

Chanticleer

NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE-TACONIC BRANCH OF THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 3, NOVEMBER 2015

This month, those who receive *Chanticleer* via email will also receive the 2015-2016 Berkshire-Taconic Branch DIRECTORY OF INITIATIVES as a second attachment. Thank you Gloria for spearheading the directory's creation! And appreciation to John Scott and the rest of the *Chanticleer* contributors (Ella Lapointe; Rich Lumma; Katy Lince) for their masterful job, editing, compiling, and getting this newsletter out each month.

If, like me, you often find it all too easy to take such efforts for granted, I can assure you that there are few places in the country with such a wealth of Anthroposophical initiatives and a local branch as well positioned to help create a vibrant context for them all! As someone relatively new to the area (Gabriel was born 10 months ago and Victoria and I moved here just a month or so before that), I am grateful for the overview of initiatives that this Directory provides and would love to help raise awareness of it and the monthly newsletter. As I consider how to serve most effectively I wondered if some other readers might share their experiences. How do you use the *Chanticleer* and/or Directory? How might you imagine it being put to more effective use? What could be included that currently isn't or how might it be available that it isn't already?

Thank you in advance for your thoughts:
Jordan@newformsproject.org

If you represent an initiative that did not make its way into the Directory of Initiatives—please email the editor for inclusion in the next edition.

—Jordan Walker



Departure—Ella Lapointe

REFLECTIONS ON A FIRST YEAR IN HARLEMVILLE

BY JORDAN WALKER WITH TRAVIS HENRY

Despite every effort to speed things along, it's taken the full length of a year for me to even begin to live into the unique culture of this valley and its surroundings. As a student of social forms, I often reflect on what lives within a specific context, and what sort of questions or themes these forms might best serve, and be served by. A couple of experiences from this past year come to mind as a way to frame these emerging themes. Admittedly, what I reflect here is entirely colored by my own biography and destiny with this place, but as such, might still prove of interest and value to you, dear reader.

Beginning last spring, I took part in a study group of two. My friend and neighbor Travis Henry and I met once a week to work on the property that my partner, new baby and I were renting in Harlemville. As we cleared brush, installed fencing, and built an exterior staircase, Travis and I discussed Charles Eisenstein's book *The Ascent of Humanity* (2007). Chapter by chapter, week by week, we'd discuss the book's big ideas during our physical work. There is something in the form our study took—this conversation over shared manual labor—that speaks to me of the genius of this Valley. I catch a glimpse that there is still much I have to learn about the grounding of thinking into the will, of working with the natural world.

Our choice of reading material, too, provided a theme that seems to live in this place. It was the first time Travis and I had read anything by Charles Eisenstein, though we were both aware of his reputation. Perhaps best known for his 2011 book *Sacred Economics*, Eisenstein came to some prominence in counter-culture and activist circles in and around the Occupy Wall Street movement with his eloquent indictment of our current economic system and encouraging celebration of a gift economy asking to be cultivated. Charles currently speaks at gatherings around the world, his essays calling for change appear in “mainstream” newspapers and magazines, and his online videos and podcasts are seen by millions. While far from a household name, he is an important figure in a loose movement that is sometimes called the “New Edge.”

As we worked outside, Travis and I frequently praised the clarity of thought and earnest enthusiasm with which *The Ascent of Humanity* lays out mankind's epic journey from the relative harmony of early tribal groups, through the Tower of Babel-like division and separation of the industrial revolution, and onward toward a future

reunification. Far from a utopian fantasy, Eisenstein's perspective is filled with well-researched examples and stories from every field of human knowledge: anthropology, psychology, linguistics, philosophy, the arts. This is an inter-disciplinary book written for a broad audience. And it has some surprising takes on the big questions of life that, while not overtly “spiritual” as that word has come to be known, unify aspects of life that are all too often held apart.

Though Charles makes mention of Waldorf pedagogy and biodynamics in the book, Rudolf Steiner's name appears only once in *The Ascent of Humanity*—in relation to Thomas Hobbes' “war of all against all”—a cryptic reference that doesn't even appear in the index. But it is hard to believe that a book such as this hasn't been influenced by Steiner's ideas of the evolution of consciousness among others. In recent years, Charles has been keynote speaker at a national Biodynamic Association Conference and a contributor to the Anthroposophically inspired Youth Initiative Program in Järna, Sweden, furthering the notion that there must be a deeper connection than the book's index would illustrate. At the completion of our book study, we sent Charles an email inquiring into his familiarity with Rudolf Steiner and how he views the international movement of initiatives that has grown out of Steiner's work. In his response, Charles wrote:

“I'm not actually that knowledgeable about Anthroposophy in conventional terms. I haven't read much Steiner. But many people have remarked that perhaps I'm drawing from the same field Steiner was. The upwelling is happening everywhere. The water is rising from many springs.”

And here arises the second theme of investigation: What does it mean for Anthroposophy to be working side by side with others who may be “drawing from the same field”? If not drinking from the same well, at least brothers and sisters in the work of bringing water to a very thirsty world.

To investigate further, I decided to spend time with Eisenstein in person and get a sense for the circle of people who are drawn to his work. In September I had the opportunity to attend a four day retreat at the Rowe Center in Massachusetts. The workshop shared its title with Eisenstein's latest book—*The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible* (2013). The 35 participants

were diverse in age and background, and something in each person's life had made the connection between inner and outer transformation abundantly clear. Without exception, everyone in the room that weekend seemed totally prepared to transform their life, not just for themselves but for the good of the wider world.

On our first evening, before we had even gone around to share introductions, Charles drew our attention to what was being born with our group coming together. He invoked something larger than ourselves: a being that would live and pass away. As organs of this being, we could help or hinder it by our thoughts, feelings, and actions. The workshop group, many of whom came from—at least on the face of it—non-spiritual backgrounds, all felt the truth of this presence during our time together. This acknowledgement of what was greater than our habitual stories set the tone for the extraordinary personal and social work that followed.

The workshop was structured around a series of centering exercises and partner and group sharing, revealing the (often unconscious) “old story” of separation that all too often rules our relationships: to ourselves, each other, and the world around us. In the surprisingly intimate way that is sometimes possible with strangers, we shared our personal stories and heard ourselves speaking with an authenticity and honesty often much harder to locate in our daily encounters. The space we created together became a true learning community as we witnessed each other breaking down the old, and taking baby steps toward a new story that Eisenstein calls (borrowing from Thich Nhat Hanh) “Interbeing.”

With such a strong pull/push toward greater individualism, and an increasingly toxic social fabric in the age of the consciousness soul, creating spaces for the practice of remaining ourselves while being together becomes more and more vital. The workshop was only a reminder of what I knew already. Rudolf Steiner described the content and cosmic context for the time humanity finds itself in. The international network of initiatives born from his work provides incredible opportunities for our inner development toward the social art. And in true Michaelic fashion, we are not alone in the work.

One year into the experience of calling the Berkshire-Taconic region my home, I'm catching sight of the outlines of questions that might be able to be uniquely investigated in this landscape. Forcing myself to put such glimpses into words, I might formulate three:

- 1) How does one explore the felt-sense relationship between the conceptually abstract and the practically concrete?
- 2) How does the extending out, building bridges of relationship, deepen the relationship with, and experience of, anthroposophy?
- 3) What are the social forms that allow for our lives to be the laboratory of such questions?

If these themes resonate in some way, I would be interested to hear from you. And perhaps Travis and I can add a few more pairs of hands to the next incarnation of our working study group.

RUDOLF STEINER LIBRARY NEWS

By the time you receive this issue of *Chanticleer* in November, we should be just about to move into our new *Blazured* space at 351 Fairview Avenue in Hudson (Greenport) NY. Thanks entirely to the fundraising efforts of Raimond Flynn, Nathaniel Williams, and a small group of donors who were convinced of the need for an artistic enlivening of the space, we were able to engage master lazurist Robert Logsdon and his crew in October to transform our plain white walls into a room of living color.

We invite you to come have a tour, and join us in celebrating our re-opening. We will be having an open house and used book sale on Saturday, November 28, 1-4 pm. That morning 10-12 noon we will also have a library committee review meeting, using the results of the survey we sent out in August as a starting point for conversation. Our new space has an occupancy limit of 49, so please email Judith Kiely <rsteinerlibrary@gmail.com> if you plan to attend the morning meeting.

Our new Friends of the Rudolf Steiner Library group got started in September, and has been instrumental in organizing our open house. Come learn about the new Friends group and their plans for the coming year at our celebration on the 28th.

And of course we will resume lending books again this month, and will be able to help you with your research questions. We look forward to welcoming visitors soon—library hours to be announced.

—Judith Kiely, LIBRARIAN

HALLOWEEN AND HORROR

ZOMBIES, BODY SNATCHERS, VAMPIRES

BY ANDREAS BRACHER

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This past spring, the Swiss author and publisher Thomas Meyer launched The Present Age, an ambitious international monthly English language magazine that regularly deals with a variety of contemporary issues from the point of view of spiritual science. As Halloween will have just passed when I send out this edition of the newsletter—and especially as over the past month those of us in Columbia County could not escape the numerous hand-painted signs proclaiming to all that “Zombies are Coming”—I thought it would be appropriate to reprint the following article by Andreas Bracher that appeared in the October issue of The Present Age. I believe it sheds some welcome light on an aspect of American popular culture that is quite easy to ignore or dismiss as harmless, but, like those lightheartedly threatening “zombie” signs mentioned above, beg for some deeper explanation. Subscription information for the new magazine follows the article.*

October in the US is the month of Halloween. As a tiny trickle this intrusion of Halloween-atmosphere begins with certain very impatient people, especially in supermarkets and other stores, already towards the end of September and the beginning of October, but then in the second half it becomes a gigantic floodwave which completely transforms the appearance of the cities. Everywhere in front of the houses you see the Jack-O-Lanterns, carved-out pumpkin-horror-faces, grinning or laughing from the porches. On the houses and in the gardens there are all kinds of decorations with spiders, spider-webs, skulls, corpses hanging down from trees, skeletons, witches' brooms and similar things. The shops will naturally transform their decorations to conform with Halloween. In Massachusetts, there is even a whole city, Salem, which in the times of colonial America witnessed the biggest witch trials, and today, each October, transforms itself into a kind of Halloween capital, with rows of shops that specialize in horror accessories and with a witch museum that, in a typical fashion, combines pretended enlightenment with a subterranean reinforcement of horror.

Among the big seasonal festivity days in the US, Halloween is the one that incites the greatest creativity and which also creates the most community. Neighborhoods get together in order to coordinate their Halloween decorations; in some places real ghost tunnels are conceived and put together and some streets on Halloween get blocked for the traffic and become Halloween pedestrian zones, where one is surrounded by a self-created comprehensive Halloween atmosphere. Whereas on Thanksgiving or Christmas the families enclose themselves in their homes, on Halloween you leave your home: teenagers go to costume parties, which are wild as Carnival parties in Europe, traditionally; grown-ups with young children go from house to house, where the children “Trick or Treat,” i.e. collect

candy. This provides a once-in-a-year opportunity to explore the neighborhood and get to know somewhat the people who live there. The whole process generates quite an unprecedented amount of mutual friendliness, benevolence and interest; one can find it amazing that these things are in such a way unleashed only through the occasion of horror.

Halloween, which is always on the 31st of October, was celebrated in Ireland as the night before All Saints' and All Souls' Day, the days for remembering and conversing with the dead. Nowadays in the US but also increasingly in Europe, Halloween has long overshadowed All Saints and All Souls. It has become a festival of horror, of the conjuration of everything spooky that comes out of the world of ghosts and the dead.

Rudolf Steiner once gave a central characterization* of “Americanism” as the “fear of the spirit.” Halloween, where the spiritual and supersensible is celebrated and conjured up as horror, is the quintessential celebration of this fear. The spiritual is there looked upon as horror, as something that terrifies. At the same time maybe one could say that the way this is constantly conjured—on Halloween and in the whole genre of “Horror” altogether—shows also a certain longing for the spirit. But this longing is only satisfied in an inverted way in the form that one all the time calls to mind the terror that comes from that region.

In modern western societies Halloween has for now taken the place of the Michael festivity. Rudolf Steiner thought of Michaelmas as something which mankind would have to develop and celebrate rightly in order for the human soul to find its right calibration within the rhythmic course of the year, and thus enable mankind to navigate in the right way through the next centuries

* Lecture of July 30, 1918, in GA 181 (*Bewußtseins-Notwendigkeiten für Gegenwart und Zukunft*)

or even millennia. Similarly to this (non- or barely existent) Michael festivity, Halloween deals in autumn with evil in the supersensible sphere, but not in the form of a courageous fight as does Michaelmas, but more in the form of shock and fascination. Maybe one could explain it in the following way: if one has missed out on Michaelmas at the end of September, on 31st October, the day of Halloween, it is already too late: evil cannot be fought anymore then; it can only be regarded with awe, and one can celebrate one's submission and collaboration.

Horror in American popular culture

Horror is not an exclusively American phenomenon, but one can probably say that horror in the film and literature of American popular culture has acquired an importance and popularity like nowhere else. Modern 'Horror' really derives from the eighteenth century, where it originates with the English gothic novel. It isn't simply accidental that the rise of Horror coincides with the rise of the Industrial Revolution: Horror is a twin of the Industrial Revolution and of the scientific way of thinking that has brought it forth. The supersensible realm, which is abnegated in this way of thinking, returns then in the form of horror, spreading fear and shock.

American popular culture has developed a significant amount of fantasy for the forms in which spiritual evil appears. The western Horror genre has used elements from other times and distant cultures to express itself and it has tailored these fragments according to its own needs. It is interesting to look at some of these motives as they appear in horror films, comics or other books. These motives, developed with a certain spontaneity and lack of self-awareness carry a sub- or semiconscious knowledge of evil, its forms and its inner logic with themselves. Three of these motives may briefly be introduced here: vampires, body snatchers and zombies. We'll look at them in the light of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual scientific research.

Vampires

The Vampire is among the most popular characters of the horror genre. It is so ubiquitous in popular culture that nobody over a certain age can escape having heard of it. The vampire in essence is a bloodsucker, a parasite, who needs the blood of real people in order to sustain himself. Vampires are the undead, *revenants*, dead people who have remained on earth and who rise in the night from their graves in order to suck people's blood, their life forces. At the same time they are also vampires,

i.e. bats. Being sucked by a vampire after some time can lead to the great transformation: the victim of the vampire, becoming anemic after too much loss of blood, dies, but then rises again from the dead and has become a vampire him- (or her-)self. The vampires can finally be killed—and redeemed—if one knows the right way to do it: one has to hammer a stake through their heart while they are sleeping or one has to expose them to sunlight.

One motive of the vampire story is nighttime, which is when he can unleash his forces; another is the fascination which emanates from the vampire, which, in relation to women, sometimes also has a certain erotic component: the vampire has the aura of a very special, exclusive being and fate. Typically vampires are also aristocrats, who often live in castles, like "Count Dracula", the most famous one. The vampire is old, he comes from an earlier period of mankind, and when he comes to the West, he usually originates from the "East", originally from the Balkans or the Black Sea region. All these elements identify the vampires as Luciferic beings, these motives (night, exclusivity, aristocracy, eroticism, past, east) derive from the region of Lucifer.

The myth of the vampire has in the West become popular especially since Bram Stoker's *Dracula* novel of 1897 and has been taken up in all kinds of variations. There were early films by the German director Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (*Nosferatu*, 1922) and the Dane, Carl Theodor Dreyer (*Vampyr*, 1932). After the Second World War the production of vampire films has grown exponentially. In the United States, the writer Ann Rice, who was born in New Orleans and later moved to San Francisco, has expanded the scope of the myth in a genial way. Some of her novels (like *Interview with the Vampire* or *Queen of the Damned*) have been very successfully made into films. She portrays vampires as the kings of the night and of nightlife, as the real insiders of the kind of strange, ghostly atmosphere that there can be in bars or nightclubs. Nightlife appears in its essence here as the biotope of the vampire, which draws in humans who never completely understand what they have entered. The quintessential vampire in this sense could be the rock star.

Even bigger was the success of the vampire novels from the "Twilight" series of Stephanie Meyer. The films made out of these novels in the years 2008 to 2012 have become a worldwide teenage-epidemic. The vampire here is especially the epitome of the object of romantic love, somebody, who is so different, special and mysterious, that beyond any competition, he satisfies love's wish for exclusivity. It is in this context interesting that one of

the first literary treatments of the vampire motif, a tale called *Polidori*, came from Lord Byron, who himself was the romantic hero par excellence, the quintessentially representative Romantic in an age which anyway called itself "Romantic." All this seems like expressions of the Luciferic nature of vampires.

Body Snatchers

A rarer, somewhat more hidden motive of horror films are the body snatchers. These are (usually) small multiplying organisms which can be transferred from person to person e.g. through the mouth and which take control of the organism which they invade. They cause a thorough transformation of the people into whom they enter. These people become more "perfect", unquestionable and unquestioning in what they do, but also soulless and de-individualized. The people invaded by them become mass beings, whose main purpose is to transform everybody else, to destroy individuality. The plot of body snatcher films usually centers around individuals or little groups of individuals who fight to escape this mass epidemic, who try to sustain their original individuality. Against the wave of the future, which is represented by these converted mass beings, their individualism sometimes seem old-fashioned, something that is destined for extinction. The bodies, controlled by the body-snatchers, are physically well trained, strong, they are well-dressed, good looking, intelligent, effective, professional; everything blurred, unclear, hesitating, skeptical has disappeared from them. All these things belong to the realm of the soul and of feelings, and all that is practically annihilated; typical of body snatchers is, for example, that they don't have any relation to music as they have no "higher" interests in general, nothing that extends beyond practical life questions. They are "invisible"; they cannot be automatically distinguished from "normal" people and they try to blend in, to be as anonymous as possible, to hide their specificity. Only when they corner a non-transformed person do their mask and their greed fall for a moment to effectuate the transformation and to annihilate the individuality.

The body snatcher motif originally stems from the novel *The Puppet-Masters* by Robert A. Heinlein from 1952. Heinlein (1902-1988) is generally regarded as one of the most important authors of American science fiction and as one of the 'Three Greats' of English-language science fiction alongside Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke. Heinlein was in the 1950s for some years friends

with Ron L. Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, and considered himself a libertarian. In his own mind, his novel was connected with the fear of a Communist takeover in America, but the real range of possible interpretations reaches, of course, much further.

The first film to take up the motif was the 1956 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* by Don Siegel, of which later several remakes were made. With Siegel, the motif has shades of social critique: his invasion of the body snatchers partly resembles political hounding, the hunting-down of political dissidents. The political connotation of the topic is further expanded in films like *They Live* by John Carpenter (1988), where a man discovers with growing terror that all the leaders and important functionaries of the American economy and politics are not 'real' humans anymore but possessed by body snatchers. An interesting variant is also to be found in the teenage genre film *The Faculty* (1998), where towards the end, a rather inconspicuous high-school girl reveals herself as the mother-organism of the body snatchers and then retransforms herself into the many-headed dragon which she really is.

The motif of the body snatchers is one of Ahrimanic possession in Rudolf Steiner's sense of the term. Traits like functional ability, an intelligence only directed towards earthly, practical things, soullessness, invisibility, de-individualisation etc. point in that direction. The fact that this topic comes so close to a real nerve, to real developments, might be a reason why it has only been used relatively sparsely in Hollywood.

In the body snatchers modern technical-industrial civilization is creating those kinds of beings which it needs in order to function in a certain predestined narrow-mindedness. On the other hand, the dysfunctional, complicated, 'soulful' human beings, who are too incalculable, are chased out of their bodies.

Zombies

A further very common figure in American and Western popular culture is the zombie. Nowadays, the concept of the zombie has so far pervaded everyday life that even politicians sometimes slander each other as "zombies." The concept of zombies originates from Haiti, and like vampires, they are undead – dead people who move about in a physical appearance and who threaten the living. In zombie films these 'undead' appear in large numbers and hordes; they are a phenomenon of a mass epidemic. They are dead people's bodies, which, for some reason, don't remain dead and decompose, but

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NOVEMBER MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Berkshire-Taconic Branch All Souls' Festival

Sunday, November 1, 7:00 pm

The evening honors those community members who have crossed the threshold in the past year, with offerings of music, verse, and a brief talk by Michael Lipson. *At Windy Hill.*

First Class Study

Wed. November 4, 7pm

At Windy Hill. Call Hanna, 325-3648 or John, 325-1113.

First Class

Thursday November 5, 7:45pm

Lesson 11. *At Camphill Village, Copake;* in the Crypt. Call Anke Smeele, 329-7973.

The Branch Coordinating Group

Fridays, November 6 & 20, 3:00 pm We meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month *at Windy Hill Studio.* All are invited who wish to take an active part in the life of our Branch of the Anthroposophical Society. For information call the editor at 392-0214.

The Living Roots Trio

Friday, November 6, 7:30 PM

The Living Roots Trio, with its earnest and complex original songs, is melancholy in tone yet hopeful in its message. Though primarily folk/rock, the band incorporates classical and jazz influences into its unique and textured sound. The observational, poetic, lyrics are carried forward by the sometimes turbulent, sometimes quirky and occasionally gentle momentum of percussive nylon string guitar playing and an upright bass. Open and raw vocal harmonies soar above (and below) and blend together throughout the songs, giving The Living Roots Trio its signature mood. Singer songwriter Séamus Maynard, vocalist Meaghan Witri, and Upright Bass player Sauerkraut Seth Travins hold down the core of the Living Roots Trio. *At Free Columbia Space on Main (next to the Family Dollar).*

Curative Education Study Group

Friday, November 6, 7:00 pm

We will continue to study together *The Child's Changing Consciousness and Waldorf Education* by Rudolf Steiner with lecture six. We meet on the first Friday of each month at the home of Christina and Dr. Basil Williams of 83-7 May Hill Rd., Harlemlville. Anyone interested in Curative or Waldorf Education is invited to participate. For directions or information call 672-4332.

Volunteer Work Day at The Nature Institute

Saturday, November 7, 9:00 am-1:00 pm

Please join us for a volunteer work day of landscaping on the grounds of The Nature Institute. Refreshments and good cheer will be provided! Please let us know if you plan to join us by calling 518-672-0116.

First Class

Sunday, Nov. 8, 3:15 pm (reading);

Thursday, Nov. 12, 3:45 (conversation)

Lesson 13. *At Camphill Ghent in Orion North,* the residence of Brian and Anna Rée. If you have any questions please contact Anna at 518-721-8508.

Douglas Sloan Book Launch

Sunday, November 8, 4:00-6:00pm

Join SteinerBooks and author Douglas Sloan for a talk in celebration of his new book: *The Redemption of the Animals: Their Evolution, Their Inner Life, and Our Future Together* at the Hawthorne Valley School Music Room.

Coming Alive to Nature: Images, Color, Light and Darkness

Mondays, Nov. 9 through Dec. 7, 9:00 am-12:30 pm

With Henrike Holdrege at The Nature Institute (in collaboration with Free Columbia). We will engage in experience-based studies of Goethe's color theory and the optics of images. Please register with Nathaniel Williams by calling 518-672-4090 or email <nafanyel79@gmail.com>. Everyone attending will be invited to contribute \$0 - \$250 toward future projects and workshops of Free Columbia. The Nature Institute: 20 May Hill Rd.

The Language of Christianity

Tuesday, November 10, 7:00 pm

Join Rev. Liza Joy Marcato as we open up the powerful words of Christianity, which are often bogged down by past history, but which are meant to liberate and empower individual human beings to build communities in love. Also continued on the following Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 PM: November 17, December 8 & 22. The Christian Community, 10 Green River Lane, Hillsdale, NY. Email <liza-marcato@gmail.com> for information.

Karmic Relationships III

Tuesday, November 10, 8:00 pm

The Staying Connected Study Group will continue with discussions of Rudolf Steiner's major works about life after death and reincarnation and karma. Lecture 10

will be discussed at 8 pm in the home of Gloria Kemp (672-4844) and Margaret Rosenthaler 672-4253, The group meets on the second Tuesdays of the month.

Bee Study Group

Wednesday, November 11, 7:00 pm

This study group will study the last half of Lecture six of Steiner's *Bee Course* and will be held at the home of Charlie Doheny, of 78 Summit Street, Philmont. This study group usually meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. For information or directions call Charlie at 672-5270 or Dr. Basil Williams, 672-4332.

Anthroposophy in America at the Tipping Point

Thursday, November 12, from 7:00—8:45pm

Report by Nathaniel Williams on the recent AGM in St. Louis and on the "Comprehensive Campaign for Anthroposophy in America," followed by a Conversation moderated by John Barnes.

As members will have recently read in the Society's 2014 annual report, the Anthroposophical Society in America has reached "a moment of truth."

- What is, truly, the situation in the Anthroposophical movement and Society today?
- What is its role, and its potential, in the world today?
- How should I, as a member of the Society or supporter of Anthroposophy, respond?

Please join the Branch coordinating group as we try to come to grips with this critical situation.

At the Windy Hill barn.

Branch Study Group Meeting

Friday, November 13, 7:30 pm

Meets at Camphill Ghent, in the MAGNOLIA HOUSE (second building on the service road). We will work on Steiner's talk entitled "Michael, the Dragon, and the Human Soul." One source for this lecture is in the collection of talks edited by Christopher Bamford called *The Archangel Michael His Mission and Ours* (Steinerbooks, 1994). It is the first lecture (Vienna September 27th 1923) in the volume entitled *Michaelmas and the Soul-Forces of Man, GA 223*. A report and summary of the talk will precede a conversation. At this meeting, the group also will make a space for members who want to study some aspect of the Theme of the Year. Please call Nick at 392-1014 for more.

Concert at Camphill Ghent

Saturday, November 14, 3:00 pm

Please join us for an extraordinary piano recital with

pianist Benjamin Hochman (Winner of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant) He will present a fascinating recital program of transcriptions. Three contrasting works written within a decade at the turn of the 20th century by Scriabin, Janacek and Granados are presented alongside masterpieces by Schumann, Kurtag and Bach. A unifying thread throughout the evening is the art of transcription: the magnificent Brahms arrangement of Bach's Chaconne and Hochman's original transcriptions of Schumann songs and piano works by Granados and Janacek. Ticket prices are - Adult: \$25, Senior (55+): \$20, Student: \$5, Family: \$45. Subscription for the whole series is: 5 concerts for the price of 4. (Please see information on Camphill Ghent's concert page web site.) Reservations are recommended and may be purchased by calling (518) 392-2760, or click on the concert information at www.camphillghent.org.

The Actors' Ensemble Fall Benefit

Sunday, November 15, 3:00-5:00 pm

Celebrating 30 years of making theatre, at the Spencertown Academy, 790 Rt. 203, Spencertown, NY 12165. Come and get a taste of work in progress with actors and musicians featuring young actors from the new Michael Chekhov School. There will be tea and sweets and time to spend with friends and neighbors. Donations of any size will be gratefully received. For additional enquiries and information contact Ted Pugh at 518-392-5743 or Fern Sloan at 518-392-5497.

Basic Meditative Exercises Group

Sunday, November 15, 5:30 - 6:45 pm

The group working together on the 6 Essential Exercises that Rudolf Steiner described - control of thought, control of will, equanimity, positivity, openness, and harmonizing will meet every third Sunday for the next six months at the Farm and Arts Learning Center of the Hawthorne Valley Association. All are invited, from beginners seeking an introduction to the exercises, to those who wish to deepen their work. Call Seth Jordan at 413.717.5101 or email seththomasjordan@gmail.com with questions.

Characteristics of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus

Monday, November 16, 7:00 pm

The third of four "Monday Nights with the Stars" with Henrike Holdrege at The Nature Institute. We will look at some of the characteristics of these four, very differently behaving planets. Registration is requested but not required. Please call 518-672-0116. Suggested donation per family is \$4 - \$15. Additional "Nights with the Stars" will be on December 14.

Nature Spirits Study Group

Wednesday, November 18, 7:00 pm

We will continue on with lecture two (2) of Rudolf Steiner's book *n Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies & in the Kingdoms of Nature* at the home of Christiana and Dr. Basil Williams of 83-7 May Hill Rd. near Harlemville. For information and directions call 518 672 4332 or Charles Doheny 518 672 5270.

Free Columbia Movie: Ai Weiwei—Never Sorry

Thursday, November 19, 7pm

A portrait of Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei; his art, his mission, and his society. *At 84 Main Street, Philmont.*

First Class

Thursday Nov. 19, 7:45pm

Lesson 12. *At Camphill Village, Copake; in the Crypt.* Call Anke Smeele, 329-7973.

First Class

Sat. Nov. 21, 7pm (free-rendering); Sun. Nov. 22, 9am (reading)

Lesson XIII. *At Windy Hill.* Call Hanna, 325-3648 or John, 325-1113.

Eurythmy Performance

Sunday, November 22, 3:00 pm

The Pennsylvania Eurythmy Ensemble will perform

in Camphill Ghent's Culture Hall "In Everything the Unseen Moves..." and will address the paradox that, despite everything that assaults and assails us, we find inner resources of joy, blessing, and release. Our story "Duffy and the Devil" encourages us that with a bit of cunning, we can outwit even the Devil himself! Music by Howard Ferguson, Johann Brahms, Robert Schumann, Saint-Saens. Poetry by Theodore Roethke, Ben Okri, Siegfried Sassoon, and venerable Anon. And the story of "Duffy and the Devil." Suggested donation \$10. Call Gry at 518-721-8423 for information.

Rudolf Steiner Library Re-opening

Saturday, November 28, 10am to 12 pm, Meeting and Review; 1pm to 4pm, Open house and Book Sale

We invite you to come have a tour, and join us in celebrating our re-opening. We will be having an open house and used book sale on Saturday, November 28, 1-4 pm. That morning 10-12 noon we will also have a library committee review meeting, using the results of the survey we sent out in August as a starting point for conversation. Our new space has an occupancy limit of 49, so please email Judith Kiely <rsteinerlibrary@gmail.com> if you plan to attend the morning meeting.



HAWTHORNE VALLEY FESTIVAL SINGERS REHEARSAL TIME CHANGE

At our Oct. 4th rehearsal the chorus members voted to change the starting time of the Sunday night rehearsals back to the former time of 7:00 pm. Rehearsals will now be on Sunday evenings from 7:00-8:30 pm in the Music Room of Hawthorne Valley School. New members are always welcome. For information call Diane at 518-325-1113

LOOKING AHEAD

Celebration of the Christmas Festival and Honoring the Spiritual Beings in Nature

Saturday, December, 19th 4:30-6.00pm, Pot Luck Supper begins at 6:00pm

We in our community will gather together to prepare healing substances for the good Earth, celebrate the Christmas Festival, and recognize the Spiritual Beings in Nature who work on our behalf. Songs, poetry, a special Christmas talk, recitation of the Foundation Stone meditation, music, eurythmy, spacial dynamics, preparing together the healing substances, and then spreading the substances on the good Earth. Children and adults alike are invited to participate in this festival. The festival will be held at the home of Christiana and Dr. Basil Williams near Harlemville. For directions call 518 672 4332

continued from page 6

reawaken after a short time as transformed beings. In the films this is sometimes motivated by the influence of radioactivity or of some unknown viruses. The main instinct of these zombies is to eat human flesh and to kill “real” humans (and thereby to transform them). Zombies are mute, swaying, unsteady bodies, shabbily clothed, resembling some kind of lumpen proletariat, and are in their souls as though non-awakened, sleeping, without intelligence or real intentionality, but governed by some indestructible instinct, which directs them towards where the ‘real’ people are. They cannot be influenced nor can one elicit any reaction from them. They can (finally) be killed quite easily but they cannot be intimidated or brought to change their behavior. On the march they are of superhuman physical strength.

They have no survival instinct of their own or no wishes. They don’t want to rule and take over society like the body snatchers. Their inclination is the total annihilation of human society through the complete transformation of mankind into these same sleeping, unconscious beings. In some respects they seem like the armies of the wretched of this earth, which flood over the fortresses of welfare and wealth.

The zombie motif has especially become popular since the films of George Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*, 1968, and *Dawn of the Dead*, 1976). Its traits are sometimes now varied to a point where they don’t make much sense anymore.

The form of evil that zombies represent is more difficult to identify. But one could quote a formula of Rudolf Steiner’s in which he singles out certain dangers

for the future development of mankind. He describes a possible negative evolution for man in the future (i.e. our) age with the formula: “Mechanization of the spirit, descent of the soul into a vegetative state, bestialization of the body.” This might be what happens to the human being and to mankind if they don’t find the path to the spirit. One could find at least the last two of these traits in zombies: their soul element is like sleeping, plantlike, and even with their physical bodies they shake in the wind like plants. At the same time, this plant-like tendency is connected with the bestiality of their physical behavior, their cannibalistic greed for human flesh and for killing.

It is interesting that in all three motifs a transformation is involved. The deepest terror emanates not from any possible confrontation with these beasts of Horror, but from the fear that one could oneself be transformed into such a monster: a vampire, a body controlled by a body snatcher, or a zombie. Man, one could say, has to transform himself in order to stay human, but if he does not do that, he will be transformed into de-humanized states by outside forces which then take over the dominion of his soul.

—Andreas Bracher,
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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FURTHER AFIELD

Anthroposophy and the Christian Community: Different Paths to the Same Goal?

November 30 at 8:00 am—December 4 at 9:30 pm

Christian Community Seminary Open Course, in Chestnut Ridge, NY.

Although more than 90 years have passed since the foundation of The Christian Community, there is still confusion and misunderstanding about the relationship between the “mother” (Anthroposophia) and the “child” (The Christian Community). In this Open Course, we will follow the process of the founding of The Christian Community, the role of Rudolf Steiner and his differentiated ideas about the relation of the two. We will investigate possibilities how and where the two can, and do, work in a productive way together. This Open Course is co-facilitated by Rev. Bastiaan Baan, Director for the Seminary of The Christian Community in North America and Bert Chase, architect, former Chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada and First Class Holder.

Evening lectures will include the themes: *The founding of The Christian Community; The help of Rudolf Steiner; Developments after the founding of The Christian Community; Lectures of Rudolf Steiner about the relation of the two; The way of Abel and the way of Cain; How do we work together?*

Complete Course: \$150.00 includes breakfast at the Seminary, all workshops and lectures. Evening lectures may be attended separately – suggested donation, \$15.00 per lecture. Email <info@christiancommunityseminary.org> to register.

November 2015

(Please see the Events Section for details)

SU	M	Tu	W	TH	F	SA
1 Branch All Souls' Festival	2	3	4 FIRST CLASS STUDY	5 FIRST CLASS	6 BRANCH COORDINATING GROUP Curative Ed Study Living Roots Trio	7 Nature Institute Volunteer Work Day
8 Book Launch for Doug Sloan FIRST CLASS	9 Coming Alive to Nature	10 Christianity Staying Connected	11 BEES	12 SPECIAL BRANCH MEETING FIRST CLASS	13 BRANCH STUDY	14 CONCERT AT CAMP HILL GHENT
15 ACTORS' ENSEMBLE BENEFIT BASIC EXERCISES	16 Monday w/ Stars (planets)	17	18 Nature Spirits	19 Free Columbia Movie Night FIRST CLASS	20 BRANCH COORDINATING GROUP	21 1ST CLASS
22 1ST CLASS EURYTHMY PERFORMANCE	23	24	25	26 Giving Thanks	27	28 RUDOLF STEINER LIBRARY RE-OPENING
29	30					

CHANTICLEER is published monthly, September through May, and is paid for by contributions from those who receive it.

The suggested annual contribution in support of the activities of the Branch, including Chanticleer, is \$50.

Checks may be written payable to the Berkshire-Taconic Branch and mailed to:

Michael Lapointe, P.O. Box 521 Philmont, NY 12565.

Our email address is berkshiretaconicbranch@gmail.com.

CHANTICLEER is the newsletter of the BERKSHIRE-TACONIC BRANCH OF THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, and aims to be a listening ear and a public voice for the Anthroposophical striving in our region, through the publication of articles, announcements, and a calendar of events.

ANTHROPOSOPHY was once described by its founder, Rudolf Steiner, as follows:

It is a path of knowledge, to guide the Spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe.

It arises in human beings as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need.

We WELCOME original articles, poetry, reports, commentary, and images that have a relationship to the Anthroposophical work in our region.

Deadline for submissions, including Calendar items, is the 15th of the month prior to the next month of publication.

Submissions may be sent via email to berkshiretaconicbranch@gmail.com.

Calendar items should be sent to **both** the branch email **and** Rich Lumma, richlumma@gmail.com.

No email? Please call the editor.

Items selected for publication may be edited for style, content, and/or length.

Editor: John Scott Legg, 392-0214; **Original Art Work:** Ella Lapointe; **Calendar:** Rich Lumma, 392-2012;

Treasurer: Michael Lapointe; **Shipping & Handling:** Katy Lince;

Additional Coordinating Group members: Diane Barnes, John Barnes, Caroline Gordon, Leland Lehrman, Robert Oelhaf, Jordan Walker, Dr. Basil Williams.

COORDINATING GROUP MEETINGS ARE LISTED IN THE CALENDAR AND ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE LIFE OF OUR BRANCH IS WARMLY INVITED TO ATTEND.

Chanticleer

*Newsletter of the Berkshire-Taconic Branch
of the Anthroposophical Society*

**P.O. Box 521
Philmont, New York 12565**

NOVEMBER 2015