

Jugendbildungsstätte Haus Altenberg in Odenthal-Altenberg

Theme: "The Social Art of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching"

Afternoon Drama Workshops (3 - 6pm)

Artistic work with

I.	<u>Tessa Westlake</u>	<i>Colour, imagination and the meeting with text</i>
II.	<u>Robert Mc Neer & Miriam Watson</u>	<i>Listening at the Threshold: perceptive play with voice, word and body</i>
III.	<u>Martin Maudsley</u>	<i>Making Myths and Telling Tales</i>
IV.	<u>Catherine Bryden</u>	<i>Clowning: All about Relationships: Wonder as a path to relationship</i>
V.	<u>Sarah Kane</u>	<i>Improvisation</i>
VI.	<u>Norman Skillen</u>	<i>Storytelling - getting hold of stories</i>
VII.	<u>Cat Gerrard</u>	<i>Speaking Jewels, Speaking Toads Embodied Voice and Becoming a Storycarrier</i>
VIII.	<u>Ulrike Sievers</u>	<i>Discovering the poet inside - connecting with the other and the world through creative writing and story sharing</i>

Afternoon Drama Workshop I:

Tessa Westlake

*'Colour, imagination and
the meeting with text'*



However grey the weather might be, or the walls around us, our ability to play and create inner pictures can become a gateway to unexpected life and richness. On the basis of movement, voice and communicative warm-ups, this workshop will be a journey of discovery, exercising our imaginary forces in different ways, developing skills of perception and expression.

Where do the pictures we fill our minds with come from? Can they be nourishing?

What worlds do poets, playwrights and storytellers transport us to? We will work with a varied selection of short texts, everything from tongue-twisters to great literature, finding resources to bring them to life. We might experience, for instance, how a line changes when spoken, or heard, through a filter of blue, or red, or green. Or see how different styles of text (story, verse, drama) are affected by where we look and focus energy. Or go outside and draw inspiration from the beech-filled valley, the ancient cathedral, the running river, the wind and the weather!

Tessa Westlake

BA Honours Comparative Literature, Diploma Creative Speech and Drama

Tessa's life's work takes place at the lively interchange where the English language, Waldorf education and the performing arts meet. Born in London into a large Anglo-Slavic family, her childhood was on the move, living in England, Italy, Scotland and France. Travels in North America, studies at the University of East Anglia and teaching English in the French Alps were followed by a spell in the City. After meeting the arts of speech and drama at Emerson College in Sussex – an awakening – she moved back to London to do the fulltime four-year training. She spent the following years touring to schools and theatres throughout Europe.

Life on the road brought Tessa to the Ruhr of Germany. Since the early 1990s, alongside bringing up two daughters, she has been giving workshops in speech and drama, communication and cultural studies, in a variety of public institutions, schools and trainings. These include the International Masters in Stuttgart and the GLS Bank in Bochum. She recently moved back to the Ruhr area from Cologne and now lives in Dortmund.



Afternoon Drama Workshop II:

Robert McNeer & Miriam Watson-Kastell

*'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.

To participate in this course, you need comfortable clothes, a sense of curiosity, and a good tolerance to laughter. If you can speak a short poem or some lines of a longer poem by heart, we can also do some individual coaching.

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

Robert McNeer,

"Dynamic...foolhardy...a mediocre plumber but a very interesting trainer."

This and worse has been said of the co-founder of the innovative cultural center in Southern Italy, "La Luna nel Pozzo." There with his beautiful wife he runs a summer festival, notorious in some circles, now in its 23rd year.

He is also an actor and theatrical author: recent titles are "Superman & Me", an autobiographical misdemeanor, "Dreamborn: the Great Beyond for Beginners" and "My Own Personal Ithaca: the Odyssey from Non-swimmers". He wrote the AudioTheater piece, "L'Ago nel Buio: Visions of Helen Keller."

Robert is a valued clown and theater facilitator in some circles, and has worked for 25 years with neurodiverse actors. He has planted 5000 trees, an amphitheater and a labyrinth on his land in Italy, which also seats a regenerative garden.

Miriam Watson-Kastell

Her passion for theatre was sparked during her time as a pupil at the Rudolf Steiner Schule Siegen and after finishing school she studied Applied Theatre Studies at the university in Gießen. She then returned to her roots, did the Waldorf teacher training in Frankfurt and became an English teacher and recently a class teacher in Marburg, where she continuously tries to sneak as much theatre as possible into her teacher's job.



Afternoon Drama Workshop III:

Martin Maudsley

'Making Myths and Telling Tales'

Myths are imaginative stories that help us to make sense of the world around us, and can be found across all countries and cultures. In this workshop we will explore several magical myths from around the world, including creation stories and nature-based folktales, showing how opening up our imaginations can allow us to see the world in a different way and make emotional connections. We will then use the inspiration of the outdoors and natural elements to create our own brand-new myths, playing with images and ideas through piecing together a story.

Storytelling is a natural human ability, and everyone has their own unique voice when telling a tale. Through a range of creative exercises participants will explore the essential elements of storytelling, and discover how to bring a story to life. There will be chance for individuals and groups to practise using different techniques to playfully perform a story: including sounds, actions, drama, music, art and audience participation. There will be a big emphasis on having a go and having fun!

Martin Maudsley

Martin has been a professional storyteller for over 20 years, working around the UK and internationally – including recent storytelling tours of China and South Korea. He performs to audiences of all ages and often combines music, song and participation to bring stories to life. Martin has a particular passion for stories about the natural world, and regularly runs training workshops on environmental storytelling. His recent books include: *Telling the Seasons* – a compendium of folktales and folklore around the 12 months of the year; and *Monsterlogica* – a colorful storyteller's guide to monsters, beasts and magical beings from around the world (available in both English and German).

martinmaudsley.co.uk

thehistorypress.co.uk/publication/telling-the-seasons/9780750996716



Afternoon Drama Workshop IV:

Catherine Bryden

Clowning:

All about Relationships:

Wonder as a path to relationship

The essence of the clown is relationship: to oneself, to others and to the world. The clown is in constant dialogue with their own feelings, discoveries, impressions, and struggles. The motivational forces in the clown's world are wonder, a deep sense of awe, and curiosity. The day-to-day stresses in life, in the classroom and school may have lulled these senses into a whisper in the backgrounds of our beings. Thankfully this need not be a permanent state. Stepping into the clown's world, each and every one of us can cultivate our inner sense of 'WOW', and we can do it in the time it takes to breathe in, breathe out, smile and look. Through the practice of wonder, we can step away from familiar behaviour patterns, cultivate deeper relationships with others and, step closer into authentic contact with ourselves.

In a theater clowning workshop, we break away from outdated ways of relating to ourselves and to others; we dance with our uncertainties and celebrate 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.

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 while running summer theatre camps in university. Her primary training has been with Nose to Nose (UK – Vivian Gladwell), Lunar Clown (IT – Robert McNeer). 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.

Contact: catherinebryden@playisseriousbusiness.info

Publications/Podcasts:

HTL Education: <https://www.hltmag.co.uk/apr23/thinking-with-our-heart>

Theater Clowning in L2 Learning: <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2x98289t>

Threefolding & Clowning: <https://threefolding.substack.com/p/clowning-interview-audio>

Goetheanum & Clowning: <https://dasgoetheanum.com/ein-platz-fuer-leichtigkeit/>

Freunde der Erziehungskunst: <https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/freiwilligendienst/freunde-podcast/detail/44-podcast-clown/>

Erziehungskunst: <https://www.artofeducating.org/article/the-clown-in-the-teacher>

Fremdsprachen lernen an Waldorfschulen kommunikativ, aktivierend, nachhaltig. ISBN 978-3-7799-8020-9



Afternoon Drama Workshop V:

Sarah Kane

'Improvisation'

What does it mean to improvise? When we do it in daily life, it can mean creating something out of little or nothing, such as a dinner from a handful of ingredients. It also involves dealing with the unexpected.

However we may use the word in everyday situations, when it is connected with the arts of acting and speaking, improvising clearly has to do with strengthening our creative capacities, with using them to imagine and create concrete situations and specific relationships, without having prepared or planned anything in advance.

Improvising makes certain demands of participants: it challenges them to make 'offers', accept others' offers, listen closely both to what is going on around and to any impulses arising within. Most important of all, improvisation is much more than creating witty repartee: it invites us to practise living in the present moment.

In this workshop we will be exploring the basic principles of improvisation as Michael Chekhov sets out, strengthening and developing our individual resilience. Improvisation has the potential to heighten our awareness of the world around, to allow us to tune into our observations, feelings and will impulses and to act on them directly and immediately.

Improvisation is a vital skill for anyone working with children and adolescents.

Sarah Kane

Born in London, Sarah worked for eight years as a literature and language teacher in Waldorf education, then trained both in Rudolf Steiner's Creative Speech and Michael Chekhov's approach to acting and theatre in Germany, Switzerland and the UK. She took over the Speech and Drama programme at Emerson College, where she taught Creative Speech and Chekhov's approach to acting, researching their interconnections.

Sarah co-founded The Michael Chekhov Centre UK, to promote and develop Chekhov's artistic legacy, then founded 'threshold theatre', 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 from 1996, working regularly in Europe, the UK and the United States. She became Artistic Associate at the Stanislavsky Theater Studio in Washington DC, USA in 1999, with responsibility for ensemble speech and acting, as well as performing and directing in the company.

She currently lives in the UK, teaching and directing in London, Berlin, Paris and Madrid.



Afternoon Drama Workshop VI:

Norman Skillen:

'Storytelling - getting hold of stories'

To be able to tell a story you first have to get hold of it. This does *not* involve learning it by heart, but there are a number of other things you can do. Like getting to know the “bones” of the story, its atmospheres, feeling your way imaginatively into its landscapes, hearing and trying to do the voices of its characters etc. Working in groups we will try, in our four days together, to get hold of a number of stories, and then perform them for each other on the last day. Getting there will involve movement, speech exercises, songs etc. to prime your body and your imagination for getting hold of your story.

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 Lutzker 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:

Cat Gerrard

Speaking Jewels, Speaking Toads - Embodied Voice and Becoming a Storycarrier

In these unique and challenging times we are experiencing a flattening, a thinning: from the connections increasingly mediated by screens to the diminishing ecosystems with their vanishing more-than-human inhabitants. How we relate to image and story suffers, too - shaped as we are by algorithms, fake news, toxic influencers. We are in what storyteller Martin Shaw called many moons ago “a pandemic of the literal”.

This workshop is a countermove to this flattening, a gesture towards rebalancing. It's an invitation to drink deeply from the well of myth, to rehydrate and refresh and to expand into the depth that mythic image and story offer.

We will work with the fairytale “The Woman Who Spoke Jewels”, variants of which popped up, mushroom-like, in many places around the world. The story takes us down many paths, asking (amongst other things) -
What does it mean for us, when we hold our tongue?

How do we stand up to be heard?

What's the process whereby we grow from speaking flowers to speaking jewels?

And what about dealing with the toads slurping out of our mouths?

We will explore ways to playfully approach and embody (this) story, as well as vocal exercises - bringing the story into our body, breath, voice and imagination. Becoming storycarriers.

We will also look at how we hold space for such stories, not just in us but for others. How we can become good story stewards: companions and accomplices to metaphor and playfulness.

Cat Gerrard (she/her) is a dramaturg, performer and facilitator from London based in Berlin. She trained in acting at Drama Studio London and collaborative performance-making at LISPA. Cat's work is multi-disciplinary and always created in a collaborative, devised process which seeks to integrate the dynamics and interplay between the personal, interpersonal and transpersonal elements that are in each creative process. At the heart of Cat's work is story: from the personal to the mythic, the individual to the collective. As Artistic Director of TailSpin, which she founded in 2015, she curated monthly storytelling nights in London and the annual Story Bazaar festival, both of which aimed to offer space for tellers to explore, experiment with their craft and push the boundaries of what we think storytelling is, in front of a warm, encouraging and inviting audience. In her work as a whole she circles around how we carry story and how we can playfully explore and embody it, developing, through this, a metaphorical way of looking at and being in the world.

In her facilitation work she guides students into the realms of embodied voice, as well as into performative forms such as storytelling, puppetry and platform theatre. She was one of the core teaching team at LISPA/arthaus.berlin for 8 years and is a regular guest teacher at Cours Florent and BIMM, Berlin. As a dramaturg she works predominantly in the dance and physical theatre scenes and is a regular collaborator with choreographer Adi Weinberg and Art du Déplacement company 101concrete.

She is a martial artist - practising Tai Ji for many years - and is currently studying to be a Shiatsu practitioner.

<http://www.catgerrard.com>

<https://catgerrard.substack.com>



Afternoon Drama Workshop VIII:

Ulrike Sievers

'Discovering the poet inside - connecting with the other and the world through creative writing and story sharing'

Through creative writing exercises, we will connect with and open to the world, the other and the Self, listening for the stories they share with us. Guided tasks will lead us on a journey on which we will discover language in its various forms and moods. We will play with words and structures as well as with different media, experiment with dialogue, have fun and take time for deep dives and reflections. If the weather permits, we will also explore the outside world, listening for the stories it holds.

Ulrike Sievers

Ulrike is a teacher in secondary and adult education as well as a story writer. For over twenty years, she has been exploring ways of bringing creativity into the classroom and inspiring adolescents and adults to embark on a transformative journey and discover their creative voices. Besides, Ulrike has cultivated creative writing throughout her life as an important source of creativity, inspiration and well-being.

For the last 10 years, she has been part of a global awareness-based storytelling and story sharing community in which she could combine her passion for story and creative writing with her interest in diverse forms of storytelling, including analogue and digital media formats.

It's her special interest to create safe and inviting spaces in which people can explore, experiment with, and develop their own voices and become confident in using writing and Story as a way of expressing themselves.