

# Claymont Society for Continuous Education

## Gurdjieff's Sacred Dance and the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann Music

### *An Exploration into Meaning and Inter-Relationship*

*Led by Elan Sicroff*

*September 5-9, 2024*



*Opera House in Tbilisi (Tiflis) where Gurdjieff had his first demonstration of sacred dances, where de Hartmann was conductor of the Opera orchestra, and where Gurdjieff met the de Salzmans.*

What are we to make of Gurdjieff's assertions about music and sacred dance? In his writings he states that there is an 'objective music' that will have the same effect on all people regardless of culture, type or taste; that seekers in the past read sacred dances in the way that we now read books; and that wise men in Babylon inserted "lawful inexactitudes" related to the Law of Seven, into various art forms, in order to transmit information to initiates of future generations.

In this seminar we will uncover underlying principles that govern rhythm, melody and harmony in music. We will explore the ways that composers insert meaning into their work, identify lawful inexactitudes in Gurdjieff's sacred dances, and then interpret their meaning. We will also bring the music and the dance together, to discover how they support and inform each other.

The dancer Alexander Sacharoff, with whom de Hartmann and Kandinsky worked on the "abstract opera" *Der Gelbe Klang* (The Yellow Sound) around 1910, once said, "I don't dance to the music. I dance the music." Conversely, in relation to the Movements, the musician must "play the dance."

Additional activities will include exercises in listening, meditation on sound, and inner exercises based on the teaching of Mr. Gurdjieff and Mr. Bennett.

There will also be a lecture-recital about Thomas de Hartmann: his life, the music, and the ideas that inform it.

The seminar will begin with dinner at 6:30 pm on Thursday May 11 and end after lunch on Sunday May 14. Suggested donation for the event is \$495 if you are staying at Claymont, and \$275 if staying off-site. However, do not let cost prevent you from attending as financial assistance is available.

**For more information, and to register, please contact Amy Silver, Registrar, at**  
[Claymontgathering@hotmail.com](mailto:Claymontgathering@hotmail.com)

Elan Sicroff attended the second, third and fourth Basic Courses at Sherborne under the direction of J.G. Bennett, from 1973-1975 — first as student and later as director of music. Between 1975 and 1979 he studied with Mme. Olga de Hartmann, widow of the composer, focusing on the music that de Hartmann composed in the classical idiom. He performed many recitals under her auspices, and in 1982 toured the United States.

Elan has worked with the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann music for 50 years, and has released 3 recordings: **A Journey to Inaccessible Places** (1987), **Sicroff Plays Gurdjieff** (2002), and **Laudamus...** (2010). He accompanied Movements classes for 40 years. Since 2006 he has been Artistic Director for the **Thomas de Hartmann Project**, which aims to bring de Hartmann's music back to the listening audience, after many years of neglect.