



Dances of Universal Peace International

United with All Love Harmony and Beauty May All Beings Be Well
Breath is the Holy Spirit Eat Dance and Pray Together Love Peace is Power May All Beings Be Happy

September 2013

Leaders Guild News and Update

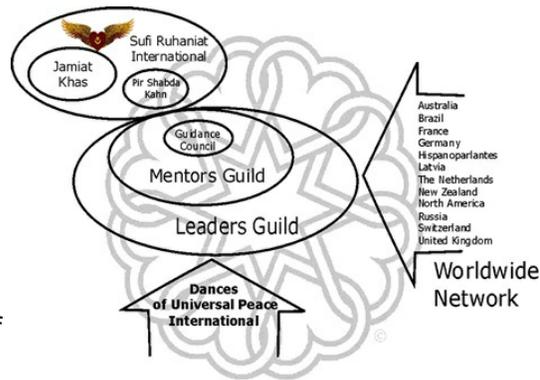
Russian Language Dance Library

This summer [95 dance write ups in the Russian language](#) have been edited and added to the on-line Library along with additions to the Russian Articles/Papers page. This completes a major step forward in making resources available to our Russian Leaders. Work continues on completing addition of Spanish language resources to the library. This fall we will be adding write-ups and articles in German.

We extend special thanks to Elena Morozova, Sophia Sylvia Murillo, Darvesha Susanne Bauer, Rashid and Katinka Beurskins and Hauke Jelaludin Sturm for their efforts in the area of international translations.

Leaders Guild and Dance Network Questions?

All mentored leaders who are current with Leaders Guild fees are automatically members of our Leaders Guild. Do you have questions about the organization of the international network? Note our resources on line, particularly the [Overview of Dance Organizations](#) and [About the Leaders Guild](#). Also, the [Leader Guidelines](#) contain a wealth of information about our Dance lineage, the role of mentor and mentee, etc. If you haven't read the guidelines recently, why not have another look now?



Leader Advances

The Guidance Council would like to congratulate and acknowledge all the Walks and Dance leaders who thus far in 2013 were certified and recognized as Mentors-in-Training, and as Mentors I, II, and III since the last announcement on March 18. Click [here](#) to view the list of these Leaders on the In-The-Garden Yahoo Group. You will need to log in to Yahoo to view the list.

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Missed Earlier Issues of this Newsletter?

See all the back issues at

[Enewsletter Home](#)

Remember!

You can post your events and event flyers on our website Calendars:

Farewell Khannah Sheine

Australian Dance Leader and Mentor Khannah Sheine, a past president of DUP International, passed away on June 11, 2013. Khannah explored her indigenous roots in Judaism as a mystic, Dance leader, Sufi Ruhaniat initiator, and pioneer in sustainable communities. She described herself as "a musician, drum teacher, journalist escapee, getting to be better cook every day, community builder and caretaker of INANA, intuitive counselor, visionary, nature lover." She was indeed all that and much more. We remember her as a great friend and big heart who helped to bring the international DUP community together. More about Khannah at the [Sufi Remembrance Project](#). Cheers Mate!



[International Events](#)

[Dance Leader Training Events](#)

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Elements of Mastery:

Longings of the Heart

By Murshida Leilah Be

The Elements of Mastery column explores the art, craft and spiritual practice of Dance leading and mentoring through the reflections and perspectives of individual mentors. Comments and discussion are welcome either on [InTheGarden](#) or [on our Facebook page](#). Ideas for future topics are welcome, as are offers to prepare articles – please contact the Executive Director.

To revisit all the articles in this series, click [here](#).

I appreciate good questions and I invite you to consider some questions with me.

What do we long for as human beings?

How does the vehicle of the Dances of Universal Peace meet our needs, and what are some of the resultant feelings when these needs are met?

What are the components in the Dances of Universal Peace that help create an experience that is meaningful, powerful, nourishing, deep and rich?

What is it in us that is nourished, inspired, strengthened, opened, fed, uplifted by our experience within the context of a dance session?

That's a load of questions - we could just stop here and ponder together for a while.



For the sake of offering a more comprehensive picture, find below a list of some common ones.

beauty safety affection acceptance cooperation closeness
communion companionship consideration consistency

inclusion respect intimacy authenticity honesty presence
play humor peace movement

touch ease equality harmony order meaning

contribution discovery celebration mourning.

As human beings, we long to have meaningful connection with others.

We long to be witnessed, to be received, we long to feel warmth, affection and love, and to offer our loving presence. We long for empathy and for compassion. We long to belong, and some people very much long to build community, which this DUP culture naturally does.

We long to awaken from our dream of separateness from our Source and from each other. We long to be free from false ideas, concepts and beliefs. We long to feel light fill our bodies, hearts and minds.

We long to experience the sacred. We long for life to have meaning and to be connected to our soul's purpose. We long to unfold ourselves into vast and free beings. We long to know ourselves, to accept ourselves and to thrive in this life we have been so graciously given.

At one camp recently, a young woman in her 20's, and new to the dances, expressed beautifully that her experience in the dances had allowed her to open to a new possibility; that of relating to other human beings with an intimate quality of presence, of seeing and being seen on a soul level, she had only thought was only possible in meeting with one's lover. She was grounded in her new experience and in awe of this way of connecting which felt safe and intimate without it being within a sexual context. I think everyone in the room felt her relief and sense of discovery of this new territory, and felt the way that she was warmed and changed by her experience, and also recognized it as part of their own experience.

An aspiration I hold for our body of dance leaders, mentees, and mentors is for us to consider these, mostly unspoken, yearnings; generating an atmosphere that holds the possibility for an abundance of these needs to be fulfilled. Within the context of our dance sessions, ideally we provide a space where the dancers are most likely to feel engaged, comfortable, open hearted, with a sense of friendliness and inclusion.

May the consequence of our work be one of great benefit, so that people walk away from our dance meetings and dance camps feeling inspired, tender, warmed, optimistic, grateful, invigorated, joyful, calm, clear-headed, tranquil, refreshed, enlivened, and radiant!

A Murshida in the Sufi Ruhaniat International, Leilah Be began leading the Dances of Universal Peace and the practice of Zikr in the early 1980's. She has composed many beautiful circle dances and Zikrs, danced the world over, and is appreciated for her depth of devotion. She lives on the Island of Maui with her husband, Bodhi. They are the parents of five grown children and one grandchild. Leilah and Bodhi live a rural home life with gardens and an orchard and serve the local community as counselors, cherags/ministers, and also help educate and serve in the field of death and dying. They also travel widely, sharing the fruits of their practice in retreats worldwide.

[Click for a .pdf file of this article](#)

International Voices

In this series of articles by prominent Dance Leaders around the world, we give voice to their vision of the role of the Dances in culture, to new ideas, current emerging issues and pathways to intercultural understanding.

A Dancing Ecology Downunder

by Arjuna Ben-Zion Weiss

The "Sufi Message" is an answer to the cry of humanity today; at this moment, when materialism is all-pervading and commercialism is continually on the increase.

The "Sufi Message" respects all Religions, recognizes all Scriptures, regards all the Prophets held in esteem by large sections of humanity, and is the Source and Goals of all ""His Wisdom in the One". - Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan at the American Radio in 1926

What does dance do for us? First and foremost, it inculcates the sense of rhythm and enhances our response to rhythm. This is really a response to life. It makes us more living, which is to say, more spiritual. It brings out beauty of form and movement, and envelops our personalities in the enjoyment of them. It takes us beyond ourselves, bringing an initial taste of the state of non-being, which is really a balm for the soul. - Murshid Samuel Lewis

The Dances of Universal Peace, as described by Murshid here, are one of the primary spiritual practices in my life. I also do practices drawn from Universal Sufism, Renewal Judaism, Engaged Buddhism, Urban Shamanism and Yoga. This diversity of practices, drawn from different cultural traditions reflects the situation in the multicultural Australia of today. My practices were not always so diverse, just as Australia was not always so conscious of its cultural diversity or of its biodiversity.



Arjuna

When I arrived in Australia in the 1950s it was very much a British colony in the South Pacific. A British monoculture dominated the society. Present day multicultural Australia was only officially recognised in the 1970s. Aboriginal people were not recognised as citizens of Australia until 1967. British agricultural practices imported by the colonists almost turned Australia into a desert twice in 200 years. The colony itself resulted from the invasion of Aboriginal land. Hundreds of Aboriginal cultures and native species of plants and animals unique to this country were destroyed. The great irony was that the uniqueness of fauna and flora here had

fascinated British scientists like Joseph Banks and Charles Darwin. It had contributed to Darwin's theory of the origin of species. On the other hand the colonists had mercilessly massacred Aboriginal people and devastated the delicate ecosystem by inappropriate agricultural practices.

So how does this relate to the Dances of Universal Peace you ask? As Arjun of Colombia writes in his inspiring article, we are facing a planetary crisis ecologically. In that sense Australia can be regarded as a case study of how this crisis has come about. Practicing the dances in Australia can then be regarded as part of a healing process for both the people living here and the land itself. Just last Saturday, at our regular biweekly dance meeting in the Quaker Hall in Sydney, we focussed on a theme of dances inspired by indigenous traditions. The first four of these were drawn from the Native American traditions and celebrated *Beauty, the Sun, the Moon and the Earth* as our Mother. Australian Aboriginal people also celebrate the Earth as our mother, however we have yet to create a dance in an Aboriginal language that celebrates this. Two of the last three dances were inspired by the Maori tradition and one by the Hawaiian tradition. Given that Australia is an island in the South Pacific, there was some geographical relevance to having these dances as part of the evening. Australia is part of the cultural ecology of the Pacific Ocean, even if this is rarely acknowledged.



Australian Dancers

It was this lack of acknowledgement of cultural ecology in Australia that inspired me to become involved in the work of the Pachamama Alliance. This work involves facilitating a symposium called 'Changing the Dream, Awakening the Dreamer', in which we present through videos and discussion the situation facing the planet to small groups of people to encourage them to take action. The Pachamama Alliance grew out of the crisis faced by the Achuar, an indigenous people of the Ecuadorian Amazon rainforest, whose land was being threatened by the petrol companies that had devastated much of Ecuador already. The basis of the symposium is that the crisis facing the Achuar is also facing the whole planet. It is attributed to three interactive factors: the unsustainable ecological practices of the industrial world; a lack of social justice in neo-liberal capitalist economics; and a lack of spiritual fulfilment in our post-modern urban lifestyle. As a social ecologist, the symposium has become a way to share my concerns with my community.

[Continue to the full article \(.pdf\)](#)

Dancing in India 2013



Dances of Universal Peace - "Ganga Ki Jay Jay!" - with Indian tourists near the Ganga river at Vishwa Shanti Stupa ("Stupa of Universal Peace"), Vaishali Dist., Bihar, India at the time of the 2013 Maha-kumbha Mela in Allahabad

Shivadam Adam Burke leading with Prema Desara on drum.