

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

Dalcroze Eurhythmics in music therapy and special music education

Interview

Memories of Mimi Scheiblauber and the development of Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a therapeutic practice: An interview with Eleonore Witoszynskij

John Habron & Eleonore Witoszynskij

ABSTRACT

In this interview, Witoszynskij remembers her first encounter with Rhythmics during the period immediately after the Second World War. In the early 1960s, she had the opportunity to shadow Mimi Scheiblauber, who had been a pupil of Jaques-Dalcroze and was a pioneer in the development of music therapy. Witoszynskij recalls in detail Scheiblauber's approach to teaching, describing the strategies and exercises she devised, and speaks of the deep impression this experience made on her. The interview also contains reflections on her teachers Brigitte Müller and Rosalia Chladek, who would later become her colleagues. Witoszynskij shares her theoretical perspectives on music and movement, developed during work with children with various disabilities and adults with cancer, and through a commitment to continual study. This interview will be relevant to researchers in Dalcroze Studies, historians of rhythmic education and music therapy, and anyone interested in the practice and theory of music and movement that developed from the work of Jaques-Dalcroze, especially in German-speaking Switzerland and Austria.

KEYWORDS

Dalcroze Eurhythmics, Rhythmics, music, Mimi Scheiblauber, Brigitte Müller, Rosalia Chladek, Cary Rick

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Born in Vienna in 1941, **Eleonore Witoszynskij** (MPhil) took Rhythmic Studies at the Conservatory of Zurich and the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna (Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien, or mdw). Besides studying piano and recorder, she undertook additional studies in instrumental teaching, psychology and therapy education, as well as dance therapy and analysis of movement for people with physical and mental disabilities. Witoszynskij has extensive teaching experience at the Institute of Music and Movement Education & Music Therapy at mdw, where she began work in 1968 and is currently university professor in the theory of music and movement. Her publications include *Erziehung durch Musik & Bewegung* (3rd Edition, 2011), *Lebendiges Lernen durch Musik, Bewegung, Sprache* (2009) and numerous articles.

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INTRODUCTION

The interview was recorded on 29 July 2015, in Vienna, Austria. The English has been corrected and repeated expressions deleted to aid smooth reading, but otherwise it is left untouched to retain the character of Witoszynskyj's speech. Footnotes add useful biographical detail and contextual information. Some of these were provided, or augmented, by Witoszynskyj herself during a subsequent meeting in Vienna (9 July 2016) and a period of email correspondence to edit the interview.

INTERVIEW

JH: Eleonore, could you please tell me about your first contact with Rhythmics?

EW: Yes, my first contact was with a pupil of Mimi Scheiblauber who taught not only music education, but also put other emphases on her work.¹ It was fascinating for me that children could react without words, and could do things without words. And these were groups that included really difficult children. It was amazing for me. And I thought that it must be through music.

JH: And what was the name of this student of Mimi?

EW: This was Annemarie Reichard-Kunz.² I met her, I think, on an excursion. Perhaps I should describe the background. After the war, it was necessary to change the ideals of teachers and kindergarten teachers because they had all been instructed by the National Socialist ideals. It was necessary to find alternative ideas, and it was part of a certain programme to re-educate people working in pedagogic fields. And I think it was in the frame of this programme that I got to know

¹ Mimi (Marie-Elisabeth) Scheiblauber (1891-1968) had her first lessons in Rhythmics with Paul Boepple (pupil of Jaques-Dalcroze) in Basel, in 1904. Later she became a pupil of Jaques-Dalcroze, first in Geneva and then in Hellerau, where she gained her diploma in 1911. From 1926 until 1968, she was head of the Rhythmics seminar at the Zurich Conservatory.

² Annemarie Reichard-Kunz (b.1929), a Swiss Rhythmics teacher and trainer of kindergarten teachers and teachers in special music education. After studying in Zurich, she came to Vienna and was based there. She taught Rhythmics at the Vienna Music Academy (1964-1968) [EW].

Annemarie Reichard-Kunz, this pupil of Mimi Scheiblauber.

So, this was my first meeting with Rhythmics. After this meeting, I decided to take all courses in Vienna given by Annemarie and I did all these courses twice because it was so interesting for me! One day, Annemarie asked me if I would be interested to go to Zurich, to Mimi Scheiblauber. For me this was like as if you asked Muslim to go to Mecca! It was really like that. At this time, I worked in a primary school and I had to find a way to arrange leave for this opportunity. I had a very, very generous boss, and I had to write a proposal. This seemed to be convincing and he promised to support my idea with a period of paid leave. The condition was that when I came back, I should share my new experience with other colleagues. This was an offer you couldn't refuse.

So I got this chance, but in Mimi Scheiblauber's eyes I was far too young because she thought I probably wouldn't understand everything behind what she did. But because of my previous pedagogic training, I had the chance also to look from another perspective. And so I was fascinated by this way of working, which looked from the first point of view just like a situation in a music school. But, I could feel and I could really observe her additional, and perhaps her main objectives and intentions, which were individual development of the personality through music and movement. This was really a highlight for me.

JH: How long did you spend with her?

EW: Only one semester, but because of this opportunity to shadow her during the week, I had the chance to have half of the study just in one semester because I did all the different levels (first, third and fifth) at the same time.³ Challenging, but very enriching because of this reason. I remember a sort of 'entrance exam'. I had to step a rhythm of 48 bars by heart, with changing metres, whilst conducting!

JH: And can you remember the year that you went?

EW: Yes, I was there in 1960, and then four weeks, in order to finish my semester, in autumn 1962.

JH: Mimi Scheiblauber was a pupil of Jaques-Dalcroze, so were you aware of the connection to

³ Autumn semesters contained the first, third and fifth parts of the training [EW].

his work when you studied with Annemarie Reichard-Kunz?

EW: No, there was no time for history in this course. The main objective of Scheiblauser was I think to teach us students in so called 'Classical Rhythmics' after Jaques-Dalcroze and to learn how to teach children using Rhythmics as she did. There was no accent on music education. Instead of that she put the accent on education in general, developing the senses, concentration, reaction and coordination, also social exercises and imagination exercises. She said Rhythmics is "based on movement and accompanied by music", which was at this time a different definition from what Jaques-Dalcroze said. For him Rhythmics was a "method of education through and into music".

I thought it would be useful to describe the differences between the original version of Rhythmics near Jaques-Dalcroze at the beginning and what it became. In Rhythmics we have these three elements: time, space and dynamic. Together, these three elements combine to make musical form and movement form (Figure 1). And music and movement, as we know, are the two essential elements in our work.

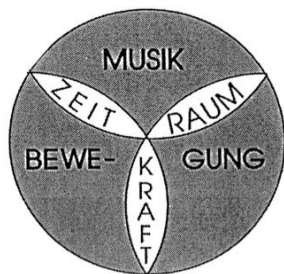


Figure 1: Witoszynskyj's diagram of the essential elements of Rhythmics: Time, space and dynamic or energy (Zeit, Raum, Kraft), with music and movement (Musik, Bewegung)

The development that I observed with Mimi Scheiblauser was that she used this version for us students in the professional programme. That means she tried to develop our musical competencies in the classical Dalcrozian form. But, in other groups, she emphasised other aspects that were already present in this original music education work. This is very important to say. She increased certain elements, for example perception, not only listening, but also seeing and feeling. And she increased improvisation, which

meant that children could work with material⁴ and this way they could develop their creativity.⁵ And she increased the field that she called social exercises, the field of communication (Figure 2). She didn't continue to have music education as

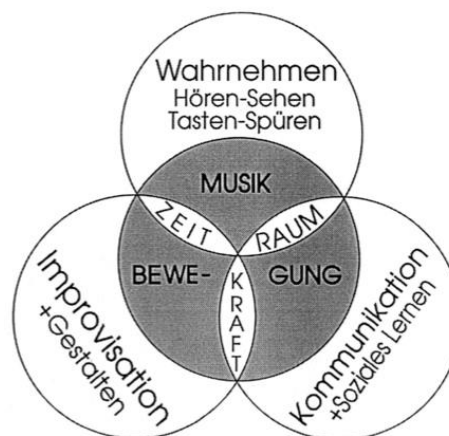


Figure 2: Rhythmic-musical education – representation of objectives and fields of activity (Witoszynskyj, 1987: 94)⁶

⁴ Materials include balls, sticks, hoops and scarves, and small instruments such as tambours and shakers.

⁵ The children had to collect these materials at the beginning of the class and place them under their chair. The attention of the children was focused on these objects and so they were more attentive and could immediately show what they understood from the music. Sometimes it was not possible for them to show this with the body only, but the material allowed for this. The children show how they treat these materials and in this way you can learn how they treat others; the material allows a projection. And if they learn to treat the different materials in the way the material demands, they are able to transfer this ability to how they treat different people. You give them the ability to differentiate in how they treat others. They were able to do this in situations that were relaxed and playful. Instead of speaking, Mimi Scheiblauser used 'Signale' such as 'Alle Kinder kommen her zu mir' [Witoszynskyj sings with an oscillating perfect fourth]. And all the children were happy to recognise these different melodies. She also used, for instance, 'Bimmel-Bammel Sequenz'. Depending on the different sounds from the piano the children had to move their legs whilst sitting (middle-range notes), or moving onto the floor and lying on their front (low notes), or standing on the chair, facing backwards and moving the arms above their heads (high notes) [Witoszynskyj demonstrates, standing on a chair and then getting down to lie on the floor]. The music was simple diatonic melodies and always given by the same melody, so that children could remember them [EW].

⁶ This shows Figure 1 expanded to include: perception (listening, seeing, touching, sensing), improvisation (and forming) and communication (and social skills).

aim, as objective, as intention. She used music and movement as a medium. Remember that Jaques-Dalcroze described Rhythmics as “éducation pour and par la musique” [education through and into music]!

And this I found really very interesting, because she attended to the needs of the children, and even individual needs. If we have handicapped children, you need to come closer to them, to their particular personality because they are so individual, and they need a different treatment compared to that of a class of children in the music school because they won't all make progress in the direction of music education. But in this way, if we have a class of children with special needs, it is really necessary to come closer to their individual needs, and to offer them things besides music education.

And this was very impressive for me to observe in her lessons. This experience helped me later when I taught at the Academy (later University of Music⁷), and our Rhythmics students had at the same time many more possibilities for working in different fields, not only the music schools. And so we could expand our areas of work, if we could use the potential of Rhythmics not only in the music school, but also education, special education, and even within the frame of therapy.

We are not therapists, but some Rhythmics teachers work in the frame of therapy. And using this extended version of Rhythmics allows you to emphasise special fields, and what is now my experience is that you don't leave the other fields. Even if you have a child with difficulties in perception, it isn't necessary to give them perception exercises only, to train them in their weaknesses only. Because the other fields, for example showing them that they can be creative in their own way, supports their self-confidence. This is a very important experience for these children. And I think this extended version is overall very helpful because it is so flexible and you can see the progress that children make this way. If you have only the original version, you are not as flexible as it would be necessary in our work with children with special needs. On the other hand, if my task is to develop musical abilities, I have the original version. And so I'm really very happy to have had this experience with Mimi Scheiblaue. As a result, we have both versions and possibilities to help children in the different fields of our work.

⁷ The Academie für Musik und darstellende Kunst became the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in 1970, and then the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in 1998.

JH: Thank you, Eleonore. Could you tell me why you made these graphics [Figures 1 and 2]?

EW: Yes, I tried to explain these differences in my master's thesis in 1987. The title was The Development of Eurhythmics and the Transformation of a Pedagogic Idea.⁸ In order to describe this change, I created this picture (Figure 2) and my students always encouraged me to use it in other articles because it also shows the Dalcrozian origin, and I really value this version. It's also a gesture of respect to show where we come from. But sometimes you need other intentions besides music education and so this graph tries to show both; music and movement education not only used for the purposes of music education, but also music and movement used as medium.

JH: And do you think that this understanding that you have put into visual form comes mainly from observing Mimi Scheiblaue at work, or more from talking with her? Did she talk about the work in these ways?

EW: Not really, because I made this graphic later, reflecting on my experiences with her work. She called these “extended” fields concentration exercises, reaction exercises, memory exercises, coordination exercises, the motoric sense field you might say. But she herself called them exercises, exercises, exercises as Jaques-Dalcroze did in his original books. And she followed this way and continued with her exercises. But, she was in my view the first who gave names to this educational point of view. For example, she said this is a concentration exercise, because it improves your concentration. And that is an exercise to improve your memory or your ability to react and so on and so on. And so this gave me the idea about the main view of her work. She herself described Rhythmics as an “education that emanates from movement and is supported by music”. And this shows you the quality of music as a medium. This was an impressive experience for me.

JH: Did Scheiblaue herself talk about how she began her work?

EW: No, I didn't hear her to speak about these things but you will find some biographic sketches and even more about her life in this book.⁹

⁸ Witoszynskij (1987).

⁹ Neikes (1969).

JH: And when you went to visit her for that semester, where exactly was she working?

EW: At the Zurich conservatory where she offered a professional programme for Rhythmics teachers. And there were also classes with children, and even handicapped children, and in addition every Wednesday she went to the Institute for Deaf Children. And I could go to watch her lessons there.

JH: So the children with disabilities came to the conservatoire for the classes?

EW: Yes, they were brought by their parents or grandparents. I remember these lessons very well because they were very impressive. You could see the progress, even in one lesson. I even remember the names Yael and Salome. These two girls were sisters; one was seriously handicapped and the other less so. The way Mimi treated these children was fantastic. On the one hand she was a little bit strict, as it was perhaps normal at this time. So one has always to consider the distance of time. At this time she was an authority and she treated these children in a sort of soft strength. This was impressive. It was a warm treatment, but in a little bit controlled way, as we would say today. She didn't show too much her feelings, as we would do today. She was a person who knew exactly what she did, as with my teachers at this time, such as Chladek¹⁰ and Müller.¹¹

JH: You said that the children were brought by their parents and grandparents. Did Mimi ever involve them?

EW: No, I did not see that. She used very often materials. And sometimes I thought that she could

¹⁰ Rosalia Chladek (1905-1995), born in Brünn (Moravia), was a free dance protagonist in the tradition of Ausdruckstanz (expressionist dance), who developed her own system of modern dance education. She trained at the School of Rhythm, Music and Physical Education at Hellerau, Jaques-Dalcroze's former school (1921-1924), going on to teach there and at Hellerau-Laxenburg (1924-1928 and 1930-1938), after the school moved to Austria in 1925 (Oberzaucher-Schüller & Giel 2011).

¹¹ Brigitte Müller (1904-1993), born in Germany, was a Rhythmics teacher, who also trained at Hellerau and Hellerau-Laxenburg. She completed her studies at the Musik Hochschule (Berlin). From 1932-1939, Müller was head of the Eurhythmics programme in Hellerau-Laxenburg. In 1941, she started teaching at the Music Academy in Vienna, where she later established a new professional programme for Eurhythmics teachers (1959) [EW].

have been influenced by Montessori, but this is only an idea.¹² I know that Montessori had been invited to the summer school of Hellerau-Laxenburg. We find her name in the list of guest teachers. And I read that Christine Baer-Frissell, under the name Christine Potter, was a pupil in Hellerau and at the same time as Mimi Scheiblaue was in the list of pupils of Jaques-Dalcroze.¹³ This must have been in 1910-1911. And so I could think that these two women could have had similar ideas, how to treat children. Christine Baer-Frissell, a very open-minded person in terms of education connected to Montessori, considered Rhythmics as "music education through the body, and body education through music". And I think for Jaques-Dalcroze the second half of this definition was probably too much. He didn't like this point of view, perhaps in his eyes it was too much in the direction of dance? Jaques-Dalcroze had already been criticised in Hellerau for considering movement as a 'servant' for music, and some teachers wanted him to give more open space for movement. And after his time, his pupils and successors in Hellerau and later in Hellerau-Laxenburg changed to a version of Rhythmics with a somewhat larger role for creative movement.

JH: Listening to you, a few questions came to mind about Mimi Scheiblaue and her work. So, besides the conservatoire you said that she spent half a day a week at the Institute for Deaf Children. How would you describe the contrast between her work there and at the conservatoire? How would you compare them?

EW: Concerning treatment of handicapped children there was no difference at the conservatory. In the Institute for the Deaf, the situation was a little bit different, because she had a bigger group than in

¹² Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and educational reformer, who developed a child-centred approach to teaching and learning that emphasised spontaneity and sensory exploration. She visited Jaques-Dalcroze's school in Hellerau (Kessler-Kakoulidis 2016).

¹³ Christine Baer-Frissell (1878-1932) was responsible, along with Valeria Kratina, for reopening a school at Hellerau in 1919 and went on to become head of the Hellerau-Laxenburg school. By 1930, she had convinced the city of Vienna to introduce Rhythmics into the kindergarten curriculum (Oberzaucher-Schüller and Giel, 2011). Baer-Frissell was known as an excellent pianist and accompanist of movement, persuasive ambassador for Rhythmics (performing on the radio and writing articles), and a pedagogue who collaborated with Montessori teachers. [Additions EW]

the conservatory. And this was a class, I think. And you find a picture in this book. Here, we see her.¹⁴ She tried to let them feel the rhythm. And for us it was amazing to see that the children were able to feel the rhythm exactly in the same time as it was given. This was really very impressive, and sometimes she used balloons and the children kept them near to the forehead in order to get the vibrations. They could feel exactly the tempo in which they had to move through the room. And they changed exactly the tempo as given from the piano. And once, one boy said, "I hear!". This was really an impressive situation. Unforgettable! "I can hear!". This way you could feel the importance of her work for these children, because to differentiate the rhythmic pattern helped them with their efforts to learn how to speak. She gave them the idea of listening. It was really convincing for me.

JH: At the Deaf Institute, were there doctors involved in the treatment and care of the children?

EW: I think so, but I'm not informed about the other treatments at this institute. This was school and boarding school all in one I think.

JH: And so were you aware of any contact between Mimi and the other staff?

EW: No.

JH: Were you aware that she kept notes about each class?

EW: She had the sort of copybook with her where she always made some notes after the lessons, yes. I saw this. She also very often used some materials in these classes. Her explanation for using materials was like this: if children have difficulties coming into contact with other children and other people, this means that they cannot come into contact with *subjects*. But, they can take some material and come into contact with this *object*, even the autistic children! This is a very interesting experience.

JH: Did you ever see her give lectures about her work?

EW: Once a week, we had a so-called theory lesson where she tried to explain her ideas. But I don't really remember exactly, probably some principle theoretical points.

JH: As well as the materials that you've mentioned, on the film of her that I've seen, she uses a piano, percussion instruments and also the bamboo pipe. Did you get a sense of why she chose to use this or that instrument in a particular situation?

EW: She preferred the bamboo pipe because of its soft sound. This is really different if you have the recorder or the bamboo pipe, because the recorder can sometimes be sharp. And this bamboo pipe was always a very soft sound. I myself constructed a bamboo pipe and I know how to play it. It is a very charming sound and not so disturbing for some children, because especially autistic children can be very sensitive and easily react in an unexpected way.

JH: And also it's very portable, and so you can move around with it, unlike the piano.

EW: Yes, this is very, very often considered as the main point. Using other instruments than the piano. You are always behind this instrument and nearly out of the room. She used also to walk with the children with the bamboo pipe. Her approach was that the children had to find their own solutions. This is a very clear concept, I think. I tried to continue my work in this sense because I was really totally convinced that she was on the right way. At the same time, she had also a distance as an observer. This was a certain mixture in one person, which I could very well understand. You can possibly better help these children this way, I think. In order to reflect on your work, it is surely necessary to keep a certain distance, in order to decide in which direction one could work further.

JH: I just have a couple more questions about the pipes, and then perhaps we can talk more about your work. Do you know where she learnt to make the pipes?

EW: I'm not sure. It could possibly be Henriette Goldenbaum or Margaret James.¹⁵ Margaret James, I think, was the first who invented the bamboo pipe. And Henriette Goldenbaum lived in

¹⁵ Henriette (Henny) Goldenbaum led the French Pipers' Guild for many years. She died in March 1995 (Drake 2006). Margaret James (1891-1978) founded the British Pipers' Guild in 1932 and through the international network of pipers' guilds would have had connections to Scheiblaue, herself a longstanding member of the Swiss Pipers' Guild. *The Piping Times* of April 1951 contains an article by Scheiblaue, 'Music for the Deaf and Dumb', which James had translated (Drake 2006).

¹⁴ Neikes (1969).

France, I think. Maybe Mimi Scheiblaueer learnt how to construct this bamboo pipe from them. I don't know.

JH: And did Mimi teach you how to make yours, or did you learn from somebody else?

EW: I learnt it from Annemarie Reichard-Kunz. She was a teacher at this institution where I worked. And she was a pupil of Mimi Scheiblaueer. After I had finished my Rhythmics studies I suggested that she should teach at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts because Brigitte Müller and Rosalia Chladek were experts in their subjects and they always said that they were not teachers for children. So we had no possibility to watch classes with children during our study. I suggested that it would be necessary to have someone for this work and so they engaged her. Unfortunately, she was very often ill, and so finally she went back to Switzerland. This was possibly the reason why I was asked to establish a programme for children. I think my experience with Mimi Scheiblaueer was very important in being chosen as teacher for this work because at this time I was really the only Rhythmics teacher who had studied in Vienna and Zurich.¹⁶

JH: So you developed that programme?

EW: Yes, I introduced and developed it. I had to establish this programme and it was a pleasure for me, and a very good opportunity.

JH: So at this time you were teaching, but you were also practising in this field.

EW: Yes, I already started to teach during my studies because during my second stay in Zurich, Vienna called Mimi Scheiblaueer, asking if she could send one of her pupils to be in Vienna, and she said, "I'm sorry, there is no-one to do that, but we have a little Austrian student here". And so I had the chance to be recommended by Mimi Scheiblaueer for a job in Vienna. Sometimes things happen like that! And so I had the chance to teach during my studies and at the same time I had practical experience. So I was in a very good situation, I think.

JH: And did you work with the same type of children? With hearing impairments, with autism, with physical disabilities?

EW: I only had this opportunity once, when my older son was five years old. I took him with me in these classes because I had to substitute for my colleague. And I thought it would possibly be important to have this experience too. And so I did it for this period. I thought that this experience was also very important for my treatment of 'normal' children. It was another tempo, and they need many more repetitions and so on. I had really very serious cases, such as children with hydrocephalus, autism spectrum disorders, Down's syndrome and hemiparesis and so on.

JH: And did you work on a one-to-one basis or in groups?

EW: No, no, always in groups.

JH: And quite mixed groups by the sounds of it?

EW: Quite mixed groups, yes. There were two groups. One group was not as seriously disabled, the other one more.

JH: And what was the context?

EW: They were in a boarding school in a certain institution for handicapped children. And, yes, perhaps on weekends their parents took them home.

JH: What was the name of the school?

EW: School for Handicapped Children in the 19th District.

JH: And did you continue with this practice throughout your professional career?

EW: I started my professional career as a student, very early, because I always had the problem to earn money. Sometimes this situation can become an advantage! So I taught already very early Rhythmics, but also piano, recorder and ear training, just to earn money. Then I became a Rhythmics teacher in a programme for kindergarten teachers and taught recorder and instrumental ensemble. A couple of years later, I introduced the Rhythmics programme for children at the academy. This was my first step into the academy, which is today the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and I became a colleague of Brigitte Müller

¹⁶ My colleague Margit Schneider and I were the first to graduate from the Rhythmics programme at the Vienna Academy of Music and Performing Arts in 1964 [EW].

and Rosalia Chladek, my admired teachers!

JH: Do you feel that there was exchange between you in terms of learning? Did you learn things from them, which you put into your work with disabled children? Do you think any of your ideas had an impact on them?

EW: Not really. I got ideas from them both because they were experts for adults and later I used them of course in my work, mainly for my adult students. My source for my work with children was Mimi Scheiblaue in Zurich. And the main ideas for teaching handicapped children I got from Mimi Scheiblaue, too.

JH: Did you also work with adults with disabilities, or was your adult teaching for the professional students?

EW: I have taught professional students for a long time, since 1968. But I also have further education in dance therapy, or movement analysis, and that's why I worked with patients who had cancer. This is my only experience with adults in a therapeutic frame. My other colleague at the academy, Margit Schneider, worked with handicapped children.¹⁷ And she also used mainly ideas coming from Mimi Scheiblaue, which she learnt firstly via me and then, later, from Annemarie Reichard-Kunz. She always said in a charming way, "If I hadn't had you as my colleague, I wouldn't have known what to do".

During my studies, Margit and I asked Chladek and Müller to show us a children's class. Finally they agreed to do this, but only once during the whole study, because they were too far removed from the children's level. When I was 28, Chladek asked to watch my children's classes. I said that it would not be necessary as she had other abilities, but she insisted. For me, it was a very difficult situation to be observed like this by my former teacher. She was an expert, a goddess for us! But, I say this to show the character of this person; she was willing to learn something that she considered

¹⁷ Margit Schneider (1936-2013) was an Austrian Rhythmics teacher and music therapist. She taught both disciplines at mdw. After her initial qualifications, she took extra study with Annemarie Reichard-Kunz. Schneider introduced the field of Rhythmics for handicapped children into the professional Rhythmics programme at mdw in 1974. She worked with adults with schizophrenia, including those in catatonic states, introducing movement at a time when a focus on playing instruments was more common [EW].

valuable. It was an opportunity to integrate into her work something she would like to do. It was touching for me. I have to say that it wasn't only my ideas she observed, my work was inspired by Mimi Scheiblaue and I was integrating her ideas.

At the same time I was very pleased, very honoured, but also ashamed and I still wished she had not asked me! It's possible that Chladek recognised in my lessons, elements not only from Mimi Scheiblaue, but also from Baer-Frissell, who was an excellent teacher of children, especially in the way they used materials and that she didn't tell the children what to do, but asked them to find the solutions for themselves. Chladek had a similar approach, she said "Try it, find out for yourself". Today I would call it an emancipatory approach; your teacher believes that you are able to find out a solution for yourself. This is very encouraging for students! These elements in my work I got from Scheiblaue and Chladek. And I adopted them because they were and are still very convincing.

JH: So did you do a dance therapy qualification?

EW: Yes.

JH: Could you tell me about that please?

EW: This was very, very interesting work for me. You have to follow a dance education that you consider in a therapeutic way. That means accompanying your dance therapy education by entering into psychotherapy for yourself, in order to work on certain problems that usually appear during your practical dance therapy education. This was also a very interesting experience for me because it is necessary to discover your background and find out the reasons for your difficulties. This way you can understand your own psychology deeply and develop a certain awareness and theoretical knowledge. It is necessary to have had this experience yourself in order to evaluate certain situations that happen in the group. Instead of making decisions for others – which you avoid – you can make some proposals to the group. This can help them to find the right solution themselves. Here we have again the same principle: the teacher creates the situation and the frame, the clients (adults, children, handicapped people) find their solutions themselves.

JH: When did you do this qualification?

EW: This must have been at the beginning of the '90s in Vienna and in Altmünster, with Cary Rick, he was our teacher. Before then, I got to know him

as a fellow student in the dance classes with Rosalia Chladek, where he was guest student from United States for one year. Later I got to know him as the creator of his own system of dance therapy/movement analysis.¹⁸

JH: Did he talk about this motivation to come to therapy and whether there was any relationship with his work with Chladek that prompted him?

EW: Yes, he did. If you work with your body, it happens not so rarely that you can find similar things. We all know our body and its possibilities and limits. So you often discover similar ideas, how to develop functions and also creative expression and so on. What I liked in working with Chladek is this way of learning. She never showed you the solutions herself, you should find them yourselves. In this way, she considered you as an expert about yourself. And this gives you a completely other view of your work than having someone who shows you what to do and how to do it. And this was a very interesting way of learning. Today we would consider it student-centred learning, a sort of 'discovery learning'. And we know that this version of learning is one of the most efficient. Chladek did it already very early in this way, and this is what I find most interesting; all these educational objectives sound very modern, very up-to-date, I think.

JH: So, at this stage then, about 40 years after you started your Rhythmics journey, you completed your dance therapy qualification, and you began to work with adults with cancer. How did that come about?

EW: At first we had to find a group for our practice. It was obligatory to have a group and I started with a colleague who was a doctor of medicine. In order to finish this further education we had to write a

¹⁸ Cary Rick (b.1941): American movement artist, who developed a system of dance therapy that became known as movement analysis (Bewegungsanalyse). It has applications in special education, psychomotor therapy, psychiatry, physiotherapy and psychotherapy. In 1994, the Institute for Movement Analysis (IMA) curriculum 'Movement Analysis, Cary Rick Method' was recognised by the Austrian National Board for Psychotherapy (ÖBVP) as an extended training in psychotherapy. See Rick (1998) and <http://www.movement-analysis.net/institute/>. [At the beginning of our further education with Cary Rick, this work was called dance therapy. Later it was called movement analysis, even though it still has clear therapeutic effects; EW.]

case study including an analysis and a description of the development of a certain patient. Later, when we should have finished our practice, they asked me if I could stay and continue without my colleague and I thought that I could do that, because it was really very, very interesting and very efficient. It opened new dimensions in approaching my work and also my work with my students. And so I did it. But when the university asked me to supervise students for their masters' theses, this was no longer possible, because it was at exactly the same time as I had my group with the cancer patients before. So I had to finish this work.

I did it for seven years. It was really very interesting and enriching. As you can probably imagine, we lost some patients of our group. These were sad and difficult moments for us; however the group could give support and help. There were sometimes people from outside who thought that it would be very hard for me to do. But it wasn't like that because you got so much from these patients, who were giving and taking at the same time, and this is all we can only wish for in terms of teaching.

JH: It's what Jaques-Dalcroze wrote. He called it a law of humankind to give and receive.

EW: Yes, that's true!

JH: What was the setting for that work?

EW: This work happened always on Wednesday evenings, from six to half-past seven. It was in the frame of research work because these patients had medical treatment at the same time and a self-help group. The patients were asked from time to time by the doctors about the success. The patients could choose between several additional therapeutic activities, such as painting and others. Some of them they decided to do the dance therapy and others took other possibilities. And my patients told me that the research concluded that people have better success if they do something in addition to the medical treatment. This was very interesting and satisfying. And for this reason I continued.

JH: Has this work been published?

EW: I am not sure. I only heard from my patients what they said about it. I only know that there was some research work, but I was not informed about the final results.

JH: What was the hospital called?

EW: Allgemeines Krankenhaus, Vienna.

JH: Did you have any contact there with medical professionals?

EW: With the doctors, unfortunately no. I only did my work and it was in this closed frame.

JH: Have you written about that work yourself?

EW: Yes, this was part of my exam, a case study. And I also had to document the progress of my group. This was part of my exam. My case study was published in 2000 by the Institut für Bewegungsanalyse (IBA).¹⁹

JH: I just wanted to go back, if I may, to Mimi. There were a couple of questions that came to my mind. She was a pupil at Hellerau. Do you remember Mimi ever talking about her experience there?

EW: No, not as far as I know. I think she didn't like to talk too much about herself. She presented her work at conferences, not only in Switzerland, also abroad in Austria and Germany. Because after the Second World War we had the situation in Austria that kindergarten teachers and all teaching people were educated in the National Socialist ideology and the responsible person in the ministry was asked to find new programmes in order to give teachers an alternative instead of this ideology. And just by chance, she came across a little book about the work of Mimi Scheiblauber, and so it happened that she got into contact with her in Zurich and invited her to come to Austria in order to teach her own Rhythmics system to all these teachers. So I know that at the beginning she was very often herself in Austria. Later she sent her pupils, such as myself, as I became one of them. It was really a fantastic chance that she invited me to go with her during the whole week. Also challenging in these high levels of the professional programme, with all the other lessons: piano, improvisation and so on. I followed her, as it was her idea. And I was very happy and thankful for it.

JH: So I think to round this off and pull it all together, it would help me to do a simple chronology, to put in some key dates. Would you mind telling me when you were born?

EW: Yes, in 1941 in Vienna.

JH: And you mentioned yesterday that your first contact with Rhythmics was...

EW: ...it must have been in 1959.

JH: So you were 18 then?

EW: Yes, and I started teaching at 18 in a primary school. This was part of this programme about the changing of ideology and how I got to know Annemarie Reichard-Kunz. I went to all her courses in Vienna and then she suggested if I might be interested in a stay in Zurich. And so I got the chance to stay with Mimi Scheiblauber in the same house where she rented a room in another flat. And this room could I use for less money.

JH: So you were visiting Mimi between 1960 and 1962?

EW: Yes, but in 1960 I couldn't finish the semester because they had another structure in summer and for the holidays. And I had to start with my class in the right time. For this reason I had to come back to Vienna. But the year after, I had already started my study at the University of Vienna and had the chance to finish this semester in Zurich because our university started in October. So I had the whole of September to finish my semester in Zurich. And this I did. At the end, I had the whole semester with Mimi Scheiblauber in all levels. Half of the full course of study, you might say.

JH: In 1961, you started at the University of Vienna and finished...

EW: ...I finished my studies with Müller and Chladek in 1964. And then I continued with instrumental music and so on.

JH: And from then on, you carried on teaching for all this time.

EW: Yes, except for maternity leave because I am the mother of two sons and for this reason I had leave for one year and six months. Then I studied pedagogic psychology between 1982 and 1987, and in the 1990s the dance therapy/movement-analysis. The pedagogical psychology was at the university where I got my masters.

JH: And what year did you start working at the institution connected with the hospital, with the cancer patients?

¹⁹ See footnote 18.

EW: I started the masters programme in 2003 and seven years before, it must have been in '96, I finished my further education and I started this education maybe three or four years before that. So, 1992 or '93 I started this education in dance therapy/movement-analysis.

JH: And when did you stop working at the university? Have you ever?!

EW: I'm still a teacher. But I reduced my work. When my husband died, Angelika Hauser asked me if I would like to continue because at this time there were not so many teachers who have two studies, the scientific in addition to our artistic study.²⁰ And so I agreed to do that because I like teaching and it was a new task for me. My life had changed, my private life, and so it was a very good idea of my colleague to invite me to continue the theory of music and movement. This is now my subject. After all the years of practical work, this is very enriching and I really like teaching young people. It is very satisfying work if you can help young people to be successful.

JH: Thank you very much, Eleonore.

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²⁰ Angelika Hauser-Dellefant (b.1957) has been head of the Institute of Music- and Movement-Education/Rhythmics and Music Therapy at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw) since 2002. (The institute divided into separate education and therapy institutes in October 2016.) A pianist and percussionist, she studied with Rudolf Konrad, Jacques Lecoq, Philippe Gaulier and Monique Pagneux, and holds a Diploma in the Franklin Method of movement training.