

# When Motion Becomes Meaning

By Aria Ramsinghani

I'm a senior at the San Francisco Waldorf High School, and a member of the Youth Eurythmy Troupe.

**My journey with eurythmy began** at the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor, where I attended parent-child, preschool, and kindergarten. After moving to San Francisco, I joined the San Francisco Waldorf Grade School, then attended Peninsula Waldorf from 4th to 6th grade before returning to SF Waldorf. Through it all, eurythmy has been a constant - what began as awe, watching the SF Youth Eurythmy Troupe, has grown into a deep understanding of what it means to move with intention and presence. This piece reflects that journey - how eurythmy taught me not just to move, but to live.

## When Motion Becomes Meaning

*"No art has ever risen out of human intention intellectually conceived, neither can the principle of imitating nature ever produce an art. On the contrary, true art has always been born out of human hearts able to open themselves to the impulses coming from the spiritual world, human hearts which felt compelled to realise these impulses and to embody them in some way in external matter." (Rudolf Steiner, 26 August 1923, Dornach)*

There is a certain kind of awe that belongs only to childhood - a reverence untainted by reason, unburdened by understanding. I felt this wonder every time I watched the older SF Youth Eurythmy Troupe students move - circling, weaving, carving invisible forces into the air. Since joining the San Francisco Waldorf School community in 2012, I have witnessed the Troupe performances year after year, and every year I watched with the same awe - it was as if these young eurythmists were touching the edges of a world just beyond this one - one that was not visible but perceivable. The more I observed, the more I wanted to step into that space - to move with that same unyielding certainty, to let my body speak a language older than words.

Several years later, I stepped into that world, and these past three years in the SF Youth Eurythmy Troupe have been among the most profound and transformative of my life. I have traced the very paths my younger self once watched in wide-eyed reverence, moved with the same certainty that once felt unreachable. And, a few weeks ago, at the Youth Eurythmy Conference, I felt this love of eurythmy more keenly than ever. To witness so many students moving together, despite their various teaching backgrounds, was a deeply moving experience. There was a unifying force in that space, and it was a privilege to work with different teachers, to see the unique ways they guided us into deeper presence and expression.

It wasn't until I witnessed the Eurythmy Spring Valley Ensemble, though, that I fully appreciated the depth of what expressive eurythmy could be, the beauty of eurythmy in its purest form. In those moments, I felt a veil of understanding lift, revealing a depth I had only intuited before - the most elegant movements, speaking through the body in a language that wove soul and space into an invisible harmony, stirring something deep within me, making the world feel, for an instant, more connected and alive than ever before. Now, as my time in Waldorf nears its end, as I prepare to step beyond the only world I have ever known, I feel the weight of these moments more than ever. In a world where nearly every beautiful thing has been stripped of its humanity, where speech is hollow and movement mechanical, where we have become so disembodied, so fractured from ourselves - eurythmy feels more necessary than ever.

*"I speak in all humility when I say that within the anthroposophical movement there is a firm conviction that a spiritual impulse of this kind must now, at the present time, enter once more into human evolution. And this spiritual impulse must perforce, among its other means of expression, embody itself in a new form of art. It will increasingly be realised that this particular form of art has been given to the world in Eurythmy." (Rudolf Steiner, 26 August 1923, Dornach)*

# Art

Steiner said this over a century ago, but never has it felt more urgent. Because look at us: Look at the world we have built - this world of steel and glass, of screens and numbers, of algorithms, of news cycles that reduce catastrophe to a headline, to a statistic, to an afterthought. Look at how we have dismembered ourselves, how we have forgotten what it means to live inside of our own bodies. We speak without feeling the weight of our words. We move without intention. We have become ghosts of ourselves, drifting through a landscape that no longer feels like it was made for human hands, human voices, human breath. To me, eurythmy is defiance. It is rebellion against the mechanization of being. It is a refusal to let movement be stripped of meaning, to let language be emptied of life. It demands that we be fully, fiercely, presently alive.

I have spent my life moving within these currents of the invisible, my body a vessel for forces that speak through gesture. I have shaped vowels and consonants with the arc or thrust of an arm, traced geometric forms, and felt the air respond as I stepped into its flow. I have woven spirals that breathe life into stillness, lifted lines that draw the soul upward, crossed thresholds where movement becomes meaning. And in those moments - when space, time, and form dissolve into pure expression - I have known, with unshakable certainty, what it is to be fully, wholly human. Because that is eurythmy to me. It is not merely art. It is not merely expression. It is a return to embodiment in a world that has wrenched us away from our own flesh, our own voices, our own breath. It is the reclamation of something we do not even realize we have lost.

*"As I have already said, our soul-life does not in any way flow into the words which we speak; we do not enter into the sounds of speech with our inner being. How few of us really experience wonder, amazement, perplexity, or the feeling of self-defence simply in the vowel sounds themselves. How few of us experience the soft, rounded surface of certain objects, the thrusting hammering nature of others, their angular or undulating, their velvety or prickly qualities, as these are expressed by the different consonants. And yet all these things are contained in speech." (Rudolf Steiner, 26 August 1923, Dornach)*

We have forgotten the essence of speech, the raw, unfiltered connection between sound and soul. Too few of us, as Steiner says, truly listen to the vowels and consonants we utter, too few of us perceive the depth of what they contain. But it is within these simple sounds- the softness of a vowel, the sharpness of a consonant- that the whole world speaks to us. We have become disconnected from this sacred rhythm, this living language of the body, mind, and spirit, leaving us lost in a sea of hollow words and empty gestures. We need now, more than anything, to step into spaces where silence hums with presence, where the air around us holds memory, where the act of lifting an arm is not just movement but invocation. We need to move not just for the sake of motion, but for the sake of remembering what it is to be human.

I have spent my life growing through eurythmy, and in doing so, I have learned what it means to be alive. This is not just an art. It is a necessity. It is resistance. It is the body reclaiming its place in the world, the soul refusing to be silenced. It is, as Steiner knew it must be, the thing that calls us back: back to meaning, back to presence, back to ourselves.

The world we have built may seek to bury us under layers of abstraction, to distance us from our bodies and our souls, but through eurythmy, we reclaim them. Eurythmy has taught me that stillness is not the absence of movement but the gathering of it— that in the breath before motion, in the charged hush between gestures, something ancient stirs. Here, in the space where movement becomes language and silence hums with intention, my body, so easily dulled by a world that demands efficiency over feeling, wakes into something vaster than itself, something that speaks in rhythms older than words, that moves in currents deeper than thought.

Because the world will hollow us if we let it - it will strip us down to function, sever us from sensation, reduce us to ghosts in our own flesh. But in the weight of a step, the arc of an arm, the breath before the next motion, I reclaim what it would take from me. And if the world insists on forgetting - on erasing the language of the body, the knowing in the bones, the presence that cannot be digitized or mechanized - then let this be my defiance: to move, fiercely and fully, in a world that has forgotten how. ✦

## A Festival and Exploration of Eurythmy in Waldorf Education

*The Youth Eurythmy Festival 2025 in San Francisco was a huge success! Forty-six students from five different schools were immersed in eurythmy for three days, February 15-19. Morning workshops were led by Astrid Thiersch, of San Francisco, and Alex Spadea, of Steiner School NYC, plus a guest teacher Kleber Akama from Brazil. After lunch a variety of activities unfolded. Students experienced Virginia Herman and Sea-Anna Vasilas, Faculty and Ensemble members of Eurythmy Spring Valley. The ESV Ensemble gave an inspiring performance on the first evening. The last evening was dedicated to eurythmy presentations by the students. Thank you to all of you who were involved with hosting the West Coast Tour of ESVE. It always takes a formidable amount of strength to see it through. They performed two shows, plus an evening program in Marin County for over 600 school children. Thank you to Lilith and Sebastien Dupuis for their fortitude and perseverance. -Monika Leitz, Mill Valley, CA*

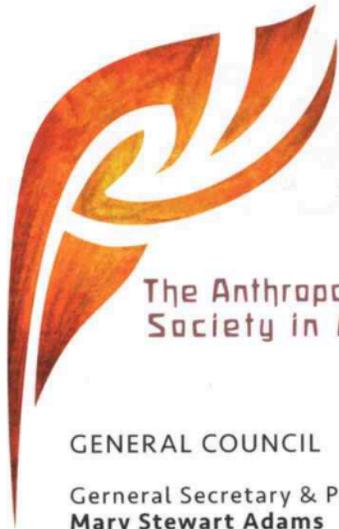
### Becoming the Melody

In the shimmering mists of San Francisco  
 I learned to cherish the art of Eurythmy,  
 Spent three long days  
 Absorbing creativity and working until my body ached  
 To move within the very essence  
 Of speech weaving in the air,  
 And music creating complex, curving notes  
 That dance through your being;  
 How to demonstrate the experience of a composition  
 Through the way you shape  
 Your body into song.  
 We spent hours  
 Carefully tracing the footsteps of a melody,  
 Reaching high to softly hold the notes  
 Our feet finding the rhythm,  
 Our forms flowing and aching beautiful,  
 Inhabiting an instrument or voice  
 To follow into the realm of the soul.  
 In a bright open room  
 Where the Earth pressed in close  
 Our bodies craft at the sounds of speech  
 Into an expression of  
 The innermost quality of the words,  
 In three brief yet impactful days  
 Our being embodied the shape of masterpieces  
 Until our very marrow sang with them,  
 And further developed the forms  
 We had spent forever  
 Moving, inhabiting, breathing, becoming.  
 Under the warm brushstrokes of the lights  
 We opened up the room  
 With the ripple of silk  
 Stitched carefully by human hands  
 Making room for all 46 of us on stage  
 To become a tidal wave of swirling figures  
 In the space of a heartbeat.  
 Here was a place in people

Who understand who you are without explanation,  
 Who could recognize a companion  
 In the moment our eyes caught,  
 Who have experienced what it means

To fall in love with the way  
 Your body curls in the air,  
 Glimmering with dewdrops on the trill of high notes,  
 Reflected in your cupped hands.  
 We know how it feels  
 To sense the reassuring presence  
 Of creation whispering within,  
 Its breath beside your own  
 As you move to the streams of music  
 Flowing within your essence  
 That arcs through each moment,  
 Embodying the tapestry of voices  
 That only our eyes can see unfold,  
 Figures rising like waves  
 And then falling back for the harmony,  
 Brightening the stones of the audience in their wake.  
 We, at least, still know how  
 To unearth the heartbeat of a story  
 Giving our bodies over  
 To the act of birthing it into being,  
 Carrying the mood of the music within and without,  
 Becoming the manifestation of a melody  
 Until our forms, moving on stage together,  
 Are simply the soul of the piece incarnate,  
 Until our feet find a brief eternity  
 In the shape of forever,  
 Lingering in the lower voice of the universe,  
 Until our hands open to  
 The high notes of joy persisting briefly  
 To brighten the space  
 With the warmth of community.

Pippa Wilcox, San Diego Waldorf School, 10th grade



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### being human

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## Letter from the General Secretary

This issue of *being human* was being produced in the midst of significant activity in the anthroposophical movement - during preparations for the 100th anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's death on March 30th and Easter 2025, the first spiritual new year of the next century of anthroposophy in the world. The challenge this presented was in how to include these momentous events while also looking forward, knowing that by publication date, the long anticipation for these events would now be transformed into experience, and, ideally, nourishment for the way ahead. Immediate reporting is not so easy, so our pages are filled not with reporting on these events, but with encounter, of Rudolf Steiner in contemporary culture, through research, in art, in the lives of our members. We are grateful to the authors, whose submissions helped us identify where and how we might begin to carve out this new path.

We begin with Tom O'Keefe, editor, translator, teacher, and an address he delivered to the community in Spring Valley, NY on the centenary of Rudolf Steiner's death, March 30th.

The next two essays were solicited by our colleagues at the Goetheanum in anticipation of this centenary time. I was given a prompt by Christiane Haid of the Literary Arts Section of the School of Spiritual Science: *Where do I Find Rudolf Steiner?* The essay appeared in the Section's magazine STIL and appears here, translated back into English.

Linda Williams' *Dear Brother Steiner*, was beautifully delivered from the main stage at the Goetheanum during the weekend of commemoration March 28-30, 2025. The parallel lines Linda drew, describing the lives of her great-grandparents and their experiences in the United States at the time that Rudolf Steiner was born, leading up to her own encounter with anthroposophy generations later, is intimately drawn, fostering an opportunity for presencing spiritual science in a culturally rooted way.

From the death anniversary to present encounter, we come next to Marc Desaulles' essay describing how we may engage with the Folk Spirit of our country society - a spiritual striving that is as essential now as it was when Rudolf Steiner first identified the work of the various beings involved in community life around the world.

Jeffrey Hipolito then invites us into an experience of the Word, as articulated through the life and work of Owen Barfield, *among the first English-language members of the movement*, and made beautifully accessible here through Hipolito's scholarship.

From these bold beginnings, our attention is drawn to the future, which not only shines brightly but speaks consequently through the dynamic essay and thoughtful poetry of two students who participated in the Youth Eurythmy Festival in February 2025. See pages 30-33.