

Some additions to the quotes used by Roland Halfen during his lecture at the Visual Arts Section Conference May 2015 (and May 2016), at the Goetheanum.

Having heard Roland Halfen give the opening lecture ‘Sense and Sense Experience as the Source of Art’ at the 2015 May Conference, I did some research into the sources of the quotes from Rudolf Steiner’s lectures that he used on that occasion. I felt that a fuller context, expanding the somewhat isolated short quotes, was needed to appreciate Rudolf Steiner’s line of thought. Also, whilst acknowledging R.Halfen’s impressive attempt to shed light on questions surrounding contemporary art in relation to anthroposophical art, I felt that R.Steiner’s standpoint towards art was not fully acknowledged leaving a rather one-sided picture. Studying the quotes in context show for the most part how closely they relate to the impulses R.Steiner himself was attempting to bring into the world – not essentially to any other streams of art past or present. I have quoted R.Steiner in other contexts as well to try to bridge the one-sidedness. But this attempt remains an incomplete study of the questions raised in R.Halfen’s lecture.

For this article to make sense familiarity with R.Halfen’s lecture (printed in English in the last Visual Art Section Newsletter from Dornach) is, of course, a prerequisite as R.Halfen’s relevant comments have, for the most part, not been included. I can email the lecture if any one requests it.

The page numbers given here are from the cycles of lectures in German.

Quote 1

Lecture of 17 Feb. 1918 in GA 271, Kunst und Kunsterkenntnis. Grundlagen einer neuen Ästhetik. *Art and Aesthetics. Foundations for new Epistemology of Art.*

Rudolf Steiner gave two lectures on the same subject and with the same title: Das Sinnlich-Übersinnliche in seiner Verwirklichung durch die Kunst. *The Sensible - Supersensible and its Realization through Art*, on 15 Feb. and on 17 Feb. 1918.

In this complicated twenty-page lecture he discusses deeper questions of art, of artistic creation and of art appreciation. The sentence quoted by Roland Halfen comes toward the end of this lecture.

“(…) I believe that art must continually advance along with our generally advancing life of soul.”

R.Halfen:

“He (R.Steiner) is not speaking here, either, of a specifically anthroposophic art, but of art as such; nor is the expression ‘advance’ employed in the naïve sense in which all development is seen as an improvement on the past. Instead he uses the word initially in the sense of change and transformation.”

In context the quote reads:

“In my earlier lecture on the same theme I tried to link my thoughts, developed here before you about the sensible-supersensible and its realization through art, to various ideas of Goethe’s. This was held against me and I see now that it is possible to speak on the theme without making a connection to Goethe. One gets such reproaches when linking up to Goethe because people, who think they have come near to Goethe and quote something they have not understood, feel able to find shortcomings in those who have taken the trouble to penetrate the matter. One can understand such a thing, it is a natural process in human life and one should really be pleased when what one says meets with such an opinion. One can even feel that if one were to get a positive response to what one says, one must have said something foolish and unnecessary. What I have avoided up until now I will at least bring at the very end of the lecture. I do believe that whoever approaches Goethe’s way of looking at things with understanding will find it in what was presented today. Even the expression sensible-

supersensible is taken from Goethe. And I do believe, although in a certain sense it is right for those to whom art reveals her secrets to have a pronounced antipathy for intellectual aesthetic criticism, that art can actually only be spoken about from the standpoint of life and most importantly heard from the artists themselves. Indeed in this regard one can make some remarkable discoveries. Artists generally speaking have nothing good to say about what other artists produce and when the artist's work sometimes gives pleasure, the opposite is sometimes true regarding what they say about their work, and this is because they sometimes harbour illusions about their own work. Yet the artist has to create out of illusions, and this could be precisely the right thing and give the right impulse for his artistic work. Still, after acknowledging all that and understanding that the artist is somewhat sensitive to intellectual-aesthetic concepts being forced upon them, I do not believe that it is totally unnecessary to have concepts about art, in accordance with feeling. **I believe that art must continually advance along with our generally advancing life of soul.** I believe just by considering the sensible-supersensible, how it forms itself through the suppressed vision, how it comes to meet us from outer nature when we free what in outer nature has been cast in a spell, that art can resolve nature's riddle in a supersensible way. In this sense I would like to conclude with this beautiful discerning maxim (of Goethe's) as a summing up of today's considerations: *To whom Nature begins to reveal her open secret feels an irresistible longing for her most worthy interpreter –Art.*”

Just before and in relation to this first quote R.Halfen says:

“The first of these aspects concerns the cultural parameter necessary here, in our case the history of art of the 20th century. As long as we do not think this is simply a history of decline (starting perhaps already with the Renaissance) but instead a deeply founded evolution of human consciousness and of all culture – which can therefore scarcely be adequately described in terms of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ – then we will regard Steiner's emphasis on the evolutionary aspects as illuminating.”

In relation to a “history of decline”, R.Steiner speaks of this fact in various connections. This is an excerpt from the Art History Lectures by Rudolf Steiner (Lecture 2. 1. Nov 1916. The Three Great Renaissance Masters):

“In our last lecture we showed the period of art which finally merged into that of the great masters of the Renaissance, and showed the connecting threads of artistic feeling which finally led up to what was so wondrously united in Leonardo, in Michelangelo and in Raphael. In these three masters of the Renaissance we find the dawning of the 5th Post Atlantean Epoch – the heralding of a new age as it expressed itself in art. (...)

Thus we find ourselves at a starting point. At the same time, however, we can regard what is exemplified as a culmination of past streams of previous epochs in these three artists, as an end point. There is little understanding in our present time of the intricacies of these factors for art has, to a certain extent, been driven out, this need not be taken as a criticism, – driven out from the general cultural-spiritual life; it is even considered a failing of the cultural-historical observer of art when art is once more given its place in the spiritual life as a whole. For it is alleged that the actual artistic element, the aesthetic, is overlooked in preference for the content, the subject matter, but this need not be the case. This distinction has only assumed such importance in our time; it had no meaning in earlier times when understanding for the artistic was more cultivated, and more present in the ordinary common sense of the people. We must consider in this respect how strongly the eradication of an understanding of the artistic element has been encouraged by all the atrocities of pictorial representations that have come before the human mind in recent times. One should not misunderstand to what extent an understanding of the “how” has diminished; a true understanding for the *manner* of

representation has been lost. In Europe the relation between the “how” and the “what” has become arbitrary, almost a matter of indifference. And so in general and in the widest circles an understanding of art has become greatly lost. (...)

In the present time, a world-conception is a collection of ideas which can, of course, be represented in sculpture or in painting and it is frequently embodied needless to say, in forms and colours and the like which to the true artistic sense will nevertheless be an atrocity. In this respect, we must to some extent utter repeated warnings, precisely within our anthroposophical stream of evolution, for a feeling for what is truly artistic is not always prevalent among us.”

And from lecture five in *Art as seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*:

“ You will see that an attempt has been made in these Mystery Plays really to show in artistic form what it is like for the soul, when it attempts to expand in the cosmic forces and to feel what the spirits of the cosmos are feeling. That was, in fact, the beginning of all art. But the materialistic age had to come, and ancient art, with its divine quality of differentiation, in which spirit was revealed in matter, had to change into secondary, materialistic, pseudo art, which the art of the materialistic age is, in essence; the kind of art which cannot create but only imitate. The sign of all secondary art, all pseudo art, is that it needs objects to imitate, and that it does not produce the form primarily out of the material.”

In the statement: “[I believe that art must continually advance along with our generally advancing life of soul](#)” I believe R.Steiner is relating, in his own subtle and modest way, to the renewal of art which was made possible by and *through* him.

In this regard a relevant passage can be found at the end of the first lecture in *Art as Seen in the Light of Mystery Wisdom* where he is speaking about a totally new impulse in art which has to come:

“(...) These are things which are not created arbitrarily by the human soul, but have to do with the innermost impulses we have to go through, because we are in the first third of the fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. *It has been, as it were ordained by the spiritual beings that guide this evolution.*” (my italics)

Rudolf Steiner’s modesty towards this new art as well his respect and understanding of artists on their individual path is described in the book *A new Impulse in Art* by Arild Rosenkranz (Arild Rosenkranz painted the middle motif in the small cupola of the first Goetheanum):

“Rudolf Steiner always spoke modestly about his own work as an artist and ever reiterated that the Goetheanum was but a small beginning. He looked for co-operation from artists to help him by their technical knowledge and experience, and one of the saddest points in connection with the loss of the old Goetheanum is that the art-world gave no assistance, no encouragement when the building was still there. He was left alone to battle for the regeneration of art, assisted by only a handful of pupils. Little or no understanding for what he arrived at was formed in those quarters where his help could bear more fruit for art. Like the work of all great pioneers, his art was ahead of his time.”

“Never could artists have come into contact with a more sympathetic advisor than Rudolf Steiner. It was a wonderful experience to submit work to his judgment. Adverse criticism he never uttered. He always looked for the merit in the work and tried to help the artists to carry further anything that contained elements, which he felt to be vital in a work of art. Whenever he looked at any attempt shown him, one felt his extraordinary respect for another person’s independence. *He never urged his point of view as an artist*, but gave suggestions, which would help one to advance further. On this account his criticisms were so especially personal

and often misleading if followed by others. One also felt that he spoke to trained artists quite differently from the way he spoke to those who had come under the spell of art through Anthroposophy. And he dealt with teachers, also, in yet another way. Artists he brought farther along the road of expression, giving them the true secret of creating within the domain of their special branch of art.” (my italics)

Quote 4

Lecture of 21 Nov. 1914 in GA 158, Der Zusammenhang des Menschen mit der elementarischen Welt. *The Connection between the Human Being and the Elemental World*. Lecture 5: Kämpfe Luzifers und Ahrimans im menschlichen Organismus. *The Battle between Lucifer and Ahriman in the Human Organism*. Pages 126,127,128

“(…) and that is the principle, you see, of the new art as opposed to the old art. These old arts were always concerned with what is present in outward space. In the new art it is not longer the concern. (...) That is, I would like to say, the key aspect of the stage of evolutionary advance in which we stand.”

R.Halfen:

„This progressive aspect of 20th century art can already be discovered in Steiner’s comments on the first Goetheanum, but at the same time also in his astonishingly radical stance towards the status of this aspect. (...)

The importance of this dictum cannot be overestimated, though of course it can be overlooked. To take it seriously means also that we radically revise the criteria with which we view and judge visual objects and the processes connected with them. Taking the example of the installations by Ilya Kabakov we can elucidate in a direct and striking way the extent to which Steiner’s indications at the beginning of the 20th century can offer a foundation for apt understanding of these works. Whereas the traditionally oriented viewer assumes that Kabakov’s installations are works in the traditional sense, in which the form of distinct objects is altered to provoke aesthetic experiences, in fact Kabakov uses daily objects that have previously been used and utilised.“

This quote comes from a lecture in which Rudolf Steiner describes the Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces in the left and right sides of the human being. He goes on to describe the most essential thing about the forms of the Goetheanum building: the forms themselves are not important but the space between and around them. If one took a huge lump of wax, RS says, and made an impression of the inside of the building one would get the right feeling - through observing the imprint - for what the building is about. The principle of the building can be approached by way of the image of the ‘Gugelhupf’ and the ‘Gugelhupftopf’: the Austrian cake and the tin in which it is baked. The Goetheanum building is the baking tin, which is there to give the right form to the cake. The essential thing is not the outer form as was the case with the ‘old art’; but the inside, and inside are the feelings and thoughts of those in the building. That is the cake.

In context the quote reads:

“So the essential thing is not the outer form of the building but what is inside. And inside will be the feelings and thoughts of those inside the building. This will happen in that the person inside sees as far as the boundary of the building, that he feels the forms and that he fills them out with thought forms. That which is inside will be the cake; that which we are building will be the form - the casing. The forms must be created in such manner for the right thoughts and feelings to be experienced. **And that is the principle, you see, of the new art as opposed to the old art. In relation to the old arts the significant thing was what was ‘outside’ in space. With the new art it is not important what is outside in space.** What is outside is the baking tin but what actually matters, what cannot be made, that is inside. This is not only relevant for the

sculptural forms but also for the painting. It is not a matter of what is painted but rather what is felt and experienced. Also painting is mere 'cake'.

That is, I would like to say, the key aspect of the stage of development of humanity in which we stand, that we really, excuse the expression, move away from the cake tin towards the cake. To remain in the baking tin means materialism; to be in the cake means spiritualism, and that is what we are working towards. If this is not taken into consideration one will not be able to judge also everything artistic in relation to us in the right way. If one were to comprehend our building in the way of the old art one could say: Yes, but for goodness sake, you have not made a beautiful cake tin! One would not realise that the main point is not the cake tin at all but the cake (the Gugelhupf). Thereby we come closer, with such an artistic principle, to the whole meaning and point of the development of evolution through spiritual science. The human being must, by means of the advance of spiritual science, extricate himself from the cake tin and familiarize himself with the cake."

Quote 5

Lecture of 15 Feb.1918. *The Sensible - Supersensible and its Realization through Art*.
Pages 99-100

"(...) In the soul both of the artist and the beholder a process of deadening and then re-enlivening through humour must always be accomplished."

R.Halfen:

„During the course of the 20th century, a subtle feeling has arisen (among other things) that our perception of the world through conceptual thinking has a “deadening” character. A reflex identification of perceptual phenomena, increasingly intensified in our “rapid-fire” culture, reinforces this tendency; and those of subtler sensibility gradually become more aware of it. Steiner did not try to circumvent this process. Instead he took it seriously as an intrinsic part of artistic endeavour as long as it is encompassed by an aesthetic capacity which he calls “humour”. This does not so much refer to our usual understanding of the term but to an ability to see, as they are, opposites, contradictions, things that mutually exclude each other – a death-like disintegration – but at the same time to integrate them in a superordinate realm, to “raise” them and know they have been reconciled. (...)

With this passage Steiner suggests that the deadening quality that enters perception through thinking consciousness cannot be circumvented or avoided but instead can itself be integrated into the process of aesthetic experience without it losing its quality.“

Again this is from the Munich lectures in which Rudolf Steiner discusses the two sources of art, which up to a point, he says, are visible in the two different streams of what is known as 'Expressionism' and 'Impressionism'. The concept of spiritually 'killing' the subject and through humour bringing it to life again belongs to the stream of Impressionism.

In context the quote reads:

“Let us suppose one felt the urge to paint a pretty woman. An image of this pretty woman must then be formed in the soul. But in the same moment, a sensitive person can feel that he has inwardly, spiritually, conveyed the pretty woman out of life into death. In the very same moment we decide to paint a pretty woman we have extinguished her spiritually, we have taken something from her, otherwise we would simply be meeting her as she is in life without creating her artistically. We must have first artistically killed the woman, and must then be in a position to summon up as much humour as necessary to inwardly bring her back to life. The naturalist cannot do this. Naturalistic art suffers because humour is missing. And because of

this she gives us many corpses, gives us what in nature is extinguished by a higher life, but misses the humour needed to bring back to life what she must extinguish in the initial process. Even faced with a charming woman, it seems as if one would not only have secretly extinguished her, but rather as if one would have manhandled her before killing her.

This is a process that goes in the one direction, this process of extinguishing, and it hangs together always with the fact that one must recreate what a higher life has overcome –that which wants to come to life in nature. **In the soul both of the artist and the beholder a process of extinguishing and then re-enlivening through humour must always be accomplished.**

So someone wanting to paint a peasant lad on the alpine pastures would not find it necessary to reproduce what he sees. The lad has been extinguished by what has been formed as an artistic conception, and this frozen image must be brought back to life by giving the lad a gesture that unites him again with the landscape. Hodler tried such things. They are undeniable longings of artists today. “

(**Deadening** has been changed to **extinguishing** as it seems to me to be a more exact translation of the intended meaning here.)

Albert Steffen (poet, painter and member of the original executive council at the Goetheanum) refers to this lecture of Rudolf Steiner, which he attended in Munich. He also gives some revealing impressions of the contemporary art scene there, and insight into the inability of its artists to take Rudolf Steiner seriously.

Excerpts from the book: *Begegnung und Rückschau. Albert Steffen in seiner Zeit (Meeting and Reflection. Albert Steffen in his Time)* Pages 42, 43, 44, 154

“When painting a person one continues the work of nature from where it has stopped. A naturally pretty lady should be initially killed (one should not be shocked - the tools are merely brush and palette), and then reanimated through humour. Only in this way can her transitory charm be immortalized. This complement seemed too dubious for the Schwabinger artists; none had treated his muse in such a dreadful manner - this was frankly heartless. A painter to whom I spoke afterwards about this idea of the “beautiful soul” said: “Even if this process really does take place in the artist, it can only do harm to know about it. The genius creates out of the unconscious.” He was afraid of consciousness.

The fear of knowledge of the unconscious came up again and again. Once as I told a poet about the cosmology developed by Rudolf Steiner saying: to me it was like a marvelous symphony composed in four masterly movements of Saturn, Sun, Moon and Earth, he took an orange, peeled it, separated the pieces and said: “In this I have the whole cosmos”, and to keep me quiet handed me a piece.

(...)What I hoped was only that my friends with their valued abilities, which I so treasured, would realize these in their entirety. To this end Rudolf Steiner points in unimaginable directions.

But I must say that in their attitude towards this great man they were reserved and unsympathetic. I remember a lecture that Rudolf Steiner gave in Munich about the sensible-supersensible in art. He spoke about the two original sins of the artists: a mere copying of the physical sense perceptible, and the abstract representation of the soul-spiritual. All my associates were there but neither the Impressionists nor the Expressionists liked what Rudolf Steiner said. The first loved the patches in their paintings too much, the others the geometric forms. As they listened their behavior was strange to say the least. One made grimaces, one turned towards the wall, another bent double imitating stomach cramps. The ladies accompanying them, who were mostly artists as well, were very embarrassed, as they didn't understand what was going on. The idea that the gestures their friends were making stemmed from the fact that they themselves were more or less ‘original sinners’ did not occur to them.”

Quote 6

Lecture of 3 July 1917 in GA 176, Menschliche und Menschheitliche Entwicklungswahrheiten. *Facts of Evolution in Humanity and in Human Beings*.
 Lecture 5: Ringende Menschen der Gegenwart. *Striving Personalities of the Present Time*.
 Pages 111/112/113

“(…) The most curious thing occurs in human life in fact in these disputes about what is beautiful or ugly, about what is artistically legitimate or not. You see, ultimately this whole judgment about beauty and ugliness, about legitimate or unacceptable art, is rooted in human singularity itself. We will never find a generally valid definition of beauty since nothing more nonsensical could exist than a universally decreed standard of beauty or ugliness. Nothing more nonsensical could exist. One may not like an artwork, and yet one can still engage with the artist’s intentions, enter in to the work that one previously failed to comprehend, and may then find it very beautiful in fact; can realize that one did not like it before only because one failed to understand it.”

R.Halfen:

„This is such a fundamental statement because, in his comments on the sources of artistic creativity, in his account of the laws underlying or immanent in artistic work, in his emphasis on the need to detach ourselves from purely subjective expression in art, Steiner can easily give us the impression that there are eternal laws of beauty that the artist must follow like state-prescribed legislation if he is to produce aesthetically valuable art. (...)

The erroneous view that there are universally valid laws of beauty leads easily to the idea that a particular style in art is the only one that should be pursued and repeated in future. If such an idea were pursued and realised in the long term, art would separate itself off from the advancing human soul, becoming isolated in itself and thus lapsing from humanity’s ongoing evolution.“

In this lecture *Striving Personalities of the Present Time* Rudolf Steiner’s focus is on philosophical questions and in particular the ideas of the philosopher Franz Brentano. Steiner expresses his admiration for Franz Brentano whom he describes as the “representative of present day striving humanity, as the one struggling with the riddles of the world”. He, like Rudolf Steiner, presents the concept of a three-fold human being but as: conceptual life (Vorstellen), faculty of judgment (Urteilen) and the inner world of feeling-movement (Gemütsbewegung). As a kind of summing up RS says: “And in particular what will be necessary for a revision of all our concepts of law, of rights, our concepts of morality, our concepts of social life and of politics to enter humanity, will be an understanding of the reality-filled concepts of spiritual science.” Questions in the lecture revolve around ethics and aesthetics: truth and goodness, good and bad, like and dislike, beauty and ugliness etc.

The quote in context:

“For the ‘Herbartian’ philosophers (Herbart was a follower of Kant) goodness is only a subdivision of beauty, beauty as it occurs as quality of human action. But what is beauty? When considering the question it will be noticeable that beauty has actually a strongly subjective character. Nothing is more fought over than the question of beauty. What one person finds beautiful the other finds no longer beautiful and so on. One can say:
 The most curious thing occurs in human life in fact in these disputes about what is beautiful or ugly, about what is artistically legitimate or not. You see, ultimately this whole judgment about beauty and ugliness, about legitimate or unacceptable art, is rooted in human singularity itself. We will never find a generally valid definition of beauty since nothing more nonsensical could exist than a universally decreed standard of beauty or ugliness. Nothing more nonsensical could exist. One may not like an artwork, and yet one can still engage with the artist’s intentions, enter in to the work that one previously failed to comprehend, and may then find it very beautiful in fact; can realize that one did not like it before only because one failed to understand it. This aesthetic judgment is really something justifiably subjective, an

aesthetic recognition or rejection.

It would take a very long time if I were to go into every detail of the statement I have just made, but you know that the following sentence has a certain justification: One cannot argue about taste. One has it already or one does not yet have it. From where does this stem? You see this comes about because in relation to every perception to which we can apply the idea of beauty, a double perception actually takes place. This is an important fact proven by spiritual scientific research. You perceive an object firstly in that the object has a certain effect upon you, on your physical body and on your etheric body. This is the one stream which comes towards you from the beautiful object, whether it be a painting, a sculpture or something else. And in the physical and etheric bodies you experience that which is out there. You experience it also in the I and in the astral body, but you do not experience these both together. You experience, on the one hand, the impression received by the physical and etheric bodies, and on the other hand you receive an impression on your I and astral body. You have a double perception. And in so far as you are in a position to bring the one into harmony or disharmony with the other, you will find the object beautiful or ugly. You experience on the one hand something for your physical and etheric bodies, and on the other hand something for your I and astral body, and if you cannot unite them, if the two things cannot sound together, then you cannot understand the work of art - it cannot appear beautiful. Beauty is always perceived when your I and astral body weave together with your physical and etheric bodies, when they 'vibrate' together in unison. An inner process must take place in order for you to be able to experience something as beautiful. It is not possible otherwise for you to experience beauty. Think how many possibilities there are to experience beauty; how many varieties of harmony or disharmony are possible in this way. So beauty is something subjective, something to experience inwardly."

Regarding the „erroneous view that there are universally valid laws of beauty“ see lecture of 5th July 1914 , The Aesthetic Laws of Form' in *Architecture as a Synthesis of the Arts* edited by Christian Thal-Jantzen.

Rudolf Steiner:

„In the case of genuine art it is perfectly apt to say that there can be no disputing about taste. You can work your way through to an understanding of how true art is founded on laws and forms that are every bit as certain as the laws of mathematics, based as they are on the deeper laws of existence. Art is a manifestation of higher natural laws that would never be revealed without art, and there is no disputing these higher laws.“

Quote 8. 26 August 1921, Dornach in GA 77b Kunst und Anthroposophie. *Art and Anthroposophy*. This publication is made up chiefly of lectures given by Rudolf Steiner at the Summer Art Course 1921 at which a number of English visitors were present. At the conclusion of the lectures Rudolf Steiner answered questions from the participants.

“Question: Wouldn't art influenced by anthroposophic teachings have the tendency to become uniform (...) as if produced by a particular school of painting?

Dr. Steiner: If we comprehend, truly comprehend what can really emerge as art from the spiritual orientation of anthroposophy, it seems to me that this question will not arise at all; we will not be lured into thinking that anthroposophy could ever seek to subject art to the influence of anthroposophic teachings. An anthroposophic outlook cannot regard art in any other way than as emerging from an experience of the flux of spirit within matter, from living engagement with the material.

(...)I can tell you that my continual wish is that people will use the capacities they have to meet what approaches the soul, and to show and depict what they wish to not in any monotonous way but in great variety and diversity.”

The full question and answer are as follows:

“Question: Wouldn't art influenced by anthroposophic teachings have the tendency to become uniform, which would not be interesting? Is there not a danger that the art would carry an anthroposophical 'hallmark' as if produced by a particular school of painting?”

Dr Steiner: If we comprehend, truly comprehend what can really emerge as art from the spiritual orientation of anthroposophy, it seems to me that this question will not arise at all; we will not be lured into thinking that anthroposophy could ever seek to subject art to the influence of anthroposophic teachings. An anthroposophic outlook cannot regard art in any other way than as emerging from an experience of the flux of spirit within matter, from living engagement with the material. Many anthroposophists have a primitive understanding of this. For example one comes across pictures hanging in various Branch Rooms which are representations of Rosicrucian teaching. That is inner feeling, inwardly intended outwardly held fast. I help myself in view of such “artistic experiments” by not looking at them. They are primitive attempts to carry over into some kind of artistic expression what has been given in the form of words from spiritual teaching. This makes no sense. One cannot transpose a teaching into a work of art.

Anthroposophy, however, whether it be the teaching or the art, leads to an inner experience of something more primordial than anthroposophical teaching or anthroposophical art - to a living element from the far distant past in the human being. Through creating, on the one hand, artistic forms that have nothing to do with anthroposophical teachings and then returning to the word, to the thoughts, one creates coherence out of the same foundations. Both are branches of the one root; but one cannot take one branch and put it in another.

In any case, I cannot feel that the life arising out of such an art-development could lead to monotony, for - I would like now to speak only illustratively - I can give you the assurance that when this building is finished and another would have to be build by me it would look quite different. I would never be in a position to create the same building in a monotonous way; and a third building I would again create differently- it certainly won't come to pass in this incarnation. But I feel the living element underlying the anthroposophical reaches beyond and above all monotony in art. *I can tell you that my continual wish is that people will use the capacities they have to meet what approaches the soul, and to show and depict what they wish to not in any monotonous way but in great variety and diversity.”*

To me it is clear that this „great variety and diversity“ referred to by Rudolf Steiner, does not imply an inclusion of other spiritual-artistic streams but is a character of the new anthroposophical style of art with its never-ending source of life. And to realise „an experience of the flux of spirit within matter, from living engagement with the material“ Rudolf Steiner has given innumerable indications.

Caroline Chanter, May 2016

A translation of the lecture of Feb.15, 1918, *The two Sources of Art: Impressionism and Expressionism* is in the book: *Art as Spiritual Activity* by Michael Howard. Anthroposophic Press.

A translation of the lecture of Nov. 21, 1914 (from GA 158) is in *The Balance in the World and Man* by Rudolf Steiner. Steiner Book Centre Inc. Vancouver