

The "Rise Up!" Conference in Phoenix, Arizona

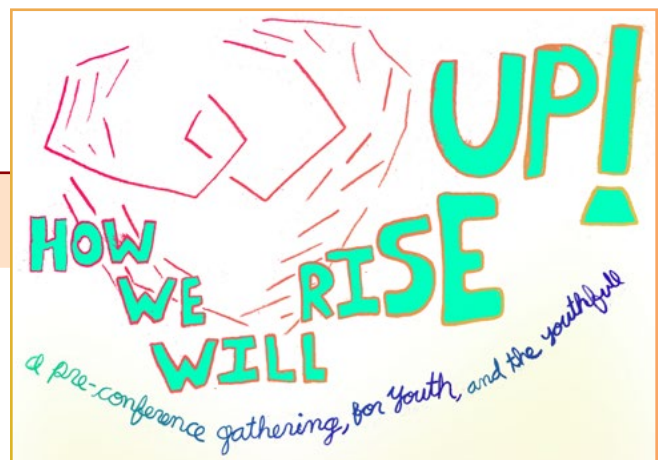
Friends from across the country and the Southwest gathered in this remarkable city at the edge of the Sonoran Desert for our annual fall gathering. The Desert Marigold School and the Heard Museum provided exceptional contexts for our work. These pages share reports and photographs from many individuals.

Overview: Daniel Bittleston Western Regional Council

If you went to a conference that aimed to give you new and renewed connections, a sense of community, and a resounding courageous yes to the world, to the work and ideas Rudolf Steiner has inspired, and to the mission of mankind, how would you decide how successful it was? A challenge! Here we go:

This conference began most auspiciously with an awe-inspiring pre-conference presentation on Wednesday and Thursday by the star-wise storyteller Mary Stewart Adams guiding an enthusiastic audience through "The Deeds of Rudolf Steiner Written in the Stars." At the same time, an impressive gathering of young people explored potential activities under the title "How We Will Rise Up!"

Friday morning in the spacious auditorium of the Heard Museum of Native Cultures and Art a gathering of probably fifty members of the School of Spirit



tual Science heard a gentle, loving, and deeply serious reading of Rudolf Steiner's Seventh Lesson by Marijo Rogers, followed by conversation.

After a warm welcome from our new program director Laura Scappaticci, who graciously maintained continuity and timing throughout the conference, we were led into some lovely, lively singing by Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter Teri DeSario. John Bloom's welcoming remarks opened a deep historical background, then activist Shepha Vainstein of reGeneration, under the title "To Humanize Instead of Demonize: Embodying the Sophia During Times

of Social Crisis,” shared extraordinary work with childhood trauma she has initiated in the Mideast. New scientific understanding finds depression, heart disease, and diabetes are all related to adverse childhood experiences, and she reminded us that Rudolf Steiner founded Waldorf education for children still traumatized by the First World War.

The whole conference breathed with a rich alternation of presentations, artistic activity, and conversation—far too much to be shared here. Just one or two moments have to be mentioned. Individuals stepped into the shoes of prisoners and read their words in a moving evening of Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Poetry. A hundred people were led



Cover artwork courtesy Eduardo Yi

by indomitable speech artist Kim Snyder Vine to recite the entire Foundation Stone Meditation, bringing it to life, line by line, then speaking it at an amazing artistic-social event “Rock, River, Sun and Sky” Saturday evening. And in a youth led panel discussion entitled “Rise

Up! The Future Isn’t What It Used To Be!” we heard the startling stories of young people plumbing depths of despair and hopelessness, then finding their feet with the help of wonderful people in anthroposophy.

We were entertained and challenged by lively eurythmy indoors and out, led by the irrepressible Rachel Schmid, who teaches First through Twelfth Grades at



John Bloom leads applause for the planning group, from right: Micky Leach, Daniel Evaeus, Charlie Burkam, Laura Scappaticci, Ray Manacas

the nearby Desert Marigold School (charter Waldorf). Many other wonderful people shared their skills and insights in classes and research sessions. Throughout, we could choose sunshine or shady spots for numerous heartwarming conversations with new and old friends, and just when we needed it most, a buffet of delicious nutritious food appeared in the hall.

A memorable and inspiring conference for which our grateful thanks go to many members, especially the planners: Charlie Burkam, Executive Director of Desert Marigold School, Daniel Evaeus of Elderberries, Los Angeles, Micky Leach of the Western Regional Council, Ray Manacas of Threefold Educational Center, Spring Valley, NY, Laura Scappaticci, ASA Programs Director;—and of course to Joan Treadaway, President of the Arizona Manzanita Branch and probably inspirer of this whole event!

(Pictured, left-to-right: Joan Treadaway, Teri DeSario, Marijo Rogers, Laura Scappaticci.)



Some participants’ thoughts on “what was most valuable”:

Great conversations with so many good people. Helping to shape some of the elements.

The active parts of the Conference, e.g., Form Drawing, Eurythmy, singing.

Everything was valuable so together it was a full experience.

The joy of the new relationships; an earnest effort to make space for a lot of different voices.

The intention to bring new life into the conference was palpable.

I was very nourished by the First Class reading. We crave nourishment at these gatherings!

Meeting new friends, other anthroposophists! So much like a festival this year!

Friday, October 13, 2017 — Conference Events

- 9:30 - 11:30 School for Spiritual Science Class Lesson and Discussion
- 10:00 - 1:00 Docent Tours of Museum
- 1:00 Welcome and Introduction to Conference
Singing with Teri DeSario
- 1:45 - 2:45 Keynote Discussion with Shepha Vainstein of reGeneration
*“To Humanize Instead of Demonize: Embodying the Sophia
During Times of Social Crisis”*



Knights Templar Seal

Opening thoughts, AGM 2017:

John Bloom, General Secretary, Anthroposophical Society in America

October 13 & the Knights Templar

It would be impossible for me to open this gathering without saying something about the Knights Templar, as it is October 13. That date in 1307 was the day that King Philip IV of France had some of the Templars arrested on false charges of heresy as part of his campaign to eliminate the order and abscond with their accumulated wealth to pay for his wars. There is quite a lot written about this if you are interested.

The Templars had both esoteric and exoteric functions. Their research, to put it in simple terms, was to study the wisdom of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem—whatever form that wisdom took, be it the mystical mathematics of the architecture itself, or the grail that the temple may have contained. The exoteric task that they took on was to protect the pilgrims from Europe traveling to Jerusalem. As foreigners on a spiritual mission, they often carried their wealth with them and were subject to highway robbery. The Templars performed two tasks, the actual physical protection of the travelers and the protection of their gold and other valuable assets. The latter they did by exchanging the gold for credit notes which could be exchanged for proportional value in gold along the way. In essence they developed an early banking system. Over time the Templars built up quite an extensive asset base through gifts of appreciation, lands, and residual treasury. Such was the trust that people placed in the Knights themselves and the tenets of the Order.

A destruction of trust

When King Philip rounded up the Templar leaders, he in essence was eliminating the foundation of that trust which was engendered through the Order's selfless esoteric practices—as embodied in the quality of service, accompaniment, and protection that they provided. Philip's motivation was greed driven by debt and the violence of war. I think of this day, October 13, as one important historical moment when a truly healing charitable social impulse in finance—I think a condition that we would all prefer to see in operation today—was sacrificed to the shadow forces of power, control of resources, and greed. So we continue to live with the consequences manifested in 1307.

Working across the threshold

Since I have started my remarks with an important historical reference, I would like to encourage all of us as members and friends of the Anthroposophical Society to work with those who have crossed the threshold of death. If we can be interested in them, and artistic enough in our expression of that interest, then they are longing to help us. I include in this group those who have directly formed us in one way or another, as well as ancestors and allies. We would not be here without them. We would not know what we know. We would not feel the draw of destiny on our lives. And, we would be well served to recognize and remember the suffering and privilege that are present in the world with us as we meet.

An inner phoenix

The work of—your work at—this AGM is engagement, to meet together, to be in real conversation with each other, and to discover how much of the rest of the world is present or absent through those encounters. Practicing love and forgiveness as

we meet, and testing our capacity for meeting the other through recognition and interest are, I hope, guideposts for what will unfold during our time here together. We will know something of this has transpired if we leave on Sunday inspired and refreshed—what we could call *an inner Phoenix rising up*.

Keynote: “To Humanize Instead of Demonize...” Shepha Vainstein, reGeneration

Shepha spoke first of a small space in Jerusalem where sacred sites of three religions stand only steps apart. She then wove esoteric questions and personal life experience, ancient ritual and self-development, insights from Rudolf Steiner and social awakening of concern for the child. She told how a meeting with the right person opened a path then launched with a generous grant from the Los Angeles Branch of the Anthroposophical Society, becoming “reGeneration.” Here is her reflection on key aspects of the talk.

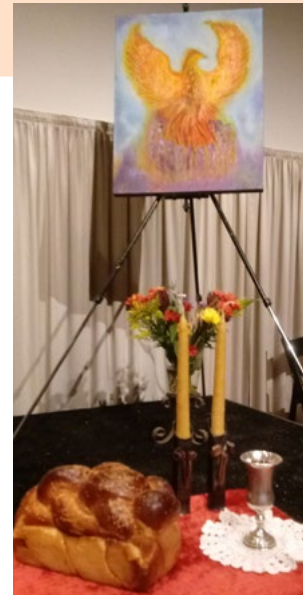
Service to the evolution of consciousness

The current research on the identification, personal and social impact, and treatment of trauma, coupled with the emphasis on new social forms of communication based on empathy, is the spiritual world helping us find ways to dissolve rigid structures within our astral bodies and purify those astral bodies so we can better receive impulses from the spiritual world. Using knowledge that arises from research on trauma and empathy, we can find ways to work together to be in service for the evolution of consciousness on the planet. This comes not a moment too soon as increasing natural disasters occur—both through war and climate change—that will impact many generations of people, leaving a legacy of civil strife and destruction of our earth’s resources.

Greatest impact: the earliest years

In view of all this, it is being recognized that we can make the strongest impact through the new field of trauma-informed education and early childhood development. The world community understands the significance: the United Nations and Yale University initiated the Early Childhood Peace Consortium in recognition that children and families can play a major role in promoting positive social change.

Scientific research in that field has validated many of Rudolf Steiner’s key indications. In *Kingdom of Childhood* he described children as being fantastically delicate to impressions—as when one pokes a finger into “finely sifted flour” leaving an indentation in the flour. The Harvard University Center on the Developing Child has now outlined current scientific research showing the critical influence that the environment plays on the child’s growing brain architecture, physiology, and responses to the world.



A shabbat table setting was prepared on stage for Shepha Vainstein’s keynote.

Lasting effects of abuse

Elsewhere Steiner made statements meaning in today’s terms that abuse of children when they are young will impact their physical health as adults. These were radical assertions at that time when corporeal punishment was recognized as a sign of good parenting! In the 1990s Kaiser Permanente and the Center for Disease Control began the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, one of the largest investigations of childhood abuse and neglect and later-life health and well-being. This study found that ACE’s are strongly correlated to the development of risk factors for disease and well-being throughout life.

Adverse childhood experiences may also include household dysfunction such as witnessing domestic violence or growing up with family members who have substance use disorders. Social scientists are now wid-



This drawing was made by a Syrian refugee this past summer when reGeneration sent a team of Israelis and Palestinians to give “microtrainings” to teachers working with refugee children from Syria, Afghanistan, and the Congo at an educational center in Lesbos, Greece. The teachers themselves are refugees. Originally the Los Angeles Branch made a large grant to our work in Palestine called “Protecting the Spirit of Childhood.” This developed into a conference in Jerusalem on educating children in crisis zones, “Nurturing the Spirit of Childhood in Times of Toxic Stress.” This summer the impulse developed into the Spirit of Childhood movement where Salman, the Syrian refugee who drew this picture, now helps teach drawing to others.

ening the understanding of ACEs to include social and historical trauma as experienced by Native American, African-American, and Latino communities.

How the Sophia arms us

I believe that the research on child development plus the new emphasis on empathy in social and emotional intelligence are “weapons” given to us by the Sophia to help us protect and nurture children as we face the 21st century’s massive challenges. Through its work in the Middle East and networking with urban educational communities here in the US, reGeneration is working to help identify, highlight, and disseminate best educational practices for children growing up with toxic stress, and ultimately to promote the knowledge and tools to create wholesome environments for children. This is one of the key interventions we can do for humanity to help promote the evolution of consciousness on this planet.

On the keynote: *Amazing, clear, intelligent. She is committed and courageous. A shining example of deeply anthroposophic work, open and inclusive, that interfaces with the world and addresses deep needs of our times. Inspiring, powerful speaker, highly current work.*

Friday, October 13, 2017 — Conference Events

- 3:00 - 4:15 Collaboration Panel with Arizona Region and Friends
“Faithfulness and Inclusion-Foundations for Collaboration”
- 4:15 - 5:00 Group Speech with Kim Snyder Vine
- 5:00 - 6:00 General Council & Leadership Team Presentation

Dave Alsop Incoming Council Chair

This AGM felt to me like a real opening out to the wider world by those gathered there. The wide-open vistas of the Phoenix landscape combined with the beauty and presence of the Heard Museum and all that it represents seemed to me to foster a new sense of place, both in space and time. And the times are very challenging. The presentations, and artistic and social activities at this conference, strongly supported the theme of the youth-led panel, “Rise Up, The Future Isn’t What It



Used To Be!” It was innovative, creative, and deeply moving, and a real step in our addressing the question “Well then, what is the future?” Intergenerational, focused on the true nature of the human being, humanized and not demonized, interdependent and awake...



Arizonans (L-R) Amy Bird, Peter Rennick, Chris Allen, Joan Treadway talk about the experience of working together across such a large and diverse state.

On the Arizona Collaboration Panel:

I was inspired by the Arizona group who are sensitive to the grief of the indigenous people, and who stand behind the initiatives in the whole state. Faithfulness, collaboration and inclusion have become a motto for me now. Really inspiring, their collaboration with one another is huge. I'm spurred on to create a similar initiative back home.



Retiring Council Chair Carla Comey introduces the General Council and Leadership Team for the Friday reports. On Saturday morning members responded with questions.

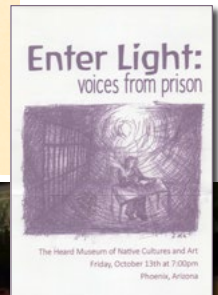
On the ASA Report & Open Discussion:

A wonderful picture of moving forward, changing of the guard, and appreciation for what has been done. Council report was warm and helped us understand their work. Presenting ASA work throughout the conference provides more focus on the Society and its process.

Friday, October 13, 2017 — Conference Events

6:00 - 7:00 Dinner Reception and Social in the Courtyard

7:00 - 9:00 Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Poetry



Participants (next page) spoke brief life stories and poems of prisoners for the Friday evening Anthroposophical Prison Outreach event **Enter Light: voices from prison**

Anthroposophical Prison Outreach: Enter Light: Very real and very moving. Powerful, so important. Thank you for bringing these voices to life and to light.

*from Hazel Archer-Ginsberg
Rudolf Steiner Branch Chicago & Central Regional Council*

Hazel’s full account is at “Reverse Ritual—Understanding Anthroposophy Through the Rhythms of the Year”: [<http://reverseritual.com/the-gate-is-opened/>].

Cynthia Trevillion: ‘Life as a Labor of Love’

All through the dinner reception my phone was “blowing up” with reports. But it was during the Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Poetry that it was confirmed: Cynthia Trevillion, long time teacher at the Chicago Waldorf School, had been killed, shot in the head and neck by a stray bullet. She was walking with her husband



John, also a teacher at CWS, to meet friends for dinner. The Trevillions were always hosting AWSNA colleagues, since they live around the corner from the Chicago Waldorf School. Only four blocks from home they were caught in gang crossfire. Someone in a black SUV opened fire on two young men standing on the street near the CTA’s Morse & Glenwood Red Line station. Just 30 minutes before Cynthia’s death, a fifteen-year-old boy was also shot a few blocks away.

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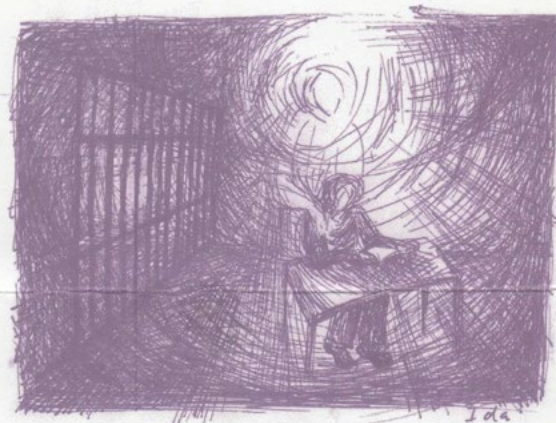
To announce this news after hearing the poetry from the APO program, some on death-row for murder, was significant. Together then we did the Hallelujah in eurythmy, which we continued to offer throughout the conference.

We pondered the hidden karma of this “perfect storm,” the auspicious date [related to the Knights Templar], the connection between these seemingly unrelated individualities. Was Cynthia helping these young men in death as she had helped her students in life? Why the head and neck? What could this mean for her next life? And what of her death stars? The particular cosmic configuration at the time of her passing held the dramatic picture of a pre-dawn alignment of Regulus, the “Kingly Star” at the heart of Leo the Lion, sitting in the upturned chalice of the waning crescent moon, with Venus and Mars on the horizon!

So much to contemplate, as we send Cynthia our love in her journey now in the life between death and a new birth. This is a big part of the practical work

of anthroposophy, to connect the living with the ‘so-called-dead’—to enter the spiritual world consciously, taking to heart the words heard on the morning of Friday the 13th, October 2017, from the Guardian of the Threshold: “*The Gate is Opened.*”

Enter Light: voices from prison



Emceed by Frank Agrama

- Introduction Kathy Serafin
- *Speak to the Earth* by Kenneth Foster Mason Howerton
- *What if I Died in Prison?* by Chuck Oliver Nathaniel Williams
- *Dear Mama* by JW Johnson Patricia Rubano
- *Shadow of the Bars* by Ron Robinson Chester Davidson
- My Awakening* by Ron Robinson
- *War between Brothers* by Santiago Soto Marianne Fieber-Dhara
- *If All were Now Perfect* by Alexis Osborn Daniel Evaeus
- *Star Twins* by Shannon Hindman Destiny Nolen
- *Out of the Soul* by Mark Robertson Rick Ruffin
- When it’s at Your Door* by Mark Robertson
- *Land of Sorrow* by Silas Kanady Joan Newton
- Penitentiary Pen* by Silas Kanady
- *The Artist Within* by Myron Stebbins Frank Agrama
- Revolution* by Myron Stebbins
- *The Truth has Set Me Free* by Dushaan Gillum Kait Ziegler
- Never Alone* by Dushaan Gillum
- *Darkness is but for a Moment* by Ruben Berrios Gail Langstroth

Saturday, October 14, 2017 — Conference Events

8:30 - 9:15 Eurythmy with Rachel Schmid (Encanto Room)
or Singing with Teri DeSario (Steele Auditorium)

9:30 - 10:30 Youth Led Panel: “*Rise Up! The Future Isn’t What It Used To Be*”

10:30 - 11:15 Group Speech with Kim Snyder-Vine

11:30 - 12:30 Concurrent, Please Choose One:

*Rising To Our Star Together: A
Conversation With the General
Council (Open to ASA Members)*

Steele Auditorium

*“Love Stories” A Biography
Workshop with Lee Sturgeon Day*

Encanto Room

12:30 - 2:00 Lunch (Look for Open Topic Sign Up Sheets!)



The panel for “*Rise Up! The Future Isn’t What It Used To Be*” (L-R): Daniel Eveaus, Destiny Nolan, Angela Foster, Chris DeRusse, Nathaniel Williams.

Dwight Ebaugh Council Member & Secretary

I share the feeling of “community” that I experienced during the youth-led discussion, *Rise Up! The Future Isn’t What It Used To Be*. By “community” I mean a falling away of the usual barriers to honest heartfelt communication, a feeling with another person that mutual understanding is occurring, a grasp of the truth that each one of us bears deep wounds and has struggled at times in this incarnation. That feeling of “community” was strong in me as I listened to the young persons. They revealed their dark sides. They spoke of their addictions, their asocial behav-

On the Youth Facilitated Panel:

WOW! Enlivening, engaging, exciting. Youth contributions are improving our AGMs. Touching. Good points brought. So glad it wasn’t pushed to the end. An important impulse to nurture. The younger members are amazing and we’d all like to support them. Very personal experiences delivered in an inspiring, powerful way. Their presence brings hope for the Society.

ior, their anguish. But they also spoke of their immense strength—the will that allowed them to Rise Up! Thanks to Rudolf Steiner, anthroposophy was and is there for these young people.

Saturday, October 14, 2017 — Conference Events

2:00 - 3:00 Concurrent, Please Choose One:

Spirit of Money with John Bloom
Steele Auditorium

*From Form Drawing to World Peace
with Laura Embrey*
Encanto Room

3:15 - 4:15. Concurrent, Please Choose One:

*Communicating Anthroposophy
with John Beck*
Steele Auditorium

*Rising Up With the Wandering
Stars with Mary Adams*
Encanto Room



Lee Sturgeon Day: Love Stories

*Lee did an excellent job, made me ponder.
She used the short time beautifully, and left
us activities to take up.
Inspiring. Lovely to be able to hear everyone
around the circle.*

John Bloom: Spirit & Money

*Powerful just to hear the questions that
came up in the spirit and money workshop
spoken out loud.
Getting down to work with the issues at
hand.
Experienced this in LA, found it excellent.
Very interesting, would like to hear more.*

John Beck: Communicating Anthroposophy

*The topic carried him, a very good question.
I'm mesmerized by how John Beck explains
the anthroposophical paradigm in
contemporary terms and mindsets.*

Mary Stewart Adams:

Rising Up With the Wandering Stars

*Fast and engaging. Her enthusiasm carried
us through the cosmos and back to earth.
Pre-conference was superb, helped get us off
on the right mood.
So pleased to hear individual research,
well- expressed, objective, clearly based in
anthroposophy.
The stars presentation was awesome but
it showed me how much I needed to learn
about the topic.*

Laura Embrey: Form Drawing

*Just the handout is beautiful.
I totally enjoyed the interactive presentation
and hearing about her work.
Great information. Many Aha moments.
Wonderful. I really like doing something, this
was very worthwhile.*



Saturday, October 14, 2017 — Conference Events

4:30 - 6:00 Participant Research & Initiative Sessions

Steele Auditorium

4:30– Andrew Linnell:
Realizing Mechanical
Occultism in America

4:55– Eve Olive: *Poems of
Birth, Poems of Earth
and A Fairy Tale for our
Time – Selections from
A Poetry Performance*

5:20– Marke Levene: *The
Development of a New
Mystery Drama*

5:45– Gail Langstroth: *From
a Poet-Eurythmist’s
Laboratory: firegarden
/jardín de fuego*

Encanto Room

4:30– Kirk Mills:
Introduction to
the **Viva la Vida
Foundation**

4:55– David Tressemer:
*A New Psychology
Inspired by
Anthroposophy*

5:20– Tom Altgelt: *Inner
Development and the
Life Cycle of a Plant*

5:45– Charlie Burkam:
Indigenous Wisdom

Steele Auditorium North Foyer

4:30– Frank Dauenhaur:
*The Three Folding
Work of CFAE and
the Mysteries of
Technology*

4:55– Helena Hurrell:
*Metal Color Light
Therapy ~ A New
Anthroposophical
Initiative*

5:20– Lynn Stull: *Becoming
a Spirit of Freedom
and Love through the
forces of Sympathy
and Antipathy*

Lynn Stull’s talk about death was illuminating. It was apparent she has done this work from a deeply authentic and devoted place.

Marianne Fieber-Dhara Central Region Council Member

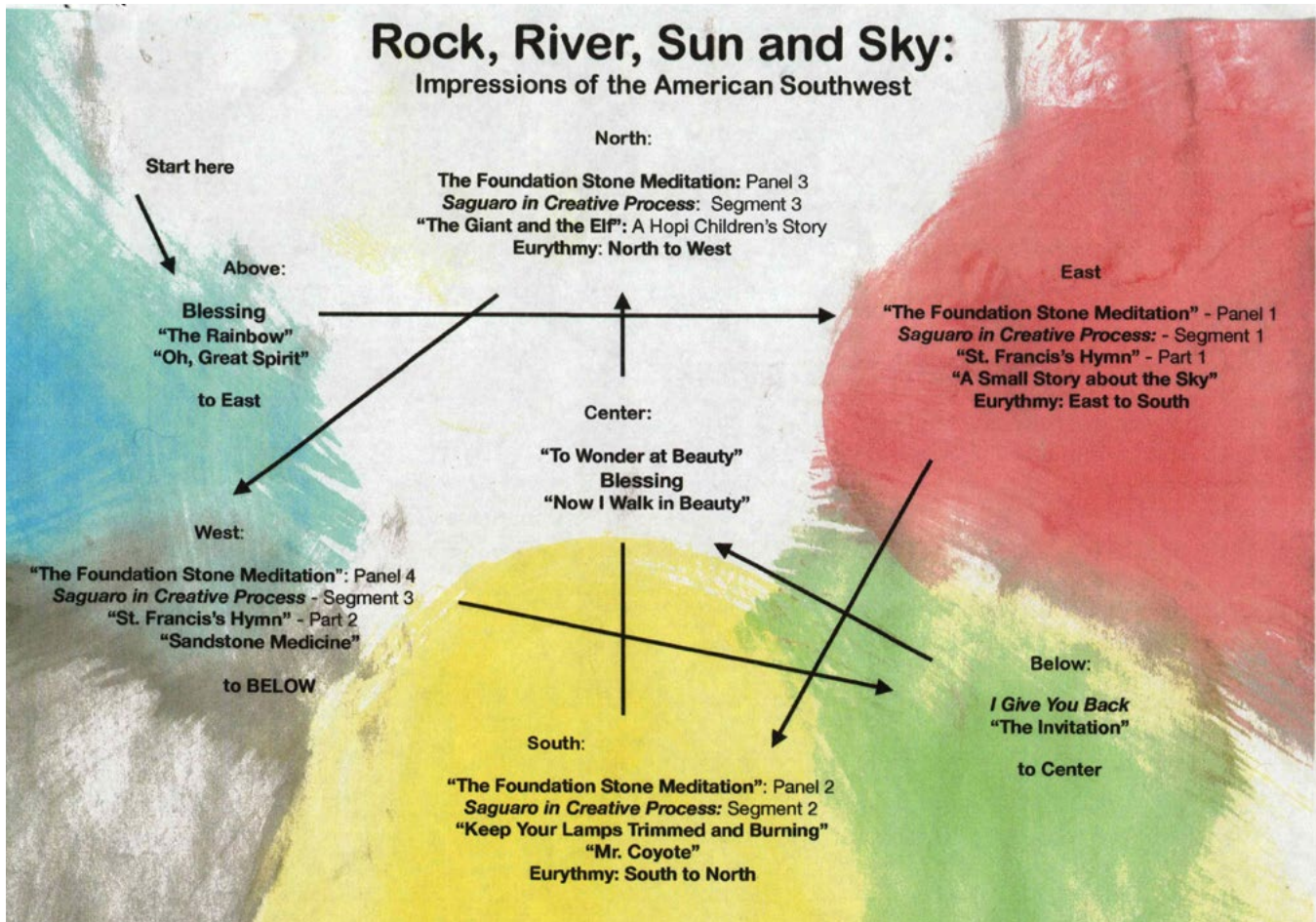
I could feel the intention built into this event, of opening the door and welcoming all voices to share their work. The Saturday Participant Research and Initiative sessions allowed eleven members and their initiatives working out of inspirations from Anthroposophy to be brought forward and shared with those assembled. This led to an experience I had that all those taking up the work, from wherever they are, have much to offer—it isn’t a chosen few—and thus the world is richer for all the contributions. Rise Up! How is your life a labor of love?



Saturday, October 14, 2017 — Conference Events

6:00-7:30 Dinner (Sit with your region or interest group)

7:30-8:45 *Rock, Wind, Earth and Sky: Impressions of Arizona*
with Teri DeSario and Friends



Response to *Rock, Wind, Earth and Sky: Impressions of the American Southwest*

This evening will live on and on with me.

An extraordinary experience that I count a blessing and gift to carry with me.

Beautiful and moving. Beyond my expectations. Left me speechless. Thank you, thank you.

Fabulous work, amazing. The Blessing was so good, so important, and that we could all join in in some way. Outstanding! Really appreciate the inclusion and theme of the indigenous people and the inclusive participation.

There are not words enough to express my gratitude—what a true 'festival' can be.

Teri DeSario's voice is still ringing inside my soul with her performance of 'I Give You Back' and every other piece was wonderful and beautifully orchestrated.

Altogether it was a wonderful blend of ceremony, performance, participation and witnessing. The eurythmist was fabulous, the storytelling, all of it!

Teri was probably the best vocal teacher I have ever experienced. I couldn't believe what she got out of us in such a limited time. I was uplifted for days afterwards.

Dave Mansur
Eastern Region Council Member

The conversations I had with members I had never met before were easy and deep; we met each other on a common plane of striving and we were happy to share with each other. The artistic presentations were of the highest quality, weaving expected forms such as poetry and eurythmy with the unexpected, like short film and collage-making.

By virtue of its Phoenix location, the whole event was imbued with the Native American spiritual stream, which brought about a clearer picture of the

Western path of anthroposophy. I wish everybody could experience the weaving of the Foundation Stone Meditation with Native American blessings.

The spirit of “Rise Up!” expressed itself in the basic question that we all seemed to carry: “How can we put our spiritual knowledge to work in the world so that its healing power may be released.” This question was answered in part by the strong presence of the Youth Section and our incarcerated members.



Sunday, October 15, 2017 – Conference Events

- 8:30 - 9:15 Eurythmy with Rachel Schmid (Encanto Room)
or Singing with Teri DeSario (Steele Auditorium)
- 9:30 - 11:00 Group Activity: *What's Anthroposophy's next labor of love?*
(Buffet Brunch at 10:00)
- 11:00 - 12:30 Sunday Plenum
- 12:30 - 1:00 Speech with Kim Snyder-Vine
- 2:00 - 3:30 Post Session with Andrew Linnell:
*For the Rest of Earthly Evolution: The Welding Together
of Mankind with Machines*



Speech artist Kim Snyder-Vine

Nathaniel Williams
Council Member at large

Looking back on the annual general meeting and conference this year what stands out are all the elements of the gathering where the regional life of Arizona came to expression. Two distinct moments most of all.

One was the panel when long-standing members of the society spoke about the present and past work, cultivating anthroposophy and supporting initiatives. We heard how over past decades, literally a very few people would regularly drive hundreds of miles to gather and work together. The life of anthroposophical work in Arizona today testifies to this dedication, interest, and the good will to work together.

In a strange way this impression of will power and dedication seemed to resonate with the very land-

scape and the city, a metropolis in a desert. Just walking the streets inspired a kind of awe for the forcefulness and dedication such an achievement required, along with the question, “Can this be sustained?”

This was complimented by a second moment, when a series of blessings and songs from Native American tradition were offered as part of the gathering. They were carried by a spirit of humility and reverence, a sensitivity for the frailty of life and the utter interdependence of humans and the natural and spiritual world they are embedded in. This sentiment also reverberated in the harsh and dry surroundings in which we met and worked. It really woke an interest in the character of all the other branches and groups in the USA, this vast, vast place.

At the end our hearts are full and open...



from *Deb Abrahams-Dematte*
Director of Development

The closing activity, led by members Angela Foster and Amy Bird, was social, joyful, and gave conference attendees yet another opportunity to connect and learn about one another and our collective efforts. Tables were set with glue sticks, magazines, and scissors. Instructions to make both a personal heart-shaped collage and a group one, using the materials

provided. All around the room people chatted and flipped through the pages, sharing their thoughts about the future and what anthroposophy means to them. Leading questions such as “Who is not at this table and should be?” and “How can anthroposophy make a difference in the future?” guided our art and our conversation.

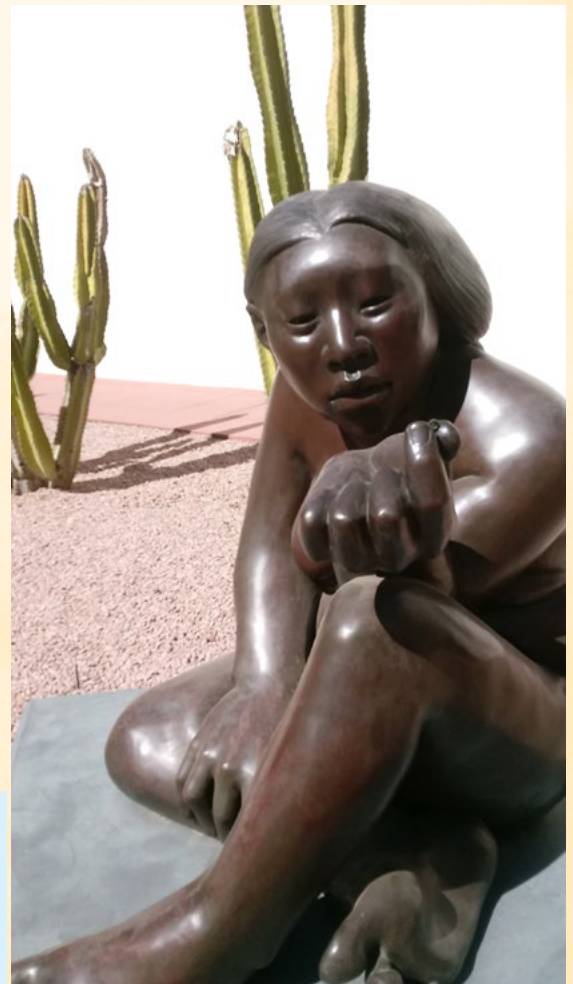


Who would have imagined such a “corny” activity could be such a great culmination of the profound work undertaken that weekend? The sense of play without pressure was expansive and truly opened up my heart to everyone. Nice way to link it all and wrap up.

The conference location, the Heard Museum, was a constant inspiration...

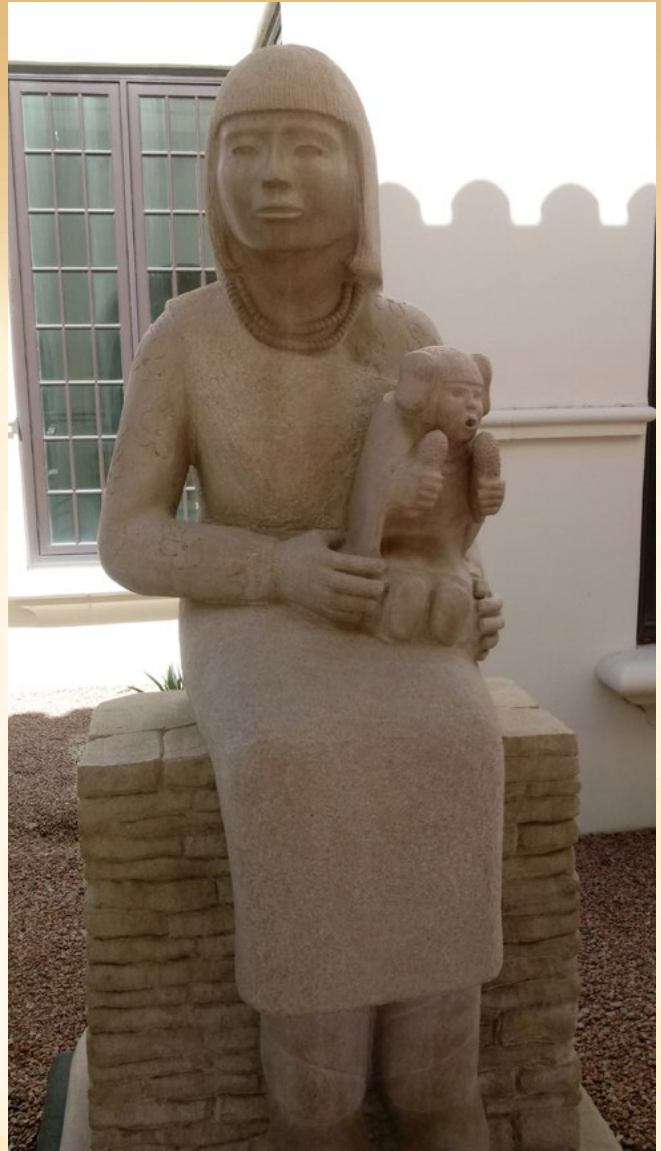


Meeting at a museum was brilliant. The arts are so important to anthroposophy. Every space was infused with spirit (because of the Muses/museum).

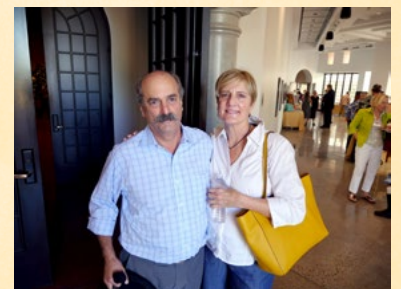
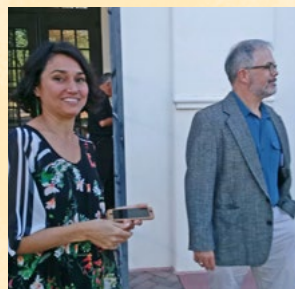
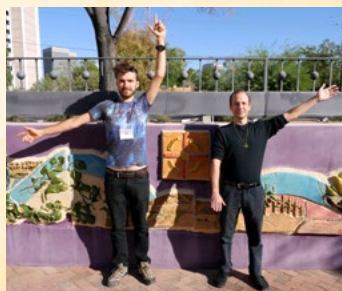
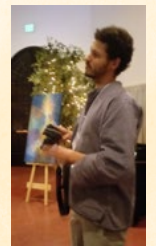
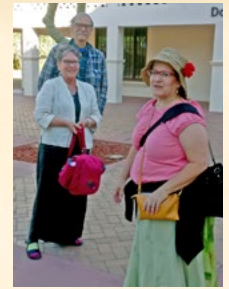


On the Heard Museum:
Wonderful art, beautiful environment altogether. Loved supporting a museum, such a nurturing place. A sacred space. Ensouled.

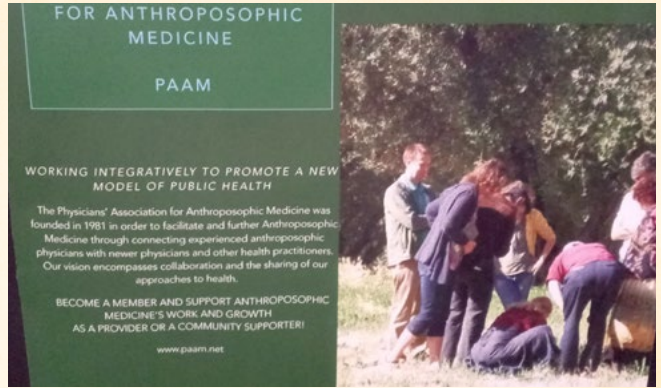
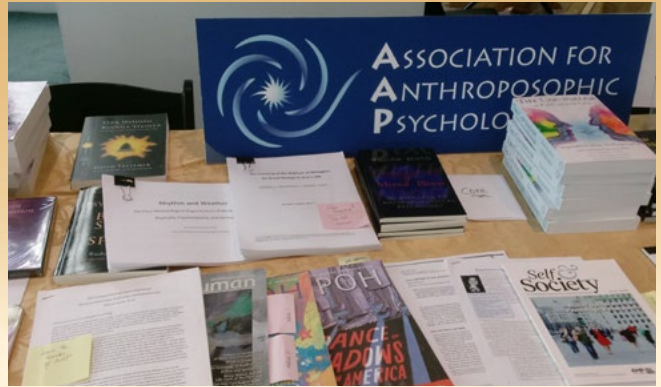
An enduring creative spirit has a presence in this place...



What is a "society" but people we are glad to meet with...



The welcome table and displays: beauty and meaning all around us...



Exhibitor Tables: *Better than excellent. I gained the most from those I met and visited. It was lovely to have them.*

THOUGHTS ON THE CONFERENCE OVERALL:

A great conference it was and I felt it was very "worth it." Wonderful on many levels.

A powerful and positive meeting with so many uplifting souls.

Three days that flew by. I made great connections with people.

Thank you! How can I help?

Appreciated your sharing of study material.

Beautiful breathing throughout.

Not to be missed. (I was never able to say that before.) Deep gratitude.

Great opportunities for social interaction—that was the strength of the conference.

Great organizing, great speakers, great museum, great food!! Great weather.

Such a powerful event.

I am so grateful for the steering committee (esp Ray) who has guided the AGM so well.

Making opportunities to meet each other is so important. Warm & loving & hitch-free.

Very very good conversations with people!

I was amazed by the overall warmth.

Coming together is food for the soul!

Starting to feel like my family reunion.

It seems the Council is doing a good job and Laura S. is a breath of fresh air.

It was a wonderful conference and left me with a renewed sense of community.

It was great that young and old people came together. It was as if a new spirit was creating a new atmosphere for the future.

Just plain uplifting.

Dear Friends,

We are so glad you have joined us here at the Heard Museum in Phoenix.

Why do we gather each year? To bolster our connection to each other and the spiritual world. To meet new friends and old. To be inspired by the stories of change-makers, wise elders, and the next generation.

Most of all, we know that when we gather, the spiritual world notices that we are thoughtfully working together, and pays attention, gets curious! Our theme of inner and outer change points to goals for which we need help: a humane future where compassion, solidarity, love are the growing gestures from each of us.

May your time here lead to new and renewed connections, a sense of community, and a resounding courageous yes to the world, to the work and ideas Rudolf Steiner has inspired, and to the mission of humankind.

Warm wishes,

~ Charlie Burkam, Daniel Evaeus, Micky Leach, Ray Manacas, Laura Scappaticci

Thanks to the authors for reports, participants for comments, and for photographs to Frank Aleph Agrama, Marianne Fieber-Dhara, Hazel Archer-Ginsberg, Laura Scappaticci, and Deb Abrahams-Dematte.