

Resonare: Foundation Studies in Music out of Anthroposophy

by Catherine Decker January 18, 2012

“...Musical sound is the appearance in the sensory world of the soul's presence within human consciousness.” Lothar Reubke

Sunlight streams through colored glass vases, casting a mosaic of hue into the room. Plants flourishing on the window sill are illuminated. Bathed in light, warmth, and tonality, all those who pass through these doors feel their etheric forces renewed.

This is the home of the Anthroposophic Music Orientation Course, **Resonare**, currently in its fifth cycle. Founded by classically trained musicians, this immersion into music out of Anthroposophy is borne out of many years of research and collaboration. Created with the intention of offering meaningful adult education, the program provides a sanctuary for the exploration of the inner nature of music. Underlying the study is an approach to music from the perspective of spiritual science.

The Resonare course can be described as a journey into the experience of tone. The central theme throughout the five intensive weekends is the inquiry into the elements of music by means of active *listening*. Students develop their capacity for listening through a variety of exercises, becoming increasingly acquainted with tones and intervals. Meeting the unique qualities of individual tones is part of the phenomenological study that engages each participant.

Activities of the Resonare orientation year revolve around singing, lyre playing, music theory, movement, and the evolution of human consciousness through music, based on indications given by Rudolf Steiner. Course content is penetrated through discussion and experienced artistically in a “hands- on” manner.

Foundational to the Resonare program is a new conceptualization of the theory of music. Examining relationships among modes, scales, and keys within this framework, a future-bearing aspect of the musical experience is discovered.

The lyre serves an essential role in our listening work. By releasing the tone from the physicality of the instrument, the lyre informs us about the true nature of the tones themselves. As an instrument that reflects the essence of tonal character, the lyre supports our investigation of intervals and their relationships.

Part of each session is devoted to singing, based on the approach of Valborg Werbeck-Svardstrom. Students learn to uncover their voices, allowing a natural stream of vocalization to be revealed.

Improvisation enables participants to work with pitch, rhythm, and phrasing in new ways, leading to a fuller understanding of the interaction of musical elements. Various stringed and metal instruments all lend themselves to our improvising together. This activity strengthens our listening while asking that we stay in the present moment.

Each weekend includes time for movement, anchoring our experiences in the human body. Using Spacial Dynamics® exercises, we explore relationships to the surrounding space and discover new possibilities for moving in ways that enhance our perception. Eurythmy offers a physical experience of the tones and musical intervals which are heard. These movement practices bring awareness of the etheric organization and complement our study by providing living pictures of archetypal processes.

It is the art of true listening that forms the basis for meaningful human encounter. When our listening is deepened, we often find that our horizons broaden. With the hygienic integration of intellectual and soul capacities, we are thus able to approach music in a balanced way. The result is an enriching of life forces and the re-invigoration of one's uniquely human capacities.

**For further information regarding the Resonare Orientation Course in Music, please contact Channa Seidenberg at (518) 672-4389. Email: channaseidenberg@gmail.com*

