

What is Tone Eurythmy?

Imagine listening to a beautiful music composition with its varied qualities and moods. These carry you on a journey of experience. And now imagine how this inner experience could become visible in movement. In such a way, Tone or Music Eurythmy is the striving to express in visible movement the intrinsic elements and qualities of music.

In Tone Eurythmy the actual musical elements which appear through a music composition are transformed into specific gestures – a visible musical expression. The music eurythmist moves forms in space, with gestures for pitch, rhythm and beat; for dynamics and harmonic relations; for the notes of the music and the intervals between them; and for all other subtle musical expressions and those living between the audible soundings. Each of these elements 'sings' of various qualities unique to each composition thus enabling the eurythmist to express with as many differentiations as would a music interpreter. Beyond this, the eurythmist can enhance the pure musical element through connecting with the vital life forces and qualities of soul and spirit.

If we listen to a musical interpretation not only an outer but also an inner hearing occurs which stimulates an inner singing. This can find holistic expression through its transformation into a 'singing' of the whole human being, in movement and in space. Yet music appears for the physical ear through time. Therefore, beyond the movements sculpted in space, Tone Eurythmy strives to reveal the music as 'Time made visible'.

Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Eurythmy expressed this as follows: 'In the musical element the spatial human being is transformed into the non-spatial human being – the spiritual human being is the origin of the musical element.'

If one listens to an orchestral music piece, each instrumentalist needs to be confident of their own voice, yet needs to tune into the resonance of the whole. So also in Eurythmy,

as beautiful as the performance of a soloist can be, the expression of music can be enhanced still further by the symphonic resonance created by individuals moving together in space and time who are aware of a higher resonance.

One can begin to understand how much, therefore, Eurythmy not only schools musicality and creative expression, but also flexibility and awareness. In playing one's own part while being open for change one learns the dynamic of 'impulse-giving' and receptivity, for bringing the whole to its fullest potential. These same qualities are our striving to become fully human and contribute to the development of humanity.

Music can stir in the human being a sense of well-being and comfort, because Music connects the soul to those realms of spirit where both the soul and music stem from. Pythagoras called this the 'Harmony of the Spheres'. Each composition in different ways reaches into this 'harmony' and brings a feeling of 'home' to the human soul. Working eurythmically with musical elements brings these forces of the 'Harmony of the Spheres' closer to the human being, enhancing the re-connection to the spiritual source. Through this connection Music Eurythmy can bring balance to the individual soul and can work to stimulate healing and harmony in educational and social settings.

Eurythmy is practised throughout the world in all its varied branches. Varied too are the many genres of music interpreted in Eurythmy, even large symphonic works. These attracting wide and multi-cultural participants and audiences.

May the creativity, harmony, spirit-connectivity and joy for 'Music made Visible' continue to move this young Art towards its furthest potential.

Silke Sponheuer (Department Head at Kairos Eurythmy Training Programme – Cape Town, South Africa)

What is Speech Eurythmy?

“In the beginning was the Word”. These opening words of St. John's Gospel carry the essence of the answer to this question. When we begin to fully comprehend the Creative Forces which streamed into this 'Word', this 'Logos', then it dawns on us that what is revealed in these words concerns not just speech, or even Speech Eurythmy, but our very existence – life itself! From out of the Logos, humankind has sprung.

“When we are able to speak of the formation of this primeval Word, which existed from the Beginning, before physical man came into being, we find that what arises in connection with Speech may indeed be called a birth – a birth of the whole etheric being, when the alphabet is spoken aloud.” **Rudolf Steiner – Eurythmy as Visible Speech**

This flowing, essential life-energy, the 'etheric', without which we would be mere physical husks, is the substance of the Logos or Word. Divine light and warmth, with the moving tonal harmonies of the spheres, is the bearer of the infinite wisdom of the Creative Force. Movement and sound combine and “God eurythmetises”, says Rudolf Steiner, “and as a result of His Eurythmy there arises the form of Man”.

Speech Eurythmy, indeed Eurythmy as a whole strives to consciously connect these essential etheric life-forces with movement and gesture, permeating body, soul and spirit.

“Let us imagine that the Gods out of their primeval activity, were to make those Eurythmic movements, which correspond to the sounds of the alphabet. Then if these movements were impressed into physical matter the human being would stand before us.” **Rudolf Steiner – Eurythmy as Visible Speech**

When we stand in the light of human uprightness, consciously aware of the source from whence we have come, we hold within ourselves the balance between Spirit and Matter. And when we are able to fill our inner soul-life with wonder and love, allowing this feeling to stream into our opening arms, we may simultaneously experience inwardly the reality of the vowel sound 'A' (AH).

If we were then to draw the gesture towards ourselves, filling it with a sense of warm, secure sheathing, the consonant 'B' could become visible.

In this way all the elements pertaining to speech can be revealed in movement – from grammatical aspects to other dynamic principles that are inherent in the 'Word'. Rhythm, colour, the four elements in Nature and the celestial Planetary and Zodiacal Constellations of the Cosmos – all of these and more, contribute to the revelation of the Logos through the art of 'visible speech'.

'Eurythmy' in ancient Greek means 'beautiful, harmonious, rhythmic movement' and in the Ancient Mystery Centres it was danced to the Sacred Word. Today when we are able to resurrect the Word from its dry, dull grave and lift it to the vibrancy it deserves, we will not only be restoring life-forces to speech and living movement to poetry and prose, but we will also be working with a fundamental task of our time – the spiritual renewal of the Word, the Logos, the Speech that gave us birth. This can become a path of transformation, not only for the development of the egohood of the individual, but also for the whole Earth – leading towards our healing and rebirth.

Michelle Kaplan (Eurythmy Lecturer & Trainer at Kairos Eurythmy Training Programme - Cape Town, South Africa)



Eurythmy as a performance art

Seeing what you hear

Through movement and gesture, performance eurythmy reveals the heart and structure of poems, prose and musical compositions performed live. The qualities unique to a 'P' or an 'Ah', for instance; the musical tone of an E flat or the interval of a seventh – these the eurythmist visibly 'sculpts' and 'sings' in space to reveal the flow of audible sound in time.

Moods and colours are also conveyed through movement and gesture, even more intensely when performed in total silence. Other definitive qualities are the strong engagement of performers with the space around and between them, and the fundamental orientation of eurythmists towards the audience.

Eurythmists move from the plane of the collar bone - a higher centre of gravity than the solar plexus in Ballet or below the navel as in T'ai chi. Close to the heart, this invokes a very different experience of movement. Together with a 'stepping' whereby the toes come to earth first followed by the rest of the foot, this brings a freedom that can make eurythmy seem effortless, aware of the downward pull of gravity, but not dominated by it.

Yvette Worrall – Eurythmist and Waldorf Teacher



Educational Eurythmy

In Waldorf schools worldwide (and now some state schools) Eurythmy is a weekly activity for 3 year olds to 18 year olds. It is a vital supportive lesson for both academic and social learning.

The children move in groups to the live spoken text or music; they learn co-ordination, co-operation and balance; they grow to recognize and value harmony and beauty. They develop a finely tuned ear for subtle difference and become able to quickly and confidently respond to change. In the broadest sense, Eurythmy supports their health.

"I learn to focus and concentrate and be able to do something without being distracted by my surroundings." (Duncan)

Eurythmy -"offers us discipline and freedom ... helps me run faster...helps with rock climbing!... helps me focus on the ball in a cricket match...helps me with Dad in jail...made me happier during my parents' divorce." (comments from 10-13 year olds)

"We have to learn to give and take, to value and respect one another, to listen to each other, to be aware of the other." (Courtenay, class 7)

The word 'education' has its origins in the Latin 'to bring forth'. To develop in the children, in our turbulent society, a confident consciousness of what it means to be human and an inner flexibility – that is the aspiration of Educational Eurythmy. It is one that the children seem to recognise.

Therapeutic Eurythmy



What is the personality of a spoken sound? What is its intrinsic quality or 'signature'? What energy and beyond-earthly powers does it impart? Exploring these questions led to the development of therapeutic eurythmy, which uses the powers of specific sequences of vowels and consonants for healing. The bodily movements and gestures related to the formation of these sounds in the larynx, are performed repeatedly by the patient, the sequences being chosen for specific pathologies, both physiological and psychological. Healing with children covers all aspects of development. It can help overcome confusion with laterality and poor co-ordination; difficulties with metabolism and breathing; and nervous over-sensitivity. By giving us a means of working practically to change ourselves, therapeutic eurythmy helps us achieve a greater self-awareness as we become active participants in our own healing processes.

Julia O'Leary – Southern Cross Eurythmy Therapy Training, Cape Town -South Africa



Eurythmy in the Workplace and Social Development



Eurythmy is increasingly being used in corporations and non-government organisations, in team-building and adult learning and, particularly in Southern Africa, in courses and programmes for consultants and practitioners working in community and social development. This form of social eurythmy makes visible the complex and multi-layered dynamics of human relationship through exercises based on the principles of living process, such as rhythm, form, structure and flow.

Within this moving field of constantly changing relationships, where participants are simultaneously required to give and receive wooden balls, know their particular sequence of movement and take responsibility for the timing of that movement, an embodied, 'three-dimensional' awareness is cultivated as well as a keen sense of self and social awareness.

Through movement, rather than discussion, the exercises enable participants to discover and practice the important qualities required for teamwork, communication and how shifts in inner awareness immediately affect the quality of interaction, and hence the end result. They awaken an aliveness in thinking, an inner flexibility to respond in the moment to what is needed in complex group situations and a capacity to facilitate emerging potential rather than bring pre-determined outcomes – all essential qualities for engaging with the social challenges of our current unpredictable world.

"The eurythmy has helped me in my facilitation. I am now giving myself permission to not know, to question from various sides. It's about moving with intention into the unknown."

(Municipal Co-ordinator, South African National Biodiversity Institute)

Liz Smith – Social Eurythmy & Conflict Mediation, Cape Town, South Africa