

Jugendbildungsstätte Haus Altenberg in Odenthal-Altenberg

Theme: 100 Years of Waldorf Foreign Language Teaching -
What have we learnt and where do we go from here?

Afternoon Drama Workshops (3 - 6pm)

Artistic work with

I.	<u>Tessa Westlake</u>	<i>The art of creative speech - colour, dance and intention'</i>	
II.	<u>Robert Mc Neer</u>	<i>Listening at the Threshold: perceptive play with voice, word and body</i>	
III.	<u>Duncan Mackintosh</u>	<i>Coming into Being</i>	
IV.	<u>Sarah Kane</u>	<i>Improvisation</i>	
V.	<u>Catherine Bryden</u>	<i>Clowning: Celebrating the Unexpected</i>	
VI.	<u>Norman Skillen</u>	<i>Telling Stories - honing your storytelling skills</i>	
VII.	<u>Paul Matthews</u>	<i>Meeting the Muses: Writing Creatively</i>	
VIII.	<u>Richard Ramsbottom</u>	<i>From creative void into form: A drama & directing workshop on bringing a scene creatively, playfully and livingly into form.</i>	

Please bear in mind:

These workshops **have to be chosen in advance.**

Please mark your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice on your enrolment sheet.

Afternoon Drama Workshop 1:

Tessa Westlake

*'The art of creative speech' -
colour, dance and intention'*



*When the short day is brightest, with frost and fire,
The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,
In windless cold that is the heart's heat*

Communication and the life of the spoken word are at the heart of this workshop. In Eliot's ever-exploring spirit, we will be on the look-out for the rich range of colours in English and the lively interactive dance of the language, noticing and differentiating the impact of our words and actions.

Texts

A range of treasures will be on offer to select from, and we will give special attention to the cycle of the year and the world of nature:

- nursery rhymes, tongue-twisters and speech exercises
- short, funny or evocative winter poems
- something contemporary; and you may have a short text, seasonal perhaps, that you would like to bring to explore and develop, on your own or with others
- *a choice from some classic narrative, dramatic and lyrical extracts. For instance from Dickens *A Christmas Carol*, dramatic verse by T.S.Eliot *Journey of the Magi* or, as above, from the *Four Quartets*, or the poetic and hilarious story 'A Child's Christmas in Wales' by Dylan Thomas: "Years and years ago, when I was a boy, when there were wolves in Wales..."*

Aspects of the work

- exercises: warm-up, movement and body work, song and games, intention and quality of gesture and voice, styles of speech and text, ensemble and spatial awareness, imagination, building atmosphere, improvisation, communication and character
- developing skills in perception, variety of expression, presentation
- working in a spirit of play, cooperation and creative discovery in the world of text
- drawing on the rich resources Rudolf Steiner gave to actors and others interested in speech and drama as well as from the work of contemporary voice coach Patsy Rodenburg (the 'three circles of presence')

In order to be able to move freely, please wear comfortable clothes and flat shoes with good grip (eg trainers).

*At the still point of the turning world...
at the still point, there the dance is...
where past and future are gathered*

Tessa Westlake Born in London

Based in the Ruhr of Germany, Active internationally as speech artist, voice coach and workshop-leader

Graduated in Comparative Literature with French Honours (UEA), four-year training in the art of creative speech and drama (London School) and TEFL (International House)

Toured full-time for five years to European schools and theatres with Ashdown Eurythmy and the Rose Theatre; other performance projects include Etty Hillesum, 'Hitch your Wagon to a Star', Celtic Harp Word and Song, directing Under Milk Wood

Speech and drama workshops, and English through the arts Over thirty years' experience leading workshops in Waldorf schools and teacher training and development (including English Week Altenberg, Emerson, Witten, Stuttgart, Mannheim and Berlin); also in local adult education and cultural centres, in groups and organisations, including early morning Voice Work-out in the GLS Bank customer services department, as well as one-to-one coaching of public speakers.

www.creative-speaking



Afternoon Drama Workshop II:

Robert McNeer

*'Listening at the Threshold:
perceptive play with voice, word and body'*

In 40 years of working with actors, a common question has been: "You ask me to listen fully to my inner voice, *and* to the world around me. How can I possibly do both at once?"

I think that it is not just possible, but natural, to listen to both at once. But it requires us to overcome some habitual thinking. "Listening at the threshold" refers to the opportunity to play in the liminal space between Myself, and the World.

In this workshop, we will explore the creative potential of our perceptive capacities. Through exercises designed to expand and refine our listening skills, we will stretch our voices, develop an awareness of our innate kinesthetic sense, our sense of rhythm, of music, our emotional intelligence and our social sense of play...

All of this towards bringing us to a sense of creative repose in our own bodies, such that we can stand up in front of a group of people and express ourselves with ease and grace.

This is our preparation to explore the secret life of words, to experience the wonder of words unbridled.

I ask the participants to learn a short poem or a fragment of a longer poem by heart (3-5 minutes), wear comfortable clothes, bring a sense of curiosity and serious fun, and be prepared to laugh. It will happen.

For a more detailed description of the nature of the course, please see
<https://youtu.be/ww4Tcvqplu8>

Robert McNeer

Robert McNeer (1957, USA) has spent over half his life in Southern Italy, where he founded a cultural center together with his wife, Pia Wachter. (*La Luna nel Pozzo*, Ostuni, Italy). There he built a stone amphitheater and labyrinth, regularly hosting winter and summer theater festivals.

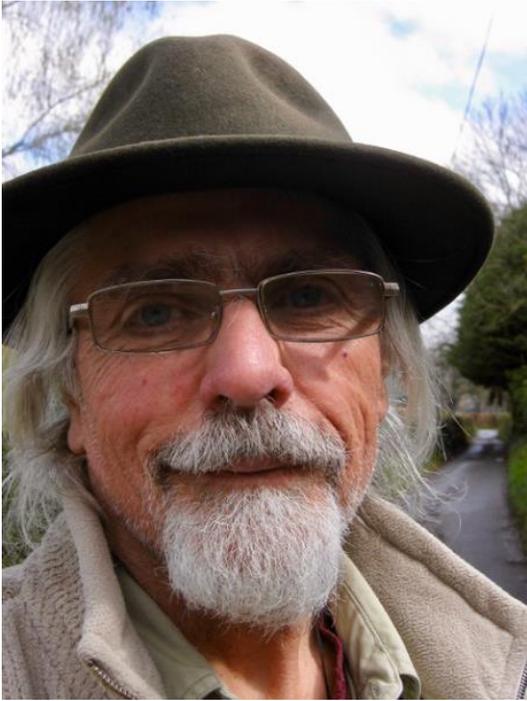
At *La Luna* he teaches clown and theater, as well as seeing to the plumbing and generally that the place is ready for the many groups who come to practice theater, dance, yoga, massage, and other things which he doesn't entirely understand but which seem worthwhile..

Robert is a valued clown facilitator in some circles. He has collaborated with *Theodora Clown* in Italy and Switzerland, and with the Danish *Hospitals Klovne* organization.

As an actor, he presently plays in two one-man shows, *Superman & Me*, and *Ti Ho Visto (I Saw You)*, as well as one with his wife, *Pothilato Mon Amour*.

He regularly directs and acts with Italian differently-abled actors, now preparing with them a piece based on Kafka's *Ein Hungerkünstler*, and with his wife manages an international mixed-abilities theater company with the *Eins und Alles* community near Stuttgart.

He has planted 5000 trees on his land in Italy, which will make a lovely living bower for his tomb.



Afternoon Drama Workshop III:

Duncan Mackintosh

'Coming into Being'

Though improvisation, presence work, open enquiry, speech exercises and working with texts we will explore experientially the three fold nature of the consciousness of the Human Being and the related arts of the speaking of Poetry and Story and Drama.

In these ways we may become more aware of the differentiated qualities of consciousness we innately possess, that we may more fully and flexibly inhabit, own, rest in, perceive from, create through, and come into our True Nature - as Creative Intelligent Loving Beings.

Duncan Mackintosh

Born in South Africa, I grew up and completed a Degree in English and Philosophy before coming to Britain in 1975, where I have lived since. After 10 years of surviving as a manual worker while exploring contemporary spirituality and psychology, I trained in the Arts of the Spoken Word (acting, storytelling, and poetry recital) in the tradition inspired by Rudolf Steiner's indications.

Became one of the first storytellers from this tradition in Britain and Europe, and co-founded of the Rose Theatre Co, performing both Shakespeare and Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas over a period of 10 years. Simultaneously I also began performing sacred poetry, particularly that of the great Sufi poet, Jelaludin Rumi, which has been ongoing now for over 20 years.

Have taught at Emerson College, both on the School of Storytelling and other courses, run workshops on theatre, speech, storytelling and inner work (presence) in many places and countries, and then at Artemis School of the Living Word - Speech and Drama & Storytelling in Sussex UK.

Since my early 20s I have been deeply interested in the mystery of "Presence", in the context of the awakening of human beings, and I have been researching running and developing *workshops on this theme for many years*. In this research I have trained with several of the foremost spiritual teachers of our time and found inspiration and confirmation for this transformational work from many traditions.

Have *given storytelling and poetry performances worldwide, with particular focus on spiritual awakening. The range of performing experience extends from tiny intimate venues, to performing for thousands at the Royal Festival Hall.*



Afternoon Drama Workshop IV:

Sarah Kane

'Improvisation'

In his manual of acting, *On The Technique of Acting*, the Russian actor, director Michael Chekhov called improvisation the highest form of acting, and set out a series of exercises to help an actor to develop skills in improvisation. But what does it mean to improvise?

When we improvise in daily life, we might feel that it means creating something out of little or nothing, such as a dinner from just a small handful of ingredients. It also has to do with dealing with the unexpected, such as an impromptu visit from a relative. In whatever way we may use the word in everyday situations, when connected with the arts of acting and speaking, improvising clearly has something to do with our creative capacities, with using them to imagine and create concrete situations and specific relationships, without having prepared or planned anything in advance.

Improvisation also makes certain demands of participants: it challenges them to make 'offers', accept what they are offered, to listen closely both to what is going on around them and to any impulses arising from within them, and, most important of all, to live in the present moment.

In this improvisation workshop we will be exploring the basic principles of improvisation as set out in Michael Chekhov's improvisation techniques, taking the opportunity to strengthen and develop our individual resilience. Improvisation has the potential to heighten our awareness of what is around us, to allow us to tune into our observations, feelings and will impulses and to act on them directly. Improvisation is a vital skill for anyone working with children.

Sarah Kane was born in London. After eight years as a literature and language teacher in Waldorf education Sarah trained both in Rudolf Steiner's Creative Speech and Michael Chekhov's approach to acting and theatre in Germany, Switzerland and Britain. From 1989 to 1996 she was head of the Speech and Drama programme at Emerson College, where she taught Creative Speech and Michael Chekhov's approach to acting, researching their interconnections. Sarah co-founded The Michael Chekhov Centre UK in 1995, to promote and develop Chekhov's artistic legacy, then founded 'threshold theatre' in 1997, to further investigate Chekhov's techniques in rehearsal and performance. She performed regularly as a speaker for movement companies and as an actor in the UK for fifteen years.

Sarah became a freelance teacher, director and performer between 1996 and 2002, working regularly in Europe, Britain and the United States. She taught Creative Speech at the University of Plymouth, and the Chekhov approach at Cygnet Training Theatre in Exeter and at The London Centre for Theatre Studies. From 2002 to 2005 she was Artistic Associate at the Stanislavsky Theater Studio in Washington DC, with responsibility for ensemble speech and acting, as well as performing



and directing in the company. During this time Sarah taught on the MFA Acting and Directing programs at the Catholic University of America. In 2005 she returned to Europe, taking on the Artistic Directorship of the Goetheanum Stage. She currently resides in the UK, teaching and directing for the Michael Chekhov Studio London, the Michael Tschechow-Studio Berlin, the Michael Chekhov Workshop Ireland and the Freie Hochschule Stuttgart.



Afternoon Drama Workshop V:

Catherine Bryden

Clowning:

'Celebrating the Unexpected'

In a theater clowning workshop, we break away from outdated ways of seeing ourselves and being; we dance with our uncertainties and enjoy our problems.

Through theater and improvisation exercises, we uncover mysteries in mistakes and experience ourselves in relationship to others and world.

This playful process, combined with feedback, opens up new ways of being present in the world and nurtures a joyful freedom.

“Knowing what to do, when you don’t know what to do,” Max Van Manen.

Teaching is, more often than not, unpredictable. In a classroom, we are expected to be tactful, intuitive, sensitive and make crucial decisions that affect individuals and the group. As Alan Maley shares, teachers need training to help them deal with and create conditions for handling the unknown and for embracing risk, to develop the ability to ‘think on one’s feet’ and respond in the moment (Maley & Underhill, 2012). These skills may often feel unlearnable. Thankfully they are not.

In theater clowning, we turn to the spirit of our inner clown to practice improvisational readiness. When we embrace paradox, confusion and our personal challenges, suddenly the impossible becomes possible. The clown schools us in the art of welcoming every gift life offers, especially our perfect mistakes.

No previous experience is needed to be touched by the clown’s magic. We don’t become clowns, we step into the state of the clown. Through warm ups, gentle physical exercises and self-reflection, we practice the ability to be present and set our imaginations free. We leave behind preconceived plans and explore letting something happen instead of making it happen...effortless intuition. If you can breathe, you can enjoy the lighthearted benefits of the red nose.

Catherine Bryden (Canada)

Catherine (Montreal, Canada) discovered the magical mysterious world of theater clowning in Germany in 2001 and trained with Vivian Gladwell. This approach to life and living nurtures her deep love and fascination of people, play, relationships, community and above all, the stunning beauty of imperfection. She’s been submerged in teaching, communication and creative processes for over three fun filled decades on three continents: North America, Asia and Europe. Catherine brings loving audacity and gentle chaos to workshops and the stage, in English, French and German.



Afternoon Drama Workshop VI:

Norman Skillen:

'Telling Stories - honing your storytelling skills'

A good story tells itself – that might well be true, but how do you get yourself out of the way so that the story can speak? The simple answer is that you can't. No matter what you do (or don't do) it will always be *you* telling the story. So a better question might be: how do I become the instrument of a story, so that the story speaks and not just me? Another way of saying this is: what is enough, and what is too much, for me to bring the story to expression? Answering these questions is what we will be attempting in this workshop, and, who knows, we might even find a way “into the zone”, as the storytellers say.

Norman Skillen

spent sixteen years in teacher education at the Institut für Waldorfpädagogik in Witten-Annen, Germany. His main task was the training of English teachers and this involved a mix of drama, creative speech work and storytelling. (It was here that he did an “unofficial” speech training with Brigitte Wegerif.) The impulse to extend this approach to the school movement at large led to the creation of the English Week, which he started together with Silvia Albert-Jahn and Peter Lutzger in 1996.

In 1999 Norman moved to Cape Town and became a teacher himself, spending ten years teaching Drama, Music, English, Geography and Biology at Constantia Waldorf School. He has also taught intermittently at the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town. From 2009 he has been a free-lance teacher and a wandering minstrel/facilitator. Since the 1990's Norman has also worked extensively as a translator, and has translated five books in the last 15 years, two of them major works by Andreas Suchantke, and one of them Johannes Kiersch's book on foreign language teaching. Combined with this an abiding interest has been the deep connections between nature, language and imagination.

Norman also carries around with him a store of Irish traditional songs, which he has been known to perform on occasion. He has also performed as an actor and storyteller, and is a graduate of the International School of Storytelling.



Afternoon Drama Workshop VII:

Paul Matthews

*'Meeting the Muses:
Writing Creatively'*

Through guided tasks in writing both playful and profound we will touch upon the three essential modes of language - dramatic, lyric and epic (narrative) - that the ancient Greeks spoke about and (with the help of the nine Muses) words rich in image, music and movement will spring to life between us. While refreshing our own love of language we will discover many new ways of enlivening our work in the classroom. This will include some simple movement exercises (beanbag throwing, for instance) related to the creative dynamics hidden in grammar. And, if weather permits, we will take our pens outside to name and praise whatever awaits us there.

Paul Matthews,

poet, teacher and gymnast has taught for many years at Emerson College. He is renowned for helping writers, teachers and storytellers (even the most anxious) to work with and develop their creative voice. His inspirational books, *Sing Me the Creation*, and *Words in Place* (both from Hawthorn Press) contain numerous exercises to nurture the creative process and bring language joyfully alive between people and in the classroom. *The Ground that Love Seeks* and *Slippery Characters* (Five Seasons Press) are gatherings of his poetry.

See www.paulmatthewspoetry.co.uk



Afternoon Drama Workshop VIII:

Richard Ramsbotham

*From creative void into form:
A drama and directing workshop on
bringing a scene creatively, playfully and
livingly into form.*

The world evolved through fire, air and water, before arriving at its present earthly form. (This journey is re-travelled in the word 'WoRLD' – whose 4 consonants pass through these same elements.) With artistic creation, too, if we arrive at form too quickly, the work becomes WooDen.

In this workshop, we will explore the directing process in the light of this. With short extracts of scenes, we will explore this slow, playful, creative journey into form. This will involve plunging into playful improvisation, in whatever ways each scene demands, but we will also take time to discuss and become conscious of the directing process itself, as a help towards the work of putting any scene or play on stage.

We will take a few short extracts of scenes - from contemporary plays and also from Shakespeare – and improvise with them before any idea of how one might put them on stage. When this leads us to find living and fruitful threads, we will begin to bring the scene into living form. We will then touch on the demands of putting the scene on stage and performing it.

Richard Ramsbotham

Richard was born near Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, England (in 1962), and has been living near or on boundaries within cultures and himself ever since. One of these is the boundary between writing and theatre performance. Or between written art and living, spoken, performed art. He has written, devised and directed many plays, often treading a tightrope between the creative chaos of improvisation and the necessary journey to bring this into form.

He has studied or taught at numerous institutions, including Cambridge and Warsaw Universities, Emerson College, The Artemis School of Speech and Drama, Glasshouse College (Stourbridge), Waldorf College (Stroud), various Camphills and Waldorf Schools, and currently the Stuttgart Hochschule für Waldorfpädagogik. He is also a writer (*Who Wrote Bacon?* Temple Lodge, 2004) and researcher, and has translated and directed three of Rudolf Steiner's 4 Mystery Dramas.