

Hello friends far and wide...

In our second newsletter for 2023 we share an update on happenings at Pacifica, as well as a reflection- by a participant- on our exciting workshops with Stefan Hasler, and a delightful interview with Pacifica graduate, Brianna Harris. Enjoy!

The year is now well underway and we feel we have really entered a new phase in the life of the training after the successful graduation of our pioneer Alpha students Sally, Brianna, Alexander and Ty at the end of 2022.

Sally and Brianna along with Beatriz (who began with the Alphas but still has some modules to complete before graduating) have all taken up teaching positions in schools. Ty and Alexander are both steadily developing their eurythmy work in other ways.

The six Beta students returned ready to take on the mantle of being the 'seniors' and are working hard. The eight students who form the new Delta group

arrived full of enthusiasm in January, and over the course of these first two terms have really begun to find cohesiveness and forge their own identity as a cohort.

In term one we were happy to have Elien return after an absence of two years to teach both courses speech eurythmy for five weeks. Then Liz Neveie took over for her first stint at Pacifica. She had a lively and productive three weeks with the students bringing new perspectives and approaches to the mix, and we look forward to seeing more of her in future.

We were also very pleased to welcome Katrina Stowe, another graduate of Dawn Langman's training, who moved to Samford this year. Katrina has taken over



teaching Speech and Drama from Nicole Ostini, and, unable to resist the call, has become a eurythmy student herself. Katrina and Nicole have also made it possible for Dawn to visit once per term to give the students a rich and colourful introduction to Shakespeare.

Finally, we are so grateful to Connie Grawert who drew on her research and rich teaching and experience to give a finely calibrated series of talks exploring aspects of the mysterious and wonderful etheric or life forces over the course of the term. The talks were open to the public and several community members attended.

At the same time preparations were underway for the long awaited visit of Stefan Hasler, who, after Lockdowns and other delays,

could finally come to the southern hemisphere in his capacity as leader of the Performing Arts Section at the Goetheanum in Switzerland, and also as mentor for Pacifica. Enroute we arranged for him to spend two days in Vietnam with the new training in Ho Chi Minh city, then a weekend in New Zealand working with experienced eurythmists and speech artists along with students from the new part time eurythmy training. From Auckland Stefan flew to Melbourne to visit Birgith Lugosi and Aurora Australis before coming on to Brisbane.

Wednesday to Friday he observed lessons and gave students and teachers useful feedback. He also shared some inspiring insights expanding on and complementing the existing body of knowledge that have emerged from the

extensive eurythmy research undertaken at the Goetheanum and more widely in recent years. In the afternoons we organised two master classes for experienced artists, and arranged meetings with speech and drama representatives so all could hear from Stefan of developments at the Goetheanum, as well as giving him several opportunities to experience the significant creative speech and drama work of Dawn Langman and her colleagues.

Our number then swelled to fifty with around thirty eurythmy and speech enthusiasts joining us for an amazing weekend of workshops and talks by Stefan topped off by a performance with eight contributions from attending artists. One of those, storyteller Iris Curteis, wrote the following reflection:

WITH DEEP RESPECT FOR THE OTHER

Iris Curteis

It's not easy to put into words what I saw or experienced while Stefan Hasler taught. I've experienced artists working with great skill in their disciplines, I've also experienced what it is to be taught by teachers who have a profound gift for teaching. That Stefan has both is not even a question; but it was the way he swept both space and heads clean of preconceptions, and all notions of 'the right way' fled the room. In their place, he inspired innovation, courage to explore without certainty of where or what the aim was – and ultimately jettisoned any notion of there being 'an aim'. But there was no chaos, nothing random or haphazard.



Left: Masterclass moment: The death of King Lear with Dawn Langman as Lear.

Below: Morning workshop for experienced participants + Pacifica graduates with their diplomas.



One exercise seemed to fill the room with human bumper-cars, dodging one another with flurries of coloured silks, gradually the dynamics changed without slowing, the 'mood' shifted, as if someone had opened a window and new air was streaming in, the sound in the room changed, and relationships became visible, consolidating, until form arose as if by itself, to create harmony in motion.

This experience repeated itself in different ways, as different groups of eurythmists worked in turn on a form, a cross, circles, mobile centres and metamorphosis – some moving on the wrong plane, not moving far or fast enough,

or losing their centre of gravity and spinning off into space ... and suddenly, creating, as if out of itself, timelessness, multiple harmonies, movement through a universe.

These things appeared to happen, come together, as again and again, people were encouraged to just 'do it as it comes', to 'let it develop', to 'trust that you will feel what is right'. There is of course a 'right way', but it has nothing to do with being correct or doing according to a dogma; what is right in this sense is born out of spiritual reality, out of objective truth and love for what I am doing and I recognise others doing.

I realised, too, that many of those present were eurythmists who had come through Pacifica or were pursuing their studies here. Clearly, the tutors have cultivated not only eurythmy skills, but also a soul-quality of openness, creative courage and flexibility that supported them to be receptive to the way Stefan taught – without imposing, with deep respect for the other, with trust that allows them to search and succeed in finding. It struck me that this was an expression of what Rudolf Steiner described when he spoke of eurythmy as a social art – this beautiful and sensitive enabling of the other to find their objective creative expression within Truth.



Brianna Harris talks about life after Pacifica College

Jan Baker-Finch

I spoke with Brianna Harris after her first term working in a school and would like to share the interview, even though the written words only convey a fraction of her bubbly enthusiasm for life and all things eurythmical!

JBF: Where are you working now and what classes are you teaching?

BH: I'm working at the Newcastle Waldorf school and I teach from kindy to class 6 so I've got primary school and sometimes class 7 is included. I take from kindy to class three once a week and class 4 to class 6 twice a week.

JBF: Fantastic, Brie, do you have a pianist?

BH: Not yet but I will in the future, and I know who to approach when I'm ready to bring the music in.

JBF: That's great. So how did it feel transitioning from training to classroom?

BH: It felt good! It was satisfying. I think I didn't realise how ready I was to actually work with eurythmy and apply it in a different way. I actually have my own way of working with it and this really started showing itself so it was a very satisfying move. I loved the training and when it came to an end there was sadness or grieving for the old. Then coming into the newness- it's wonderful, it's very fresh and good.

JBF: How do you think the training prepared you for work in the world?

BH: Well.... I think pedagogical Eurythmy was touched on multiple times in the training and every time I was able to understand a different level of



it. I think particularly that last term before we took off into the workplaces, I was able to gather myself and actually prepare for what was coming in the future. We were in the classroom once a week applying what we were learning and we also practised teaching each other as if in the classrooms. That was so much fun- to try and go into what the child's consciousness is like at whatever stage it is and have that level of understanding in yourself before you bring it to them. I think we were really well prepared for that- as much as you can be without actually working with the children.

JBF: Generally speaking, do you feel like you've got enough eurythmy in your backpack so you can now work independently?

BH: Yeah definitely, definitely! Working on my own makes it clearer to see where my blanks are - so I'm thankful

to still have my tutors and Steiner's books and lectures, and colleagues to always turn to! I feel like I've got a lot of tools that I can call upon out of the training to apply for my eurythmy practice. I'm going back through all my notes again and going 'wow, that kind of went over my head then', but I've written it down, so somewhere I can meet it again, yeah!

JBF: Interesting. How do you feel about eurythmy now it is your profession?

BH: Hm.. I think the feeling changes on a day to day basis. Sometimes, now that I'm not just in a 'eurythmy hub', it's a little bit like: OK how DO I feel about eurythmy being my profession? Other times it's so clear, I'm so meant to be doing it. You know mostly the feeling I get is- this is SO right and it couldn't be any other way!

And eurythmy in Steiner schools is just so part of the fabric of the

education. It's wonderful, it can just take you into every subject and open all these worlds for you. So yeah, it just feels right!

JBF: Wonderful. What would you say to young people who might be considering the training?

BH: Do it! It is such a helpful, fun, challenging, beautiful way to learn about yourself and the world. It will enrich anything you do in life. It enriches life!! Make it work 'cause it's really worth it and you come out of it- I've come out of it- much more secure in myself and with a strong sense of purposefulness even if I can't understand what it is, I just have that feeling inside which was really hard to find before the training. And if you are studying spiritual science, eurythmy helps to digest it!

JB: That's cool. Finally, where to next?

BH: Next? Well, still working at this school, I love it so much!

[In June] Anthony [partner] and I are going to the Goetheanum for the Youth Section Leadership event where all of the youth leaders worldwide come together and explore what's living in us and what we can see for the future year. The following week turns out to be the eurythmy graduates' week so I hope to go to the performances and do the tour of the Goetheanum.

JBF: Thanks so much for sharing, Brianna. Go well!



Do you know anyone who might be interested in the training?

Please direct them to our website: <https://www.pacificaerythmy.com.au/eurythmy>

or tell them to get in touch: pacificacollege@gmail.com

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