christ-Mystery.

After 35 years of ongoing daily meditation of the First Class mantras (even during the course of his illness), Sergei Prokofieff was himself astonished by what he was able to work out in addition. For a long time he was uncertain about whether the connections that had been revealed in this way should actually be disseminated. During his second lecture on the Fifth Gospel in Oslo on October 2, 1913, Rudolf Steiner had said: “Only with a sacred reticence can one decide to talk about these things. One might speak of being practically overwhelmed by an awareness of treading on the most sacred ground

of human beholding in the attempt to express in words what is revealed there to the gaze of the soul.” While he was working on his book Sergei Prokofieff experienced that feeling as well. But in the end he came to the conclusion that he should publish his insights. In the foreword he writes the briefest of indications that it was penned under “conditions that were not simple,” and he calls it “the very beginnings of the General Anthroposophical Section.”

### Rudolf Steiner

In witnessing how Sergei Prokofieff committed the last of his forces—with diminishing bodily strength—to create this more-than-400-page book, it would be hard to find the words or concepts needed to describe what took place. When everything was finally completed he felt an enormous relief—and then dictated yet another wonderful study on Rudolf Steiner’s human path of destiny, the path of his spiritual entity through the millennia of various cultural epochs. According to Sergei Prokofieff, “Today—more than ever before—we need Rudolf Steiner’s help and support.”

With Astrid Prokofieff (who read his text to him one last time so that he might edit it) he worked on it until the end and was able to complete it. The final corrections on the book about the First Class were extremely difficult for him—like physical work in the physical world—even though, as always, his secretary Ute Fischer supported him in it. But the study about Rudolf Steiner represented pure joy for him. “With what else should we close this life?” he said to me, smiling—physically emaciated but with radiant eyes. That was the culmination of his spiritual work and his life—the “immersion of the whole human being in his task.”

### Moscow

Today, however, we must ask ourselves about the extraordinary forces of spirit and will with which Sergei Prokofieff was actually able to accomplish all this. We heard in the picture of his life offered during the funeral ritual about his difficult incarnation in Moscow during January 1954—nine years after the end of the Second World War, and in the midst of a totalitarian political regime. For this life Sergei Prokofieff found or sought a highly gifted, cultured family with illustrious

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capacities, extensive education, and a lofty, even quite lofty, artistic level. Nonetheless it is also true that his beloved grandmother Lina suffered for a long time in Stalin's camps and, like many other friends and acquaintances, lived under an oppressive regime. Later Sergei Prokofieff would reveal the underlying character of this regime in his study of the "Sorat Mystery" and the Sorat forces that brought to power National Socialism in Germany and Bolshevism, Leninism, and Stalinism in Russia—and led both peoples away from their tasks. Indeed, these forces actually turned these tasks into their opposite—with consequences that we still have to bear and will continue to bear.

### The Path to Anthroposophy

The incarnation in this time was especially difficult for Sergei Prokofieff in view of the task his individuality had set for him during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In early childhood it was already connected with a deep loneliness and painful experiences. In the biographical sketch given by Rolf Herzog of the Christian Community we heard that Sergei Prokofieff kept secret his inner connection with the spiritual world; that as a child he never had the impression that this was his first time on the earth; and that, in the middle of childhood (in his ninth year) he rediscovered esoteric Christianity through the Parzival story which was read aloud to him from the libretto of Wagner's opera by his grandfather Leonid Feinberg. But how and where could one connect to it in the present time?

We heard as well of the significance Max Voloschin's home in the Crimea had for Sergei Prokofieff. From the age of 14 he was able to be a guest in this house during his vacations, and there he found books by Rudolf Steiner in Voloschin's comprehensive library. He set out to read these in quietude and seclusion, but also in spiritual loneliness—beginning with *Knowledge of Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* which brought him the long hoped-for answer to his fundamental question about esoteric Christianity in the present time. "Although the name of Christ was hardly mentioned in the book, it was clear to me from my first reading of it that I had in my hands a description of the path of the human soul to the Christ, given

by the spirit of our time." That book became a guide and a helper for him on the inner path he pursued with utter consistency, even though he seldom if ever spoke about it.

In the Voloschin home he also read Rudolf Steiner's *Occult Science, An Outline* in French. There he encountered the Rose Cross meditation—which shook him deeply—as well as the Christ-being at the mid-point of cosmic and human evolution. This moved him profoundly: "Everything Rudolf Steiner spoke of here was already known to me, but I was unable to express it in thoughts before then. What had lived in my soul as a general, undefined feeling was now penetrated by a conscious clarity of thought." Sergei Prokofieff had a rich inner life that was almost completely hidden from those in his immediate surroundings at that time, and he had an intense adolescence of spiritual seeking that included many mystical experiences.

### Youthful Poetry

In the years between 1971 and 1973, when he was 17 to 19 years old, he wrote extraordinary poetry about the path out of the darkness and into the light, about spiritual battles and apocalyptic events, doing so with profound honesty and dramatic inner force. "I was awakened in the night by the powerful inspiration, as though awakened by the verses themselves. I rushed to my desk in order to capture the poetic words and images quickly—often putting on paper a poem that had arisen fully formed in me—frequently more than one; it was as if they themselves were striving and streaming towards the page. They were the poems of a 'soul on fire.'" These poems had remained hidden in a cupboard in his parent's Moscow home—he had shown them to no one when they were written—until he rediscovered them there on a visit during his illness. He decided to publish them; they were published last year by a non-anthroposophical press in Moscow in a splendid volume of more than 400 pages entitled *The Mystic Fire of the Soul*. It contains forewords by Sergei



Sergei O. Prokofieff:  
*The Mystic Fire of the Soul.*  
Early Poems. Moscow 2013

Prokofieff and the eminent Russian poetess, Sofia Prokofieva, his mother. Among other things, she wrote: "In the world of poetry I know of no other instance in which such a powerful poetic revelation was born from a soul in such a short time." Sergei Prokofieff once told me how sad he was when in his nineteenth year the poetic inspiration that had accompanied him for such a long time suddenly ceased. He was distraught.

The voice of the verses

went silent although he briefly tried to continue writing. Then, around the time of his first moon node, he decided out of the most profound depths of his soul not only to read the writings of Rudolf Steiner but also to choose anthroposophy as the central task of his life and his destiny. With this, his biography changed: "Only when the decision had been made and I experienced with full force that my life had received new meaning and purpose was I led out of my original lonely condition by the guidance of my destiny—I was taking the first steps to serve those ideals consciously which had previously lived below the surface in my soul and which now had become for me fully conscious reality thanks to spiritual science."

### Demands of Spiritual Science

At the home of the Voloschins in the summer of 1973 Sergei Prokofieff encountered for the first time a young anthroposophist—Slava Ivonin. The poetic inspiration had gone silent about three months before—and doubtless made way for that strong knowledge-based recognition of the spiritual world that Sergei Prokofieff identified as anthroposophy until the very last day of his life on earth. Matters of the soul, artistic matters, had temporarily receded. It now became a matter of acquiring a sense-free thinking by means of an inner schooling. Renunciation was part of this—and Sergei Prokofieff later willingly set aside his great artistic talents in order to allow all his power for spiritual scientific work and research in the narrower sense to come to the fore.

In our last conversation just before his death, he told me that he would have dearly loved to have worked out something on Goethe's *Faust* and Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas. He also carried in his soul a significant draft of a "story" about an encounter between Rembrandt and Christian Rosenkreutz, details of which he revealed from time to time. Sergei Prokofieff's poetic capacity—indeed, his whole artistic way of being, essentially a soul way of being—was not evident to many people who "only" knew his lectures and the clarity of thought in his written work.

After his first "moon node" and the decision to place his own life in service to anthroposophy, the hand of destiny led Sergei Prokofieff not only to his first anthroposophical friends and freed him, in part, from his "original condition of loneliness," but to Ukraine as well, where he was able to borrow some of Rudolf Steiner's lecture courses from a translator. He traveled almost 600 miles to do so: "At that time I was prepared to overcome any and every obstacle in order to acquire such a course of lectures. Because anthroposophy was now the most important part of my life."

His path had directed him to Rudolf Steiner's written works in the house of Max Voloschin before he became acquainted with the lecture courses—and he viewed this sequence as an essential signature for himself and his knowledge-based access to the work of Rudolf Steiner. The 1909 course on the hierarchies given in Düsseldorf and attended by (among others) Christian Morgenstern and Michael Bauer was the first course he read.

### Inner Promise

During a sleepless night shortly before the end of his 21<sup>st</sup> year, he studied the karma lectures given in Arnheim in July 1924—and they gripped him at every level of his being. "Now I knew the spiritual being whom I always serve and to whom I wanted to dedicate my whole existence—'the countenance of the Christ,' Michael, the inspirer of modern spiritual science." In Arnheim Rudolf Steiner had also told about the intended culmination of anthroposophy at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, about the "alliance" with the good spiritual powers that had entered through the Christmas Conference

1923/24, and about his own covenant with the spiritual world. In the spirit of the Arnheim lectures Sergei Prokofieff intensified his decision for anthroposophy so that it became an inner "promise" ("the first conscious solemn promise of my life"), and he took up anthroposophy with increased resolve. It quickly became evident to him that anthroposophy was not merely an accumulation of ideas and perspectives but was instead a being of the supersensible world—that "living being" about which Rudolf Steiner said in 1923 that it "moves invisibly among us" and that we must in turn respond to it with a feeling of "accountability."

Sergei Prokofieff studied Rudolf Steiner's writings and lectures with his characteristic thorough-going strength of will and a spiritual/intellectual capacity that was capable of analysis as well as large-scale synthesis; and he worked intensively on inner schooling. His understanding of anthroposophy was by no means merely ideal-intellectual in nature. In fact, he had understood that it was possible and necessary to transform anthroposophical ideas with one's own soul force into images filled with life, into imaginations—or at least, pre-imaginings. In other words, into images that take hold of one's own feelings and perceptions in the process of their transformation. As a result, his love for anthroposophy became increasingly intense and intimate—ideals were formed that created life forces.

### The Foundation Stone Meditation and the German Language

At Easter 1976 Sergei Prokofieff took part for the first time in anthroposophical work as part of a small underground group in Moscow that read the Foundation Stone Meditation in German and Russian. He had never before heard the German text—and was unfamiliar with this language. Nevertheless, something happened while he listened to it that, much later, he called a "genuine miracle" in his life "that could only be compared to awakening from a deep sleep." "In the sound of the German words of the Foundation Stone Meditation a completely new world of spirituality opened up to me. The language I heard was rich and 'spirit-filled' like the sublime thoughts it conveyed. Language and content revealed themselves to me for the first time in their inseparable unity.

Not only did the German language show itself to me in that moment as the only possible bearer of the wealth of wisdom in the new Christian esotericism but the content of the Foundation Stone Meditation appeared before my soul in all its cosmic-earthly power as well. [...] From a spiritual perspective, I felt [...] with my whole soul that there was only a single work composed in human language that could be placed alongside the Foundation Stone Meditation: the Gospel of John, or more precisely, its prologue and Christ-Jesus' words of farewell. From the beginning it was clear to me that the one had originated from the same source as the other, that they arose from the divine sphere of the Cosmic Logos, encompassing all worlds—from the direct revelation of the living Christ."

Sergei Prokofieff experienced something that became ever clearer to him in the years that followed: John, the author of the Gospel that bears his name and of the Book of Revelation stood under the cross as the only conscious witness to the Mystery of Golgotha; Rudolf Steiner, however, was the witness to the second crucifixion of Christ in the etheric realm during the materialistic 19<sup>th</sup> century—to the beginnings of the second coming of the Being of Christ, and thus to the emerging resurrection of Christ-consciousness in human beings. John (who later became Christian Rosenkreutz) and Rudolf Steiner are the two great teachers of esoteric Christianity; they stand next to one another in the spiritual world and lead Christian-Rosicrucian esotericism.

The German language he now set out with a passion to learn became for Sergei Prokofieff the "Mystery language of the present time" and the principal language of his spiritual life. The first lecture course by Rudolf Steiner that he was able to read in German was about the Nathan soul and Parzival: *Christ and the Spiritual World—On the Search for the Holy Grail*.

### Holy Nights and Beings

At Christmas 1976—nine months after his profound experience of the Foundation Stone Meditation in German and just before his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday—Sergei Prokofieff attended a small anthroposophical group for the first time. The group met in the home of Maria Alexandrovna Scriabina, the daughter of the composer,

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to celebrate the twelve Holy Nights. Sometime earlier, Annie Jahn and Karla Kiniger (both from Austria) had re-founded the anthroposophical work in Russia with a celebration of the twelve Holy Nights and the reading aloud of the Foundation Stone Meditation in German and Russian. Sergei Prokofieff had a singular capacity for understanding the cosmic-hierarchical dimension of anthroposophy and the beings connected to it—the Christ, Sophia, and Michael. Now he took hold of that dimension in all its depth; he was spiritually at home in these lofty spheres. Later, while living in the West, he prepared fundamental studies that were published as *The Cycle of the Year as a Path of Initiation Leading to an Experience of the Christ-Being*; *The Twelve Holy Nights and the Spiritual Hierarchies*; and *The Heavenly Sophia and the Being Anthroposophia*. These demonstrated how far he had come with these themes in the short time since the communal Christmas festival celebrated with the others in 1976. He also had a most extraordinary ability to penetrate the building of the First Goetheanum in all its spiritual-cosmic language of form and beauty.

### **The Karma of the Anthroposophical Society**

On the other hand, in Moscow during the mid-1970's he also encountered the earthly shadow side of the Anthroposophical Society, or was led to it by the hand of destiny. He read Marie Steiner-von Sivers' words (in her foreword to the volume on the Christmas Conference) about the deep "tragedy" of the Society, about "what it meant for Dr. Steiner to take our karma upon himself." "We were probably called, but not chosen." Soon thereafter he came upon an original copy of the 1935 "Denkschrift" against Ita Wegman and her friends. He was made physically ill about what he found there. The illness lasted only a few days, but was intense—and later (in the context of the Society's karma) he understood it as the precursor or "seed" of his fatal illness. As early as the mid-1970's, for Sergei Prokofieff there was no question of a purely historical-intellectual approach to the "Denkschrift": "The reality of what had happened lay much deeper and it needed to be suffered through in order to overcome the inclination to solve these issues simply by abstract-intellectual

means." After the painful weeks and months that followed his reading of the "Denkschrift" Sergei Prokofieff had the impression that he had grown closer to Rudolf Steiner in soul and spirit, and now felt himself to be his esoteric pupil in full measure.

In his final impressive lecture in the Great Hall of the Goetheanum on March 30, 2012 (which he sensed would be his last) he continued to speak of Rudolf Steiner's path of suffering with the Anthroposophical Society during 1923—after the fire—and the metamorphosis this suffering had to undergo in Rudolf Steiner's soul in order finally to become the love that infused the Christmas Foundation meeting. He described the path leading from the Mystery of Golgotha to the "all-prevailing love" of the Whitsun spirit as the archetype of this process.

When Sergei Prokofieff joined the Anthroposophical Society in 1977, he already viewed it as a "knowledge-based community," and he saw clearly that it had deeply transgressed against Rudolf Steiner through lack of understanding. The Christmas Foundation impulse had not been recognized in its depth, nor had it been sufficiently implemented in practical life. Sergei Prokofieff experienced inwardly that a reversal of the situation and a true "making good" of the transgression against Rudolf Steiner were needed if a possible "culmination" were to take place for anthroposophy at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was his starting point along an enormous path of will—pursued with commitment and deep earnestness—and he sought to understand the form of the Christmas Conference in order to redress the situation insofar as possible.

### **The Foundation of the New Mysteries**

In four lectures at the end of 1979—a hundred years after the dawn of the Michael age and three years after he first heard the Foundation Stone Meditation in German—he presented his detailed research results in Moscow and spoke about the esoteric meaning of the Christmas Conference and the founding of the School for Spiritual Science. For him, the Christmas Conference was not just the "mystical fact" of the Anthroposophical Society; it was the start of the Michael Mysteries for esoteric Christianity, and everything—within the Society and

outside it—would depend on its future. His friends asked him to write down these lectures and the insights he articulated in them, and he agreed to do so—which required almost three years of inner work.

For the written version he also decided to look at the course of Rudolf Steiner's life from the perspective of what happened at the Christmas Conference. He approached the Christmas Conference as the high point of Rudolf Steiner's life in the Christian Mysteries—and as the most significant spiritual event of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the "physical plane." He later said that at the time (1980–1982) there were probably only two or three people in Russia who would be interested in the subject. Yet he succeeded with his work (*Rudolf Steiner and the Founding of the New Mysteries*), and it also became well known in the West (which brought with it great personal risk). But Sergei Prokofieff's essential and existential relation to anthroposophy was such that he would have risked his life for it.

### **Inner Closeness to Rudolf Steiner**

In 1982 this work appeared in Stuttgart as a book—thanks to a careful translation by Ursula Preuss (with whom Sergei Prokofieff maintained a close connection until her death and beyond). In the foreword he wrote (among other things) that the book was published in the "consciousness of the pressing tasks" that would "stand before the Anthroposophical Society and every individual anthroposophist" as the end of the century approached. Later he told of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual presence, soul support, and inner closeness as an occult teacher and older friend, a presence he truly and intensely felt in working on the Christmas Conference.

He now also felt himself even more deeply connected with the destiny of the Anthroposophical Society as well: "To found a modern Michael community on the earth that calls upon our age to become a new brotherhood of knights and guardians of the Holy Grail—that seemed to me the main task of the Anthroposophical Society on the esoteric level."

Only 28 years old when the book was published, Sergei Prokofieff no doubt had great hopes for it—or rather for its subject. Toward the end of the book he spoke of how the tie that united Christ with his disciples did not last: "Thrice Christ Jesus



Photo: Supplied

Sergei O. Prokofieff, Moscow, 1982

calls to them, and thrice they sink into a deep sleep. They are unable to sustain the consciousness they could have received through the loftiest recognition of the Christ Being and the cosmic meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha.” Thereafter Christ experienced Golgotha in “cosmic loneliness.” Since then, this loneliness has been an essential part of the new initiation; it was a loneliness Rudolf Steiner had also experienced fully. In the context of the turning point in time we again meet the question of when the “awakening through the Christmas Conference” might begin within the Anthroposophical Society.

### “The Christmas Conference is among us!”

In Sergei Prokofieff’s view, the path taken by the disciples toward the Whitsun event was marked by deep pain—and in this sense the Anthroposophical Society must henceforth establish anew the relationship to Rudolf Steiner and the Christmas Conference through pain and through spirit recollection, spirit mindfulness, and spirit envisioning so that it might realize its impulse—something Sergei Prokofieff described as the “Whitsun” of anthroposophy and its Society: “The Christmas Conference is among us! We should make every effort so that we are able to move forward to where it exists as an unshakable reality!”

In his first work he described the

Foundation Stone Meditation as the “earthly-cosmic image of the seven-fold human being who is fully penetrated by the Christ, of the human being who is moving from the cosmic past to the cosmic future and who is able to find the Christ in the present cosmic time as he goes along this path.” And he brought the being of the Foundation Stone itself—the dodecahedral stone of love that Rudolf Steiner had created and presented to Michael—into relationship with the imagination of the Grail. In a personal conversation he told about the profound spiritual experience he had had at that time—at the conclusion of the work on the book—as he in fact saw the modern imagination of the Grail spiritually before him. He experienced his own work as though it were a gift of grace from the spiritual world. It had been an enormous experience to undergo such an inner event, and to have thought its thoughts for the first time—not that he himself had done so for the first time since they were well-known to Rudolf Steiner, but for the first time in the sense of discipleship.

### Encouragement for Further Spiritual Work

Sergei added that Rudolf Steiner deliberately did not express many things in their entirety but left them to the individual work of others. He simply suggested answers or where answers might be found so that his pupils and colleagues received a kind of “prompt” for their own activity. “As a result the feeling can arise that he (Rudolf Steiner) hoped or even expected that his pupils would take up and continue these impulses—and he always encouraged them to do so [...]”

In a conversation toward the end of his life, Sergei Prokofieff counted several findings among his most profound spiritual experiences and “experiences of grace” during his later spiritual research: the recognition of the difference between the phantom body and the resurrection body; an understanding of the interior of the earth as the place where the first hierarchy and evil work—two elements that are geographically close but separated by the cosmic midnight hour; the clear connection between the Foundation Stone Meditation and the resurrection body; and the path from Jesus consciousness to Christ consciousness that he researched in

the progression of the 19 Lessons of the First Class.

### The Approaching Cultural Epoch

After moving to the West, Sergei Prokofieff turned the focus of his spiritual work and the resulting publications toward—among other things—pivotal questions of Central and Eastern Europe. At age 33 he completed his great book about Novalis, the German cultural figure of the previous century to whom he felt closest. For him Novalis was a future-oriented precursor of the approaching sixth cultural epoch of Johannine Christianity that would draw its character from the Slavic folk. Sergei Prokofieff’s connection to the German language was deepened through the works of Novalis, and he saw him as a spiritual bridge builder between Central and Eastern Europe, someone to whom he felt close. Having finished his book about Novalis with gratitude, he continued on this path, and worked intensively on related topics. He published his results in: *The Spiritual Origins of Eastern Europe and the Future Mysteries of the Holy Grail* (1989); *Demetrius* (1992); *The Prophecy of the Russian Epic* (1992); and *The Spiritual Tasks of Central and Eastern Europe* (1993). He was also a cofounder (1990) of the Anthroposophical Society in Russia, and its country representative.

With these books Sergei Prokofieff turned mainly to the members of the Society; he wished to help them by establishing a thorough and broad understanding for future cooperation between Central and Eastern Europe. He was shocked to see how the “Americanization” of Germany was advancing, how little knowledge there was about the rich German literature and culture (even among anthroposophists), and how little they knew about spiritual Russia. In the foreword to *The Spiritual Origins of Eastern Europe and the Future Mysteries of the Holy Grail* he wrote: “The factual details and phenomena can appear in their true nature only against the background of a historical-metahistorical panorama and concrete knowledge about the intentions and goals of the good and evil forces that will forever battle for the right to lead Eastern Europe.” He hoped for the development of an independent power of judgment, and up to the end he saw an absolute need for this demonstrated in current politics.

### The Question of the “Culmination”

Sergei Prokofieff’s other work was focused (as it had been since the mid-1970’s) on the approaching end of the century and on the Anthroposophical Society. In 1999 he published the essay *The Anthroposophical Society and the Being Anthroposophia. The Turn of the Century and the Tasks of the Anthroposophical Society* [English translation in *The Future is Now: Anthroposophy at the New Millennium*]. He spoke of the “depressing fact” that there had been no culmination of the anthroposophical movement at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and that the spiritual presuppositions for it were, in fact, missing. As Sergei pointed out, Rudolf Steiner had made the cosmically significant possibility—even necessity—for a culmination of anthroposophy dependent on the pursuit of the Christmas Conference impulse. But it was already impossible to speak of such a thing in 1924, and even less in the years of social destruction that followed. During the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the impulse of the Christmas Conference—despite all the claims to the contrary—had more and more disappeared from large areas of the Anthroposophical Society. Now a real new beginning of the work was absolutely necessary. Sergei Prokofieff said that “standing on the Foundation Stone” is the esoteric foundation of the Anthroposophical Society. Without that, the whole constitution and all the bylaws are a form empty of content. The basis for a new community, the social power of resurrection, exists in the Foundation Stone which by nature is not of this world and must be taken individually into each heart. Opposing forces cannot penetrate the community if it lives in the members’ hearts.

Moreover, the Foundation Stone is the spiritual meeting place for the Aristotelians and the Platonists who must unite at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continue the work together. The “light of cosmic thoughts” is in the sphere of the Aristotelians, while the “picture quality of cosmic imaginations” is in that of the Platonists. However, both groups can come together in the substance of the Foundation Stone formed of cosmic-human-love.

Sergei Prokofieff also indicates that

Rudolf Steiner had created the Foundation Stone in the etheric world and that it is a reality for the unborn and for Michaelites who have died, but also for the heavenly hierarchies. The Aristotelians and the Platonists can work with them for humanity’s future in the age of the etheric Christ. Placed deep into the etheric heart, the Foundation Stone is at the “source” of the two streams of etherized blood—the microcosmic and macrocosmic streams—and it provides essential meaning and assistance for the fulfillment of humanity’s tasks, tasks with which the Michael community of the Anthroposophical Society is confronted.

For Sergei Prokofieff, all this was a spiritual reality—even an experienced reality—and not just a system of thoughts. His books lived through the substance of his intellectual and meditative power; in the end, they lived in his spiritual-esoteric capacities, and despite their far-reaching perspectives they actually stood in the service of civilization’s challenge and future. His great work on *The Occult Meaning of Forgiveness* (published in 1989 and dedicated to the “memory of the sixty-sixth anniversary of the 1923/24 Christmas Conference”) is an example of how he took up significant issues of the present, issues that were and are vital questions for the Anthroposophical Society.

### Encounter with Evil

In 1999—the same year *The Anthroposophical Society and the Being Anthroposophia. The Turn of the Century and the Tasks of the Anthroposophical Society* appeared—the seriousness with which Sergei Prokofieff took these things was also shown in his first basic study on the problem of evil (*The Encounter with Evil and its Overcoming through Spiritual Science. With Essays on the Foundation Stone*). According to Rudolf Steiner, it was against this evil that a “fully conscious battle” must be waged now and in the future. Sergei Prokofieff had given lectures on the topic in Eastern and Central Europe during 1998, a year that represented a third recurrence of the apocalyptic number 666. As described by Rudolf Steiner in his September 1924 course on the Book of Revelation, this recurrence always produces a significant strengthening in the power of evil. Beginning After 1999, what Sergei Prokofieff describes in his

book—and clearly anticipated—appeared year by year in all its dramatic reality: terror attacks and new forms of evil. No other anthroposophist since Rudolf Steiner has so thoroughly and deeply—so openly, fearlessly, and directly—looked at the forces, levels, nature, and effects of evil. Sergei Prokofieff presented an impressive analysis of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also penetrated to the level of the underlying forces—right down to the asuras and Sorat, who not only seek to subjugate humanity, but also to destroy the human ego-being.

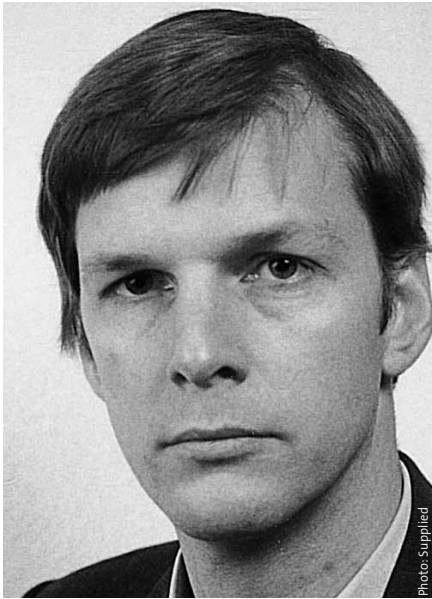
Sergei Prokofieff opened our eyes to the often scattered remarks by Rudolf Steiner on this subject; he had worked with them to make them productive. He emphasized that it is even important for the hierarchies that human beings recognize evil since they cannot directly see the effects of evil in the material world and need a “reflection” through the spiritual consciousness of the human being. If this is created, they can offer effective help to humanity in its confrontation with the forces of evil.

### Protecting Anthroposophy

Sergei Prokofieff did not write these things merely in service to his own books, although the attentive reader could perceive how important his spiritual work was for the spiritual world as such. He did not present his findings primarily as an analyst; he worked for the reality of what he called the “Foundation Stone for the good” and a basis for a new human community of Michaelites in which the “principle of a spiritual brotherhood can be fully realized for the first time.” This was also how Sergei Prokofieff saw his years of confrontation with open opponents of anthroposophy and with the many ways it was being misused and deformed by those in its “own ranks.” The point was to form a true “brotherhood” that—in combination with the will—would stand existentially for the core impulses of anthroposophy in civilization. It was not only its enemies and the lack of consciousness among the members that hindered and delayed this, but also many events that diverted attention from its central content.

He did this work out of responsibility toward the spiritual world, and especially toward Christian Rosenkreutz and Rudolf Steiner: “If we...take the comprehensive law of karma seriously, we have to say:





In the west: Mid/end of the 1980's

In the spiritual world—the source [of anthroposophy]—there is a being who now must bear the consequences of such misuse until every person connected with this spiritual treasure consciously accepts his responsibility to it. That means that to this very day a being must bear the entire negative karma that arises through the misuse of higher knowledge. This is the other—esoteric—aspect of human freedom found in the words of Paul: ‘For ye are bought with a price.’ The individuality who must most directly bear the negative karma of human freedom is Christian Rosenkreutz.” Rudolf Steiner called Christian Rosenkreutz “the greatest martyr among human beings,” one who bears the consequences of distorted truth.

Rudolf Steiner had indicated in a conversation that he is celebrating a ritual with Christian Rosenkreutz before an altar in the spiritual world—“a sacrificial altar of humanity.” According to Sergei Prokofieff, there is significance in selflessly serving the being of anthroposophy in the spiritual world, and in supporting these two masters of esoteric Christianity—to working with them in the future rather than “increasing their burdens and sufferings on behalf of humanity through the misuse of their work.”

### The “Purity” of the Spiritual Horizon

Sergei Prokofieff’s efforts in this regard—which cost him a great deal and lasted to the very end of his life—found a focal point in his battle with Valentin

Tomberg. Although Tomberg had been an esoteric pupil of Rudolf Steiner, a Class member and Class holder, and a General Secretary, his later works sought to reverse the steps from Jesus to Christ and deny the existence of a spiritual science. “It would be hard to imagine a stronger attack on the inner core of true Rosicrucianism,” wrote Prokofieff who recognized Tomberg’s brilliant intellectual gifts and found in him a worthy opponent. Later, however, battles arose that cost him a great deal of effort because of the low intellectual and spiritual level of what was being asserted, and that turned his work with these battles into an enormous test of endurance. Nonetheless, Sergei Prokofieff undertook that effort as well because he had recognized that Michael—as a “fighter for the purity of the spiritual horizon”—needed fellow warriors on the earth so that the etheric Christ would not be seen in a distorted image (with fateful results for humanity).

In the critical dispute that ensued—which Sergei Prokofieff undertook in the way described—the written works he created as he pursued this path were the result of what he recognized to be a personal occult responsibility. He understood his writings in this area as constituting an effort to protect the research method of anthroposophy from being undermined and destroyed, to reverse the “debt” owed Rudolf Steiner, and to make possible the culmination in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—or in a time to follow. Sergei Prokofieff wanted to contribute at least everything he had in his power.

### Appointment to the Executive Council

In 2001 he was finally called to Dornach to join the Executive Council at the Goetheanum. Looking back on his life in personal conversations, he expressed repeatedly that he should have been called to the Executive Council by 1994 at the very latest so he could work intensely in Dornach for the “payment of the debt owed” to Rudolf Steiner and for the culmination. Even before his appointment he viewed the so-called “constitution question”—which he described during the 2000 Annual General Meeting as an “ahrimanic seduction”—and many other events since then as intentional attempts at diversion from the central tasks of the Goetheanum and the School

for Spiritual Science. Nevertheless he moved ahead with all his strength. He arrived in Dornach with his completed manuscript of *May Human Beings Hear It! The Mystery of the Christmas Conference* (the most voluminous of his career). It was a manuscript that contained—in over 1000 pages—everything he had discovered about this theme since his first monograph appeared three times seven years earlier. In the foreword he wrote that the study had been given its direction by his attempt to find an answer to the one question: “What did Rudolf Steiner intend when he called the Christmas Conference the ‘beginning of a cosmic turning point in time?’” Before Prokofieff, no member of the Executive Council had ever come to Dornach with such a work that described what had always been intended and should now occur in an epoch-making way under the sign of the “culmination.”

Looking back on the goals for his work, Sergei Prokofieff wrote that he had come to Dornach to aid in developing the Goetheanum into a contemporary Mystery center, and had seen his main task as pursuing his ongoing research and teaching to support the connection with Rudolf Steiner and the deepening of anthroposophy (especially its Christology), as well as an understanding of the Christmas Conference, the esotericism of the Anthroposophical Society, and the work of the School for Spiritual Science (General Anthroposophical Section/First Class). He had relied on the power of this work and these initiatives to radiate into the worldwide activity of the Anthroposophical Society—and on the effect that branch and School work would have on the Goetheanum in return.

During the following twelve years Sergei Prokofieff not only gave essential lectures at the Goetheanum and on nearly every continent on the earth, but also published a rapid succession of fresh and profound works on the themes he had noted and researched. Among them were an independent publication on the Foundation Stone meditation as a “key to the new Christian Mysteries” as well as monographs focused on Christology that intensified in depth and detail with each successive book. He wrote about the Christological and cosmic-human dimension in *The Philosophy of Freedom*, the relation of *The Philosophy of Freedom*

## ■ ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

to the Fifth Gospel, the appearance of the Christ in the etheric, and the mystery of the resurrection in the light of anthroposophy—all this done with a breadth of spiritual-scientific observation that opened up previously unknown areas but was also quite exact.

### **An Intensification of Anthroposophy**

Sergei Prokofieff's books were not simply compilations of Rudolf Steiner's research and writings—they presupposed these. He developed them further in thought and meditation with a comprehensive knowledge of those works that had not been possible for his predecessors, and through independent, innovative research always done in close relation to the spiritual being of Rudolf Steiner. Despite his strong force of will he retained a pronounced sense of humility.

However, he was increasingly troubled by the relationship to Rudolf Steiner within the Anthroposophical Society and in Dornach, and he published a book concerning this relationship in 2006. Based on his own spiritual experience, Sergei Prokofieff knew that finding a real spiritual relationship to Rudolf Steiner was a necessity for the life of anthroposophy itself—and thus decisively important to the future of anthroposophy and the anthroposophical movement. The last lecture he gave in the Great Hall of the Goetheanum on March 30, 2012, has the character of a legacy; he published it under the title *How do we stand today before Rudolf Steiner?* (in *Crisis in the Anthroposophical Society and Pathways to the Future*). In it he describes the inner experience that can arise in encountering Rudolf Steiner who stands before the Michael pupil at the threshold to the spiritual world like the pupil's own higher self. He speaks of how one finds one's spiritual teacher in the spiritual world and sees "how truth and the personality of this human being begin to flow into one another in the light of Christ-Jesus' archetypal image."

Sergei Prokofieff hoped that the intensity of the relationship to the being of anthroposophy could be increased in Dornach, and he knew that such an intensified relationship to the being of anthroposophy would bring about a spiritual closeness to the being of Rudolf Steiner. Dornach was to be—or become—

the place where the living supersensible being of anthroposophy could truly be experienced—"for Rudolf Steiner intended from the beginning that at the Goetheanum (as nowhere else in the world) people could meet anthroposophy in a pure and undistorted way and find its Christological core there." According to Sergei Prokofieff, anthroposophy had been given to the Michaelites so that "our consciousness could be widened and spiritualized, our feeling of responsibility strengthened, and the will to fulfill our tasks awakened."

In this regard Sergei Prokofieff felt himself to be increasingly isolated. He knew and accepted that an experience of "cosmic loneliness" was part of modern initiation, but he often had to ask himself where his colleagues in the battle for the "culmination" were to be found. It pained him that his relationship to Rudolf Steiner—and the reasons he insisted on its significance—were often misunderstood; its inner spiritual dimension was not seen and what he taught and authentically lived remained uncomprehended.

In *The Heavenly Sophia and the Being Anthroposophia* (1995) he had already asked: "how many people [today] still know what true spiritual love is?" But he himself stayed true to the esoteric core of anthroposophy and to "what the Michael power, the Michael being, wants from the human being"—and he continually felt that will.

### **A Test of Powerlessness**

The challenging themes in his own great explorations had seldom been chosen by Sergei Prokofieff himself—rather, they had been given him by the spiritual world. He often said in personal conversation, "And when a task has been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the spiritual world it does not answer with agreement but with the next, even larger task." The point was not merely to acknowledge the spiritual world, but to carry forward the impulses of anthroposophy that were threatened in an abysmal age, and to continue and sustain one's inner work: "We must still be tested about whether we are prepared to be true representatives of the Christmas Conference's esoteric impulses in the world and whether we are willing to stand for the realization of its aims and tasks despite all the failures and setbacks experienced by

the Anthroposophical Society in the past [20<sup>th</sup>] century." In spite of experiences to the contrary in Dornach and elsewhere, Sergei Prokofieff was determined "to pursue the path of responsibility and service and to be led in this by the example of Rudolf Steiner. He wanted to develop the courage to withstand the "test of powerlessness" and to continue trusting in the future breakthrough into civilization of the Michael stream, but without trivializing anthroposophy and making false compromises with the "prince of the world." Sergei Prokofieff knew early on that this path could end in a personal martyrdom and he was prepared for that.

In an early lecture at the Odilienberg in 1988 he said, "Based on our connection and engagement with the Christmas Conference, forces can be awakened in us to take the karmic challenges we as anthroposophists have brought from our pre-birth existence and transform them into a fulfillment of karma in our lifetime—and thus become able to make free karmic sacrifices in the last third of our lives. This means being able to pursue the path Rudolf Steiner had himself gone."

In fact, for Sergei Prokofieff a part of the esotericism of the Anthroposophical Society was found in the fundamental question: "Am I willing myself follow Rudolf Steiner on his sacrificial path despite all the difficulties and sufferings connected with it—or am I unwilling to do so?" In his comprehensive book *May Human Beings Hear It!* with which he set out on the path to Dornach, he wrote that if we are not prepared for martyrdom we cannot follow the path of Christ discipleship today. Elsewhere he also emphasized that Rudolf Steiner's earthly path "in its inmost nature" had been an imitation of the Christ path. Two years after he became ill he published a chapter from *May Human Beings Hear It!*—"Rudolf Steiner and the Karma of the Anthroposophical Society"—under the title *The Esoteric Nature of the Anthroposophical Society*. There he cites the words of farewell in the Gospel of John, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." [John 15:13]

### **The Renewal of the Mysteries**

Sergei Prokofieff accepted the Easter 2011 diagnosis of his serious illness as a decision of the spiritual world: "The

disciple is not greater than the master.” He had written extensively about Rudolf Steiner’s illness in *May Human Beings Hear It*, about the opposing forces that raged against the Christmas Conference, and about how Rudolf Steiner had been little protected by his colleagues’ (insufficient) esoteric understanding. Sergei Prokofieff was too modest and reticent to express something similar about his own situation, but he never experienced his illness as belonging to him and his own destiny. During the difficult years of illness he felt a further intensification of his closeness to Rudolf Steiner and he had already been prepared for many years “to take at least a small part of his cross upon us with the weak powers at our command.”

At the end of his life, Sergei Prokofieff could see his own biography in full detail and—to the extent this is possible on the earth—he had worked through it and transformed it. He said in conversation that it is important to bring one’s own spiritually penetrated life story to the spiritual world and to relieve the hierarchies of this work after death. We do not know how he was actually received there. In a last conversation shortly before his death, he said to me that he had things to tell the spiritual world and Rudolf Steiner, especially about the conduct of anthroposophy on the earth. But he added that he was very happy to have had the opportunity to serve anthroposophy during this life.

Rudolf Steiner emphasized: “And one day—when these things are thought about rightly in the world—people will honor the task of the Goetheanum by recognizing that it was the responsibility of this Goetheanum to renew the Mysteries.” Sergei Prokofieff was an extraordinarily outstanding pioneer in this work of renewing the Mysteries. There are many people on every continent throughout the world who know his explorations of the spirit through his published works and lectures and who saw in him the representative of Rudolf Steiner on the Executive Council and the leader of the General Anthroposophical Section at the Goetheanum.

Sergei Prokofieff left the earth during the centenary of Christian Morgenstern’s death, a centenary that has been commemorated since this Spring by anthroposophical friends in many places.



Sergei O. Prokofieff, Dornach, 2009

How infinitely grateful was Rudolf Steiner to Christian Morgenstern for taking up and deepening anthroposophy during the years between 1909 and 1914. Morgenstern carried the anthroposophical ideas he had selflessly worked with, Christianized, into the spiritual world so that soon after his crossing of the threshold on March 31, 1914, they stood before him in their essence and became a great and continuing help for the unborn and those who had died, as well as a support for Rudolf Steiner on his further earthly path. How might Rudolf Steiner feel in the spiritual world about the more than four decades of life’s work that Sergei Prokofieff dedicated to anthroposophy with such intensity, with such capacities, and with such a selfless attitude. In the foreword to *The Mystery of the Resurrection* (Whitsun, 2008) he wrote in the first sentence: “The content of this book is intended to bear witness to the depth of understanding for the events at the turning of time that can be found on the basis of Rudolf Steiner’s spiritual research.” He continued later: “Such an effort must be made today in order to demonstrate the inexhaustible fruitfulness of anthroposophy. For even a hundred years after its founding, its wellsprings are as alive and inspiring as they were originally. They can be discovered by anyone who embraces them in an appropriate meditative mood and with the necessary intensity, and who seeks to

unite them with the best creative forces of his own soul, fructifying and quickening it. One can then approach their contents with an ever-increasing astonishment and ever-greater reverence. Today only these soul forces are capable of opening for the human being a path to the Christ that is appropriate for the present time, for it is on Him alone that the meaning of life on earth is founded. Therefore this book is meant to express the deepest gratitude to Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy, this great Christian Master of the West.”

### A Power that Protect and Helps

Sergei Prokofieff concluded the review of his published work that appeared for his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday on January 16<sup>th</sup> of this year with the hope that his explorations would have a “deepening and helpful effect” for striving human beings who wish to make the Goetheanum a place for the New Mysteries in the future. But I believe these people will be assisted by not only his books but also the power of his great individuality, his being, to protect and help. In a eulogy Rudolf Steiner said: “And in the presence of death we feel for the first time what grace we were given by the wise guidance of cosmic existence to have met those to whom karma has lovingly led us.” After receiving word of Sergei Prokofieff’s death, a friend wrote me “What a loss—and also what a significant reception on “the other side” of this most inwardly faithful pupil of Rudolf Steiner and protector of his new revelation of Christ!”

We will try to maintain and intensify our connection to Sergei Prokofieff. And we hope that he will actively support us on his further journeys.

I will be  
And from myself do  
What radiant power  
Illuminates in me.

| Peter Selg, Arlesheim (Switzerland)

Address revised by the author.

Most of Sergei Prokofieff’s books are published by the Verlag am Goetheanum, and many have been translated into English. A catalogue of his works (in German) can be found at [vamg.goetheanum.org/5947.html](http://vamg.goetheanum.org/5947.html) and [www.wegmaninstitut.ch/programme/prokofieff.prospekt.final.pdf](http://www.wegmaninstitut.ch/programme/prokofieff.prospekt.final.pdf).

## ■ GOETHEANUM

Exhibition Room

## No Remodeling

The exhibition space with the sculptural group will not be remodeled during the stage reconstruction. As the member of the Goetheanum Leadership responsible for facilities issues, Paul Mackay made this decision at the beginning of July. Too many details were unresolved.

Plans had been made since 2012 to remodel this area (one of the rooms associated with the stage) during the stage reconstruction as so that it could be used for special events. Removing the urn room (established in 1929 and later dismantled) along with the carved entryway by Oswald Dubach would create more space in which to experience the sculpture. The plans and a model were shown to members during the Annual General Meeting in April, then debated.

Although the Goetheanum Leadership had agreed in principle to the construction plans, two discussions with experts found at no convincing solutions for the problematic details still outstanding. Among them were the opinion that the carving represented an authentic form, the preservation of Dubach's entryway, the difficult acoustics, and the fact that events would have to be held at the level of Ahriman's cave in the sculpture.

### Working Group on Future Plans

A discussion with European General Secretaries at the end of July led to the view that this project was not yet ready to be undertaken because of the open questions, the pressures of time (cost-effective remodeling could only be done now, in July and August) and the cost-benefit balance. Paul Mackay thanked architect Ulrich Oelssner for the work he had done on the proposal.

A working group (open to members) on future plans and placement for the sculpture will begin on September 20, organized by the Art Section at the Goetheanum; it will review every aspect intensively. An interim report on the subject will be presented at the 2015 Annual General Meeting. | *Justus Wittich, Spokesperson for the Goetheanum Leadership*

**Registration** for the working group: [vorstandssekretariat@goetheanum.ch](mailto:vorstandssekretariat@goetheanum.ch)

Large Stage

## Festival and Preview

On September 26 the stage of the Great Call will reopen (*Anthroposophy Worldwide* No. 5/2014). On opening day the Goetheanum Eurythmy Stage's new program based on scenes from *Peer Gynt* will be given its premiere. Further projects will follow.

The stage in the Great Hall reopens on September 26 after one year of reconstruction. All members of the Anthroposophical Society, donors, and the public are invited to attend the festive opening of the Great Hall from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. with talks, eurythmy, and the premiere of a string septet overture commissioned for the Heiligenberg septet.

The new program by the Goetheanum Eurythmy Stage under the direction of Margrethe Solstad will have its premiere that evening: *Light and Lie* with scenes from Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and music by Edvard Grieg and contemporary composer Knut Nystedt. The new orchestra pit of the completely reconstructed Goetheanum stage may be used for the first time.

### First Opera Guest Performance

On October 25 the first opera project will be presented: *The Fall of the Antichrist* by Viktor Ullman, based on Albert Steffen's "dramatic sketch" of the same name. This guest performance by the Olomouc Moravian Theater is also the Swiss premiere of the opera. Marcus Gerhardt, the director of an Ullmann Archive (no original manuscripts) will provide an introduction to the opera.

At the end of July 2015 there will be a preliminary performance of *Faust I* prior to the new Goetheanum production of the entire *Faust* directed by Margrethe Solstad and Christian Peter and planned for Easter 2016.

The Goetheanum Stage's season will begin on September 5 with the youth theater project *Twelfth Night* under the direction of Andrea Pfaehler. This guest production by the Verein Junge Bühne is taking place in cooperation with the Goetheanum Stage. | *Sebastian Jüngel*

**Schedule:** [www.goetheanum-buehne.ch/5365.html](http://www.goetheanum-buehne.ch/5365.html)

## ■ ANTHROPOSOLOGY IN THE WORLD

Turkey I: Painting in Selçuk (Ephesus)

## Color between Worlds

On May 18-24, 2014, Esther Gerster held a painting course on a beach at Ephesus. It had every prerequisite for an intensive experience of color: green trees and palms, expansive blue of water and heaven, radiant yellow of sun, and the day's morning and evening's red.

We began our painting working in the studio by concentrating on the color blue; the studio was bordered by shady palm trees and filled with rays of light. The cloud-free sky, the sea, and the changing nuances of blue helped us to concentrate in body and soul, not least when we went for our daily swim in the waves of the sea. The next day we turned to the radiance of yellow: fittingly, sharp and perceptible rays were shining between the palm leaves. Our strengthening and concentration on red and its further intensifications led us to the final day when we experienced the three basic colors on canvas, developing them into a rainbow spectrum with earth and sky and the atmosphere placed in between.

As we painted—gently supported by Esther Gerster, our communal reading of texts, lectures by Rudolf Steiner, the prologue to the Gospel of St. John and exercises in Bothmer gymnastics and eurythmy—we had a deep experience of the interchange between outer and inner in a way that seemed familiar, and we always sought the midpoint.

This spot in what is now western Turkey is also a place where one can experience the whole theme of humanity. For instance, two people—a Turk and a Bavarian, strangers at that point—strode beside one another on a walkway in neighboring Selçuk. Of course we began a conversation with "Where do you come from?" and "Where are you going?" before we parted wishing each other well or drank the customary tea together and continued our conversation. In a spiritual-scientific context these questions also lead to the Book of Revelation which was composed by St. John on Patmos. | *Thomas Anderl, Munich (Germany)*

**Courses:** September 2014, Patmos; May 2015, Ephesus. **Contact:** [thomando7@t-online.de](mailto:thomando7@t-online.de)

## ■ ANTHROPOSOLOGY IN THE WORLD

Turkey II: Anthroposophy at the Istanbul Children and Youth Art Biennial

### Arising from an Impulse for Movement

On June 8, during the third Istanbul Children and Youth Art Biennial, Şafak Topkaya performed with her tabletop theater (*Masa Tiyatrosu*). Afterward, Roberto Pellacini gave a talk on Waldorf education and provided an insight into eurythmy with demonstrations for the Turkish audience.

The previous day the members of the Waldorf Education Seminar in Istanbul had looked at the spaces available in a shopping center. A messy room was available. It was not particularly desirable: pictures of all sorts hung on the walls or stood on the floor, painting materials were scattered about, furniture was stored...On the very day of the performance the good spirits of the seminar transformed it into a magical fairytale world with only a few—but significant—changes.

Şafak Topkaya was able to wake up the small but select audience (about 30 people) with her warm introductory words filled with welcome. She spoke about the human being during the first seven years and about the background of the tabletop play, one especially important for small children in playgroups and kindergarten. With her great ability for empathy Topkaya prepared the figures for the Turnip Play by Tolstoy: grandfather wishes to pull the turnip (grown quite large) from the earth; it was a turnip that was very small when planted. To do this he must be helped by mother, granddaughter, dog, and cat. However, at the beginning the little mouse lent the whole group its strength to uproot the obstinate turnip, a strength that was small but significant. Very small, but equally decisive! There were children in the first row who experienced the play attentively and with inner joy.

#### Understanding Child Development

Then Roberto Pellacini gave a general description of the 1919 founding of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. He said a bit about the content of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical lectures, especially the threefold organization of the human organism; the trichotomy of the human soul in thinking, feeling, and willing; the relationship of the human being to the various realms of nature including the point Rudolf Steiner makes in *Theosophy* that "as a spiritual human being every person is a species unto himself." The



*The Enormous Turnip: Şafak Topkaya performs the story by Leo Tolstoy*

methods of Waldorf pedagogy should become an "art of education"—art as an instrument for the child's development, one that makes a permanent change.

#### Eurythmy Demonstration in Turkish

Roberto Pellacini introduced eurythmy by pointing to the fact that every solid form in the world arises out of an impulse for movement—the human form in its outer physical shaping as well as in its living systems. These creative forces can become audible when we hear the sounds of the alphabet and notes of a musical scale. They can even become visible when they take on form through the movements of eurythmy. The vowels and the twelve consonants from the "evolution sequence" were demonstrated in eurythmy. Sounds and words from Turkish followed: "babam" (my father), "annem" (my mother), the four elements "toprak" (Earth), "su" (water), "hava" (air), and "ateş" (fire). The lecture ended with a short verse from a poem by Yunus Emre (died 1321): "If I were killed / And my ashes / Strewn to heaven, / I would immediately call to my earth: / I need you, I need you!" Two children (who were about 10 years old) sat in the first row and surprised us by immediately guessing the words performed in eurythmy as though self-understood. | *Roberto Pellacini, Hamburg (Germany)*

Turkey III: Eurythmy Performance

### It Became More

On June 21, 2014, student teachers and educators gave what may be the first public eurythmy performance in Turkey at the conclusion of their two-and-a-half month eurythmy seminar with the Istanbul Friends of the Art of Education. The performance took place in the gymnasium of the IELEV private school in Istanbul

It was supposed to be an intensive eight-weekend course for student teachers and educators. But fortunately it became more: six hours of instruction every weekend from April 12 to June 21 complemented by a theoretical section with a focus on eurythmy and its anthroposophical foundations. The educators brought diligence and intensity to this compact time. Some even "flew" from distant Bodrum. One student will continue her eurythmy studies at the Alanus University in Alfter (Germany).

A classroom was available and Asrin Can Akalin, a gifted student from the conservatory, accompanied on the piano. The course concluded with a one-hour eurythmy performance before a small enthusiastic public on June 21 with the theme "The stars once spoke to man..." (*Yıldızlar bir zamanlar insanlarla konuşuyorlardı ...*). Among other works there were works by Arvo Pärt, Johann Sebastian Bach, Fazıl Say und Rudolf Steiner. | *Tarhan Onur, Istanbul (Turkey)*

*Perhaps the first eurythmy performance in Istanbul: Waldorf seminar students perform*



## ANTHROPOSOPHY IN THE WORLD

China: Chengdu Waldorf School, 10 Years

### Booming Development

The campus of the Chengdu Waldorf School buzzes with even more activity this summer. A grade school teacher training, high school teacher training, and children's summer camp for 7-to-11-year-olds are taking place simultaneously now that the school year has ended.

September 13, 2014, brings the tenth anniversary of the Chengdu Waldorf School and the start of the first Waldorf high school in China. The government has informed the school that only kindergarten through 6th grade are permitted on the property and the middle school 7th and 8th grades, plus the new 9th grade, must shut or move elsewhere. The school quickly registered its middle grades and new high school with another institution so that they can continue at another location. Meanwhile the kindergarten building must be completed by September if the rapidly growing student population is to have enough space.

#### Parallel to the Economic Boom

The new kindergarten building will serve about 130 children in 7 classes and the high school will start a ninth grade with about 32 students. The grade school has some 200 students, with two first grades, 50 teachers, and 20 staff (cooks, grounds people, guards, etc.). Teacher training programs proceed in modules throughout the year and include kindergarten, elementary grades, and high school, as well as university courses. Waldorf teacher trainings have also sprung up in Beijing, Xi'an, and Guangzhou.

The explosion of Waldorf-Steiner education in China parallels the economic boom of the country and a big question hovers over these educational initiatives: How long will this growth go on and how seriously will the underlying spirit of this education take root?

Many good wishes for the tenth anniversary, the new high school, and future work in China go to Huang Xiao Xing (Harry Wong), his wife Zhang Li, and Li Zewu, the three founders of the Chengdu Waldorf School, and to their dedicated colleagues at this busy and challenging time. Zhu hao yun! (Good Luck!) | *Van James, Honolulu, Hawai'i (US)*

Italy: Rudolf Steiner's Books in the Library of Entrepreneur Adriano Olivetti

### Courageous Decisions with a Long-term Effect

The name Olivetti is famed for its innovations in the area of office equipment. Adriano Olivetti (1901–1960) was the most active and well-known entrepreneur in Italy following the Second World War. Works by Rudolf Steiner and a book by Albert Steffen were found when his library was catalogued (starting in 2012).

He is one of the most interesting personalities to be found among Italy's entrepreneurs and in its political and social culture. His name stands for the inventive and fantastic quality of Italian products during the second half of the 20th century. His firm at Ivrea invented and produced one of the first personal computers in 1960. During his lifetime the public knew nothing of his connection to Rudolf Steiner's work. But two of his close associates (Giorgio Soavi and Franco Ferrarotti) discussed anthroposophical subjects with Olivetti. From the end of World War II to the 1980's the Olivetti company advertised on last page of the Italian journal *Antroposofia*.

#### Based on Contemporary Insights

Olivetti's firm employed up to 40,000 workers with branches in 17 countries. In 1933 he took the reins of the company from his father, Camillo, and radically reorganized it according to the most up-to-date organizational and productive principles. For him there was a social and cultural mission connected with a business operation. He supported better working conditions, and social services in his city (health, housing, transportation, education, lifelong learning). He financed cultural initiatives so that the name Olivetti also came to stand for social education, beauty, taste, modernity.

He had his firm's property designed according to the newest principles of city planning. Later, as president of the Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica (INU), he helped create avant-garde architecture in Italy. He entrusted factories, residences, schools, businesses to a series of young architects and thereby shaped the 1960's world of design as Italian Style with an international resonance.

In the political area he took part in antifascist rallies, and in 1946 (after a period of exile in Silvaplana) he published his ideas for a new social and political organization of the state. As mayor of Ivrea he suggested a federal system founded



*Turn toward the human: Adriano Olivetti (Cover of Comunità, March/April 1960)*

on local and professional communities and a threefold arrangement. He tried to bring this about—also on a national level as a member of parliament in Rome. Unfortunately this was the only area where Olivetti was not so successful.

#### A Model of Fruitful Activity

Two years ago a list of his personal library was published in a cooperative effort by Edizioni di Comunità (founded by him) and the Olivetti Foundation. The most frequent author among the 3,000 extant books is Rudolf Steiner (26 titles in 30 volumes); there are 7 books by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and 1 by Albert Steffen! Rudolf Steiner's works range from esoteric and Christological titles to threefold society and *The Philosophy of Freedom*. Those interested in Olivetti's ideas will not be surprised by his affinity for Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy (even for his language). However, ideologists have long disputed this connection.

Our socially, culturally, and humanly degraded time calls for conscious and courageous decisions with responsible and long-lasting effects. We can work to make Rudolf Steiner's intuitions and suggestions fruitful even today just as Adriano Olivetti did in his own time. | *Stefano Andi, Milano (IT)*

German translation by Esther Gerster.

## ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

We have been informed that the following 86 members have crossed the threshold of death. In their remembrance we are providing this information for their friends. | *The Membership Office at the Goetheanum*

Irène Feierabend	Füssen (DE)	March 22, 2013	Julya Knierim	Düsseldorf (DE)	June 7, 2014
Anny Labree	Zeist (NL)	September 10, 2013	Hildegard Rittelmeyer	Borchen (DE)	June 10, 2014
Barbara Ohlmüller	Kronberg (DE)	October 15, 2013	Hannelore Biermeier	Bad Liebenzell (DE)	June 11, 2014
Terence Davies	Hastings (GB)	December 11, 2013	Roswitha Droggan	Frankfurt a. M. (DE)	June 11, 2014
Anna-Lisa Mattsoff	Helsinki (FI)	February 4, 2014	Inken Saltzwedel	Müllheim (DE)	June 11, 2014
Julyan Norwood	Chattanooga/TN (US)	February 17, 2014	Gero Müller	Merzhausen (DE)	June 12, 2014
Frau M. Hisschemöller	Dirksland (NL)	February 20, 2014	Susanne Oehler	Ariesheim (CH)	June 12, 2014
Annemarie Goebel	Niefern-Öschelbronn (DE)	February 22, 2014	Ingeborg Bräunlinger	Berlin (DE)	June 13, 2014
Helga Auler	Kassel (DE)	March 10, 2014	Reiner Heinrich	Heiligenberg (DE)	June 15, 2014
Kai Barthel	Gottmadingen (DE)	March 12, 2014	Uta Kempf	Kassel (DE)	June 16, 2014
Gisela Junker	Ahnatal (DE)	March 17, 2014	Raili Sarhia	Helsinki (FI)	June 17, 2014
Jacobus van Ijzerlooj	Zeist (NL)	March 22, 2014	Susanne Lin	Stuttgart (DE)	June 19, 2014
Hans Weitzenböck	Erlangen (DE)	March 23, 2014	Mary Binder	Aveton Gifford (GB)	June 21, 2014
Ilona Rathner	Borchen (DE)	March 30, 2014	Rudolf Pfeiffenberger	Stuttgart (DE)	June 24, 2014
Bryan Richardson	Forest Row (GB)	March 30, 2014	Gerhard Gutland	Stegen-Eschbach (DE)	June 28, 2014
Johanna Brandau	Bad Vilbel (DE)	March 31, 2014	Robert Matt	Strasbourg (FR)	June 28, 2014
Barbara Golla	Winterthur (CH)	in March, 2014	John Root sen.	Great Barrington/MA (US)	June 29, 2014
Gretel Feiler	Stuttgart (DE)	April 6, 2014	Johannes Staub	Dornach (CH)	June 29, 2014
Christa Schmidt	Remscheid (DE)	April 7, 2014	Helgo Bockemühl	Frankfurt a. M. (DE)	June 30, 2014
Elfriede Mangold	Kaiserslautern (DE)	April 10, 2014	Annelis Oswald	Birwinken (CH)	June 30, 2014
Thomas Martin	Basel (CH)	April 12, 2014	Ingrid Lohmüller	Berlin (DE)	July 2, 2014
Lotte Hasch	Leipzig (DE)	April 18, 2014	Annegret Ostheim	Stuttgart (DE)	July 4, 2014
Guntrud Hildebrandt	Marburg (DE)	April 18, 2014	Claus Dittmer	Dresden (DE)	July 5, 2014
Reinhilde Büchler	Frankfurt a. M. (DE)	April 20, 2014	Adelheid Zugnoni	Reinach (CH)	July 6, 2014
Ursula Ries	Haan-Gruiten (DE)	April 26, 2014	Heinz Blankenspeck	Meppen (DE)	July 8, 2014
Bozidar Bonacic	Den Haag (NL)	April 28, 2014	Ilse Andres	Basel (CH)	July 10, 2014
Daniel Schmitz	Ergolding (DE)	May 1, 2014	Pirja Majava	Helsinki (FI)	July 10, 2014
Patricia Kehoe	Charlevoix/MI (US)	May 2, 2014	Helga Schöneborn	Stuttgart (DE)	July 10, 2014
Erna Möckel	Bomlitz (DE)	May 3, 2014	Elise Bauer	Heidenheim (DE)	July 13, 2014
Martin Hoffmann	Täby (SE)	May 4, 2014	Ruth Haertl	Fürstfeldbruck (DE)	July 14, 2014
Margarete Sonderegger	Neuhausen (CH)	May 7, 2014	Bernhard Kaune	Fellbach (DE)	July 14, 2014
Johanna Wisselink	Oegstgeest (NL)	May 12, 2014	Pélagie Drzymala	La Celle Saint Cloud (FR)	July 15, 2014
Paulette Caron	Croissy sur Seine (FR)	May 14, 2014	Leilani Houtchens	Sacramento/CA (US)	July 18, 2014
Maria Fluitsma	Zeist (CH)	May 14, 2014	Henry Everard	Überlingen (DE)	July 21, 2014
Franziska Heitz	Basel (CH)	May 17, 2014	Eva Försterling	Darmstadt (DE)	July 21, 2014
Gertrud Baacke	Hannover (DE)	May 21, 2014	Tom Wilkes	Kerikeri (NZ)	July 24, 2014
Joop van den Heuvel	Zeist (NL)	May 21, 2014	Helmut Heck	Wuppertal (DE)	July 26, 2014
Gabrielle Matt	Strasbourg (FR)	May 22, 2014	Sergei Prokofieff	Dornach (CH)	July 26, 2014
Richard Phethean	Aberdeen (GB)	May 29, 2014	Willi Schweighauser	Bottmingen (CH)	July 27, 2014
Simone Cabrol	Pignan (FR)	May 30, 2014	Jutta Meichsner	Dresden (DE)	July 29, 2014
Antje Harcken	Künzell (DE)	May 31, 2014	Frøydís Lutnæs	Berlin (DE)	August 5, 2014
Reinhard Pucher	Eckwälden (DE)	May 31, 2014	Gudrun Nitsche	Stuttgart (DE)	August 5, 2014
Kurt Beta	Bremen (DE)	June 7, 2014	Günther Althage	Stuttgart (DE)	August 8, 2014

From June 7, 2014 to August 11, 2014 the Society welcomed 174 new members.  
435 are no longer members (resignations, lost, and corrections by country Societies)

## A Spoonful of Honey

If we could experience time instead of space we would not taste the sweetness in a spoonful of honey; we would taste the 3,000 miles flown by the thousands of bees who collected the nectar for this one spoonful—transforming it from the geometry of the blossoms into the geometry of the comb.

We would not see the golden-brown color; we would dance the lemniscate sun-dance of the scout bees. Aristotle had already spoken about how bees describe location, and today we know that the further the food source is, the more exact the dance; the closer the food source is, the fewer mathematics the hive needs to arrive at the right angle of departure for the honey bees to follow.

If we could experience time, the honey might taste bitter because we would feel the hunger of the bees in the mown summer landscape, because we would also suffer the sickness and disorientation brought about by pesticides.

If we could experience time, we would hear the sound “h” when we looked at the spoon: the hum of the worker bees day in, day out, and a third lower, the drones. We would not taste the tangy sweetness; we would feel the sun because the sun has guided the bees to the blossoms even when clouded over for human vision. The sun reflected 10,000 times in the facets of their broad eyes!

*Wolfgang Held*

## ■ FEATURE

*Performance of Scenes from Rudolf Steiner's First Mystery Drama in Japanese*

## “There can be eleven Benedictuses”

On July 25–26 the first Mystery drama conference in Japan took place with scenes from *The Portal of Initiation*. The first and second dramas had been translated into Japanese by Yoshiyuki Nitta 30 years ago, and they sold so well that they have been out of print for some time—but there had never before been a performance in Japanese.

The impulse for the performance came from Michael Debus (Christian Community priest in Stuttgart (Germany)). Since 2009 I have led a group in which we read the dramas, and since 2010 I have been attending the Goetheanum's Mystery drama summer conferences with other Japanese. In summer 2012 Michael Debus suggested that I could produce the dramas in Japanese. How we work on the dramas is important here: without stress and with an eye to community building. Our first meeting was held during Michael Debus' visit to Japan in 2013. I had my doubts about whether anyone would be interested. But then I found 25 people in the little room with its ten chairs!

### Eurythmy Rehearsal via Skype

Next was the 2013 summer conference where 27 Japanese took part. In the Goetheanum's North Hall we decided to do something from *The Portal of Initiation* as a workshop performance in summer, 2014. Each group would offer a favorite scene. Since Michael Debus' visit was already planned, it became a two-day conference where he held introductory lectures. We grew more confident because two groups formed from the people at the Goetheanum—they had already been doing regular work on the text for a long time. At the time it remained open whether four teachers from the Tokyo Steiner school in Fujino (who were also at the Goetheanum) would offer a scene.

In Japan, each group began by continuing its unhurried work on the text (the groups planned to wait until January to make concrete preparations for the conference). My Shinjuku group planned to offer the first scene with 16 actors. The Kawasaki group (7 actors from the Christian Community in Tokyo) wanted to take on the fourth scene since a young eurythmist planned to present the spirit of the elements in eurythmy.

The Fujino group had not yet decided, so I asked whether they could do the fifth scene—Michael Debus had suggested beginning with the first and fifth scenes of *The Portal of Initiation*. A group also formed through the initiative of a speech formationist who lives in Ishikawa (six hours by train from Tokyo!) and has a farm there. She wanted to tell the fairytale of love and hate as Frau Balde. This added the sixth scene. She asked me to tell the ironic fairytale as German; thus I also played German in the first scene.

The Shinjuku group met about every two weeks and rehearsed. Four people from the sixth scene (Frau Balde, the eurythmist and the speaker of the spirit of the elements, German) practiced each week via Skype; two of them live in Tokyo, one in Ishikawa, and one in Osaka. That worked for me as German, but it was probably very difficult for the eurythmist to hear the speaker's breath over Skype and do eurythmy to it...

### No Need to Be an Anthroposophist..

We had rented a room at the National Olympics Memorial Center for this private workshop performance. We used about a quarter of room's length as a flat stage, and put chairs in the rest. We had to improvise to create the mood of the scenes in this barren classroom. We borrowed five ramps from a eurythmy studio and sewed five red and blue bolts of fabric into a large cloth...

On both days about 200 people experienced the Mystery dramas (a couple of days before the conference there were already five people on the waiting list). Despite the simplicity of

the stage the mood was unbelievably intense, and each scene succeeded as a nonprofessional performance (at least more than most people had expected).

During the final conversation the actors and the audience shared experiences. Many found the dramas more interesting than they had expected—the drama on the stage was different from the drama read. In any case the scenes were not just played and seen by committed anthroposophists. Many in my group were new to anthroposophy, and yet they found much in the experience.

This led to the thought that there was no need to be an anthroposophist to understand and feel the Mystery dramas. They deal with what is generally human. Another outcome was that it would be good if as many people as possible could speak and act the dramas themselves. Perhaps our workshop performance showed a right form for the “Mystery dramas in Japan.”

### Effect on the Japanese Language Spirit

At the close of the conference Michael Debus said something very significant. There were not only visible people at the performance, but also many invisible beings. Our performance not only had meaning for those who saw it with their senses, it also had a very positive effect on the Japanese language spirit. Thus we had a task for the future: We need to explore the rhythms of the Japanese language and find a more suitable translation.

We are planning another two-day conference for next year—all eleven scenes from *The Portal of Initiation* on a single day. We will rent a hall with a real stage and have invited Gioia Falk to visit Japan for a week after Easter, 2015. We want to involve new people and new groups in various regions. The eleven scenes require eleven groups. According to Michael Debus, “There can be eleven Johanneses, eleven Marias, and eleven Benedictuses.” | *Hiroko Kagawa, Fujisawa (Japan)*

