

New Year letter 2018

„In as much as we transform our present, so we are also transforming our past.“
Tchich Nhat Hanh

Dear friends of the fine arts,

In 2017, three art exhibitions of worldwide importance took place: the Biennale in Venice, the Documenta in Kassel and Athens and the Sculpture-Project in Münster.

In Summer, with a small group of participants, the section visited the Documenta 14 in Kassel. 'Learn from Athens' – this title was more than just a motto. Sceptically anticipated in advance by the media, the exhibition took place not only in Kassel but also in the Greek capital, Athens. "During these times of political upheaval, the artworks would like to make a statement to counteract the constantly repeated same old narrative with which people from Turkey to America are force-fed", writes the 1970s born Curator Adam Szymczyk. The creator of this exhibition with the highly sensitive artistic soul is considered shy and reclusive.

Despite a didactic basic tone, our group discovered personal stimulus and artistic encounter: the poetic Video work "Viviens garden" about the artist Vivien Sutter in conversation with her elderly mother, the wonderful 23 metre long embroidery work of the Sámi-artist Britta Marakatt-Labba or Miriam Cahns impressive paintings, which dealt with fleeing and violence, to name but a few.

Unfortunately, the artistic director Adam Szymczyk felt compelled to scold and chide until the very end. The Documenta has run up a deficit of around 7 million Euros, caused most probably by Athens as 2. venue being. In this regard, the visitor numbers weren't exactly very helpful either!

Articles (in German) about the Documenta and the Biennale: www.sbk.goetheanum.org/aus-der-sektion/berichte

Some highlights from last year's work of the Section:

The artistic kick-off was provided by the exhibition "Brentanos Studio" with 77 works by Hannes Weigert in the West Staircase of the Goetheanum.

Here follows an excerpt from Bodo von Plato's opening speech:

"As I saw some of the pictures for the first time – they are going to be visible in the West Stairwell of the Goetheanum – I did not see what I saw. Not that there was nothing to see. But that which is visible did not show itself. I also did not see any abstraction. What I saw did not immediately call up in me that which made cognition or recognition possible.

But then, in a kind of after-glow, post-vibration, I realized something about the human being. No human being is visible. No human Figure. Slowly I started to cognize what I was seeing – just at the moment when I was looking. I saw the seeing human being. It is as if one were in a vision laboratory. In "Brentanos Studio", there, where we are dealing with the transformation of consciousness going over from the grasping of things to real (inner) 'vision'.

Reports on the exhibition can be found here: www.goetheanum.org/ausstellungen

In May, the Ascension conference took place with the theme: "New media – New Materials". Around 70 participants experienced an open encounter with an extremely current topic, which threw up many questions and problems and will accompany us more and more in the coming years.

Photos and reports from the conference: www.sbk.goetheanum.org/aus-der-sektion/berichte

The new "Artistic year of Study" which was announced in the 2016 Christmas letter changed during the preparations into the "Art Workshops". The aim is to create a forum which practically and theoretically works with the artistic work of Rudolf Steiner and thereby places itself into a relationship with the complex reality in which we are living today.

What we are offering here is aimed at creative artists, artistically interested people as well as students. The intention is to provide space for individual study and research. The "Art Workshops" work closely together with the art collection and archive at the Goetheanum.

The project was opened in September 2017 with a 10-week "painter's workshop".

Under the leadership of Hannes Weigert, 25 participants studied with great enthusiasm Rudolf Steiner's original sketches for the 9 "Nature Moods". Dina Wendtland, responsible for the art collection at the Goetheanum, made the original sketches available for this purpose.

Dates of the "Art Workshops" for 2018:

15 Jan–2 Feb	Sculpture with Claudia Schlürmann
5–23 Feb	Painting with Hannes Weigert
26 Feb–16 March	Architecture and Landscape with Rudolf Kaesbach
24 Sept–30 Nov:	Painting workshop with Dorothea and Ronald Templeton

Reports: sbk.goetheanum.org/aus-der-sektion/news

This September in Hungary the Napút (Sonnenweg) Art Academy celebrated its 10th anniversary. An Exhibition with four artists from the academy was for viewing until 31 December 2017 in the Anthroposophical Society in Vienna: Biro Edina, Academy director Döbröntei Zoltan (his works were able to be admired in the 49th "Goetheanum" magazine), Hódosi Helga und Kiss Viktor.

The visit by the Canadian architect and First Nation President Douglas Cardinal in November was a very special highlight in the year's events of the section. Cardinal comes from an indigenous Metis Blackfoot Family, which can look back upon an old, highly developed culture. They were the original inhabitants of Canada. In a public work report he gave an impression of his creative work and enthused us with his spirituality and deep humanity.

A description can be found here: www.sbk.goetheanum.org/aus-der-sektion/news

Also in November our School of Spiritual Science conference took place under the title "the small dome – the unknown being". This took place for the second time in collaboration with the sculpture school. Lectures by Elke Dominik about the still little known sculptural forms of the "thrones" in the small dome space of the first Goetheanum as well as lectures by Alexander Schaumann about the spatial form of the double dome building gave a deep insight into motives and formative impulses.

Plans for 2018:

In the May conference of 10th until 13th May we will focus upon the theme "Architecture Today". Via lectures, above all through conversations, we would like to come into a stimulating exchange with one another regarding current questions dealing with the theme "organic architecture impulses". We would like to invite both constructors and architectural foundations. In the foyer of the Goetheanum it will be possible for architects practices and architectural foundations to display their projects. On Saturday it is planned to visit the Vitra Campus in Weil am Rhein, with guided tours and architectural conversations.

In June we will put on a research weekend once more: The "6th Workshop Conversation on the II Goetheanum Building", with Alexander Schauman, Henning Schulze-Schildorff and Peter Ferger.

In the November conference from 15th until 18th November we will, in collaboration with the sculpture school, work further on artworks of the first Goetheanum, above all with the dome paintings. Even after 100 years, there are still many questions to be considered which could fructify our current artistic work. In this connection, it is extraordinary that, among artists who until now were never connected to Anthroposophy, there is an increasing interest in the work of Rudolf Steiner.

Exhibitions:

In 2018 we will in collaboration with the archive and its leader Johannes Nilo, show treasures from the 12,000 original works comprehensive art collection. Contemporary works should then create the bridge to the present.

We are looking forward to your visits, questions and suggestions and wishing you a good and peaceful new year 2018!

Warm regards,
Marianne Schubert
Section leader

All current dates and reports about past events can be found on our website: www.sbk.goetheanum.org



Pictures above: Installation and Flyer of the Ascension conference 2017.



Pictures above: „Malerwerkstatt“ with Hannes Weigert in September 2017, the canadian architect and First Nation President Douglas Cardinal visits the Goetheanum, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington DC, Douglas Cardinal.