

The Twelve Moods—A new creation story

On 24th of August 1915, one year after the beginning of World War I, Rudolf Steiner handed over his poem “Twelve Moods” to the eurythmists who performed them only five days later. The “Twelve Moods” are less well-known and more mysterious than his “Soul Calendar,” the weekly verses that many people work with regularly. As one enters more and more deeply into the verses of the “Twelve Moods” with their mysteriously veiled and challenging language, carefully seeking access to them by speaking them aloud and gradually making them one’s own, one can be profoundly moved by the magical effect and power of these words. Who is it that speaks to us? Where do these verses come from? Whom are they speaking to? What do they convey?

Cosmic order

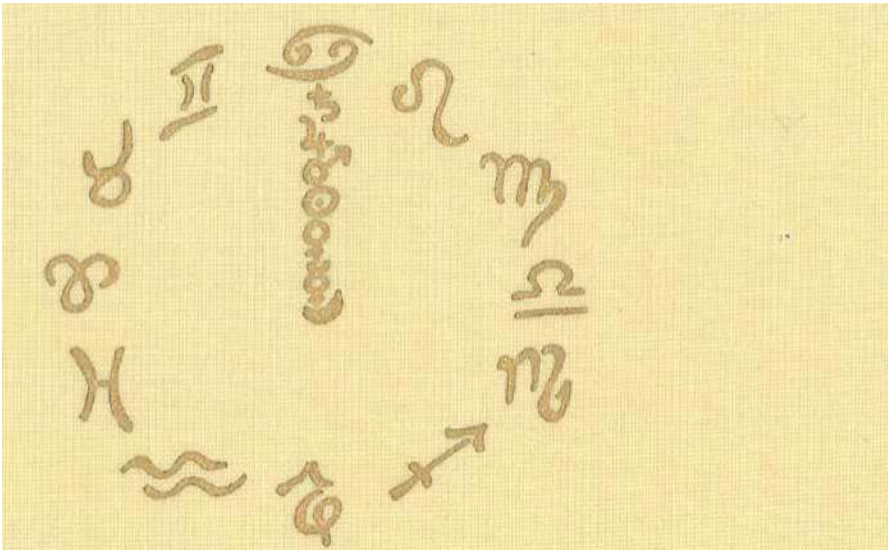
The “Twelve Moods” consist of twelve verses that appear to us in various modes of being and evolving in a particular order. They represent spiritual aspects of the images of the Zodiac, each verse proceeding line by line through the souls of the seven planets. Anyone who has had opportunity to experience the “Twelve Moods” performed in eurythmy, must have been impressed by the powerful effect of the cosmic order, represented by the twelve images of the zodiac spread out in a huge circle, with the planets forming a moving radius from the periphery to the centre. The signs of the Zodiac, shown in different colours, and the planets which convey their impulses to them, give expressions to the words of the “Twelve Moods” through sounds, planetary gestures, Zodiac gestures and spatial movement, pervaded by music: a unique, cosmic image of the evolving human I, presented through the arts.

Human being and cosmos

The harmony of the laws of nature can be a true reflection for an inner peace and coherence in our soul life that we hardly ever achieve. The peace and lawful movements that we observe in the cosmos are rarely present in the lives we lead today. The cosmos with its fixed stars and moving planets shows us a lawfully ordered world from which traditional astrology derives particular effects on human beings.

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The 2015 Pentecost Conference at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland...a cosmic theme based on Rudolf Steiner's "Twelve Moods."



The "Twelve Moods" are not conventional astrology, however: they do not refer to ancient wisdom or seek explanations for the riddles of life in the starry worlds; they offer access to "the lawful harmony of a spiritual world that reveals itself in us and in the cosmos alike. True spiritual science does not seek to find human laws in star constellations but tries to find them, as well as the laws of nature, in the spiritual world."

The spirit of time, Michael, and the human being

As a way towards understanding this approach, we will look more closely at the evolution of humanity in connection with the hierarchies, since this is connected with the evolution of the cosmos. How can we today connect with the cosmos in a way that is appropriate to our development in the age of the consciousness soul? Modern thinking has led us away and detached us from the cosmos, so much so that we experience ourselves as minute specks of dust in the universe. Our freedom as human beings without authorities has left us to our own devices amidst the earthly-spatial conditions of the material world.

Yet, we are still connected with the cosmos, due to an immensely important fact described by Rudolf in his Michael Letter "The Future of Humanity and the Work of Michael." When we descend from pre-earthly existence to a new birth, we seek to establish "harmony between the stars and our earthly life." That this is possible we owe to Michael, Rudolf Steiner pointed out

Michael's deed makes it possible for us to enter voluntarily, from the earth, into a spiritual, productive relationship with the cosmos and to re-enliven the cosmos by becoming aware of our own connection with it. How can we gain awareness of our cosmic origin?

The “Twelve Moods” – a sentient experience of the cosmos

The mighty cosmic language of the “Twelve Moods” speaks to us from the cosmos, as an expression of the Logos, allowing those who hear and encounter these words to acquire a sentient experience of a world where the laws of the cosmos prevail. The words of this language awaken us to the spark inherent in them. In his address for the first performance of the “Twelve Moods”, on 29 August 1915, Rudolf Steiner outlined how we human beings, who, from a cosmic point of view, are wandering around aimlessly in our earthly conditions, can “rise above our disoriented earthly thinking and receive strength in thinking and feeling from the calm movement and regularity of the cosmos [...] And in the cosmos we see, as if crystallized, the word in its calmness and the word in its movement. But we do need to feel it in the cosmos.”

According to the Michael Letter quoted earlier, the “Twelve Moods” can be seen as an expression of the Christ-Michael language. The fact that they can help us to feel our way into the cosmos is deeply healing and enlightening. Something that has become disconnected becomes part of the whole again, of the universal cosmos....

Twelve worldviews

The twelve worldviews Rudolf Steiner presented in 1914 provide a different kind of access. The element that has remained with us from the spiritual cosmos and that is connected with our innermost being is our thinking. Our thinking has been wrought from the laws of the cosmos and we can unfold it in the greatest possible freedom.

Looking back to its forms, it sees their twelfold inspiration through the spiritual hierarchies. Just as our ‘I’ needs twelve senses to gain awareness of itself on earth, our thinking unfolds in twelve cosmic worldviews in order to wake up spiritually and become part of the world. With the twelve worldviews we have direct access to the spiritual cosmos—not only in philosophical views of the world, but in all cultural realms....

Working with the “Twelve Moods” in this way can lead us to an actual, artistic experience of “being one with the laws of the cosmos....”

Christiane Haid, Goetheanum; Jaap Sijmons, Antroposofische Vereniging in Nederland—Anthroposophy Worldwide vol. 3-4 (2015), pp. 10-11.