

## The Purpose and Scope of the Lemniscate Arts International Tour

January 2015

It is the intention of the Lemniscate Arts tour to bring to its audiences an experience of the spiritual dimension of life on the theatre stage. This will be achieved both through the content of the productions—the subject matter of the performances—and through the way in which that content is presented.

Underlying this intention is the conviction that individual human beings will be able to achieve full personal responsibility when they understand themselves as spiritual beings who share their humanity with every other human being. Part of this responsibility will be mastering the moral tasks related to the material and technological resources available in our time.

The approach taken by Lemniscate Arts is based on the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) who was an Austrian philosopher, scientist, and educator. Steiner's writings and lectures give a picture of the connections between the spiritual world and the earth as well as the development of the human being as a spiritual being. Steiner called his work "Anthroposophy".

From Rudolf Steiner's work have arisen Waldorf Education and biodynamic agriculture as well as developments in medicine, architecture, mathematics, astronomy, the visual and performing arts, economics, and curative education. One of the emphases in Rudolf Steiner's teaching is to comprehend the impact of technology in our lives and to work artistically to balance this. Ar-

tistic work is a uniquely human capacity and an important vehicle in the authentic understanding of life.

The tour will feature three dissimilar productions: a Shakespeare play; symphonic eurythmy; and a mystery drama. These have been chosen because of what they have in common: the potential to communicate to their audience the spiritual dimension of humanity.

Shakespeare stands out in the repertory of English dramatic literature, not only through his unparalleled use of language, but more particularly because of his ability to bring onto the stage archetypal qualities of humanity in concrete, highly individualized characters. Moreover, he still had an inkling of the influence of invisible beings on human life, and brings those into his *dramatis personae* in plays such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*.

Symphonic Eurythmy, presented with a full orchestra, is often performed in Europe but rarely outside the European continent. In 2005, Lemniscate Arts toured, with Eurythmy Spring Valley, Dvorak's 9th Symphony, "From the New World", throughout North America. This was the first performance of full orchestral eurythmy in 27 years in America. The fully expanded scope of the symphonic form reveals musical power and nuance in a way not possible in more intimate performance of chamber ensembles. See [www.newworldtour.org](http://www.newworldtour.org).

The Mystery Play is a dramatic form that has been passed down through the ages. It differs from other plays by showing on stage the connection between the spiritual world and the

earth; it reveals the activity of the spiritual beings who work from the heavens to help or hinder human beings in their earthly lives. For the classical Greek playwrights, such as Aeschylus, the involvement in daily human life of divine forces, personified in the Gods and the Furies, was a reality that they allowed to appear onstage. In a more modern era, the most famous Mystery Plays are perhaps those of the York Cycle, a series of at least 48 plays, performed by the York Craft Guilds from 1376 to 1569. In the year 2000, a revival of the York Cycle was staged in the York Minster as The York Millennium Mystery Plays.

Rudolf Steiner wrote four Mystery Dramas in the years 1910 to 1913. He described these plays as showing a path to developing inner freedom. Distinguishing Rudolf Steiner's mystery plays from others is the presentation onstage of the former lifetimes of the main characters and the way in which the deeds of former lives shape the challenges those individuals face in subsequent lifetimes on earth. The Working of the Spirit is the result of collaborative efforts to understand how the series of plays written by Rudolf Steiner might have continued had Steiner not been occupied by other tasks as a result of the outbreak of World War One. The extreme destruction of the World War itself bore one of the signature elements of the twentieth century, that of disconnecting advances in applied technology from the necessary corresponding moral development.

The performing arts of our productions, like the Mystery Dramas before them, have been developed with the intention of communicating the spirituality of the human being. To ac-

complish this artistic event, the approach we take to acting will use indications from Rudolf Steiner as well as professional techniques from the work of figures such as Michael Chekhov and Rudolf Laban. These approaches develop the inner gesture of each character.

Creative Speech works with a deepened sensitivity of the larynx and a technique suited to differentiating spiritual elements, beyond only the physical aspect of speaking.

Eurythmy, an art of movement performed to speaking and music, makes visible through gesture and form the qualities of human speech and music as both outer and inner realities of the world of sound. It is an art form inaugurated by Rudolf Steiner in 1912 and deepened over the following century in collaboration with speech artists, poets, musicians.

Anthroposophy, the basis of these performances, offers a way to take self-development in hand to develop perception and understanding of the relationship between the spiritual and earthly worlds. The performances themselves, in their artistic immediacy, can open an experience for the audience of dimensions of humanity hidden from outer senses.

The tour will be a presentation of art forms that enable us to address the community of humankind by offering a theater experience incorporating both the physical and the spiritual dimensions of life, death, love and passion.