



CENTER FOR BIOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL ART

Biography and Social Art Certificate Program Fall 2022 – Summer 2025

The guiding question of this training is: What does it mean to be a Human Being?

This training takes place in one- and two-week blocks of integrated learning over the course of three years. All blocks consist of both conceptual learning and skill development through presentation, group conversation, individual reflection, biography exercises (using artistic processes such as drawing, writing, sculpting, and painting), inner development practices, singing, movement (Spatial Dynamics, Eurythmy and Authentic Movement) and nature observation.

One- and two-week residential blocks consist of five and ten full days, respectively, including at least one evening session per week. Online blocks will take place over two consecutive weekends (Fri – Sun) for seven hours each day, with generous breaks. Other regular online meetings occur throughout the course.

YEAR ONE

The first year, the training is focused on learning through one's own direct experience.

Fourfold Imaginations of Life:

Elements, Seasons, Temperaments and the Human Being

(Nov - Residential: one week)

We begin immediately with a socially artistic process to establish group agreements. Fourfold themes are explored experientially through meditations on the elements as well as plant observation. Small research groups focus on the temperaments; a fairy tale becomes a source for biography exercises; a dyad communication technique is introduced, and we look at the conditions for inner work as described by Rudolf Steiner in *How to Know Higher Worlds*.

The Twelve Human Senses and the Uses of Enchantment

(March - Online: two weekends)

The twelve human senses as described by Rudolf Steiner are considered in relation to moral and spiritual development in our lives and over time. We also look at morality as depicted in fairytales and the uses of story in biography and social art. *What if the world is bewitched spiritual truth and it is our task to break the enchantment?*

Living Gestures in Nature and the Phases of Human Life

(July-Aug - Residential: two weeks)

We dive into the seven-year life phases, enriched by a year-long observation of trees. The seven "life-trees" and their connection to the planets are introduced. We sculpt clay heads from infancy to old age. Small research groups consider phenomena such as moon nodes and the Jupiter and Saturn rhythms, as we work with various ways of charting the life journey.

YEAR TWO

The second year brings the opportunity to practice the role of facilitator with others.

Group Facilitation and Adult Learning Design

(Residential: one week)

In this block, we look at learning styles and soul types. We revisit the planets once again, considering how their attributes may be expressed in groups and in individuals. We look at the continued relevance of the ancient injunction “Know thyself.” Learning design is explored through examples; and then, in pairs, participants design their own small group experience, workshop or event to be carried out between sessions.

Skills for the Human Encounter: Practicing Biographical Conversation

(Online: two weekends)

Contemporary times demand multiple ways of meeting. We consider the various qualities belonging to counseling, coaching, and biographical conversation. We revisit the planets in more depth and explore their particular pairings. We look at the “anatomy” of a session: creating a space, preparing oneself, various directions to take and tools to use, grounding and closing. There is demonstration and practice of skills in class.

The Evolution of Consciousness Through Art: Mirrors of Becoming

(Residential: two weeks)

Participants share the body of work they have created, through a year-long study, building collectively a picture of evolution seen across human history and, as we discover, mirrored in the individual life. Possible future directions for evolution as presented by Rudolf Steiner, along with our own observations, are also considered.

YEAR THREE

The third year continues to develop these practices while deepening esoteric study.

Appreciating Differences: Meeting the Needs of our Times

(Residential: one week)

This block offers deep consideration of the changing consciousness around questions of diversity. We touch on ancient and new myths; stereotypes and archetypes; male / female and masculine / feminine dynamics working within the four bodies (as described in the previous block). We explore the forces that shape us, including culture, ethnicity and religion within the context of reincarnation and karma.

Thresholds and Questions of Karma

(Residential: one week)

This block takes an esoteric look at the times we live in – from Consciousness Soul to emerging Spirit Self. We consider questions of destiny and karma; modern life as initiation; inner and outer thresholds; the counter forces of Lucifer and Ahriman; the Double and the Guardian of the Threshold. We open and explore these themes through biography work, dyad communication, sculpting and movement, coming ultimately to a ritual enactment of the “Royal Walk.”

The Foundation Stone Meditation and Final Projects

(Residential: two weeks)

The Foundation Stone Meditation is the backdrop for this week of presentations by the participants. We examine the relationship of this meditation to biography work and bring it into movement with Spatial Dynamics. For the final projects, each person presents their process, discoveries, and an experiential exercise to take others into their subject.

Work outside class:

* **Throughout the course:** Keep a personal journal around the theme of each block, recording thoughts, observations, questions, etc.

* **Throughout the first year:** Observe a tree regularly, including drawings, observations, poetry or prose, etc. Create a portfolio of your work to share in the summer block of year two. (No artistic experience or expertise required.)

* **Throughout the second year:** Observe and copy artwork through the ages. Produce additional pieces from a particular epoch or artist upon which you've chosen to focus. Create a portfolio to share in the summer block of year three. (No previous experience or expertise required)

* **During the third year:**

- After first practicing with a colleague, using the tools acquired through the training, facilitate a minimum of three biographical conversations with another volunteer individual.
- Design a workshop in class and carry it out with a group of any size.
- Continue to practice.

* **Final Project:**

During the first year each participant will choose their own long-term project to develop throughout the course and will make a presentation as the culmination of their work.

Presentations given in class:

Every presentation is an opportunity to practice the work you are learning, to share your discoveries in relation to the content of your subject, as well as create an exercise to engage the group in a meaningful experience. Presentations will include: the biography of a well-known person, a brief look at one of the twelve senses, an exploration of a time period or single artist (relative to the evolution of consciousness) and your final project.