TWELVE RELIEFS ON THE MOODS OF THE ZODIAC

Gertraud Goodwin, January 1991-February 1992

The relief work on the moods of the zodiac was my second approach towards the theme. It took little more than a year and I tried to work on the zodiac moods during their appropriate time, although this was not always possible.

I felt a stronger and simpler connection to each mood, so that their gestures have become more one- sided and characteristic. Yet again, I feel I have only discovered another side of each one. And new aspects would emerge, if the zodiac would be worked on with the question of polarity, i.e. working on Aries and Libra, then on Taurus and Scorpio etc. or taking into account the Trigones, i.e. the relationship of always three of the zodiac moods related to each of the elements. These aspects will be looked at at another time.

Here the exercise was to come to simple fundamental sculptural gestures, trying to find the underlying "alphabet of form" which is the basis of every living becoming thing in nature around us. But rarely we would find only one gesture at work- they work together in the most varied combinations, just like the alphabet is not yet poem!

During the work, the process of becoming of each relief was an experience of a true metamorphosis. This is not physically visible, as it is a process in time. But both forces- the form gesture, the forces of the zodiac, and the process in time of metamorphosis always work together: without the zodiac forces no form would ever be visible- all would be a process in time like water and air! Without metamorphosis, we would have a never changing world of fixed and static forms without any change! The reliefs were originally all modelled in plasticine and then cast in plaster. Then they were painted with metal pigments according to their relationship with the planets.

The first four moods of the zodiac- the Ram, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer have one common quality and that is that their formgestures can be seen in the unfolding of the growing plant as it appears as from in time. But these formgestures manifest in every living being in very individual ways and by no means in a time sequence which shows that the zodiac constellations next to each other in space, i.e. Ram is followed by Taurus etc. In this sense, the plant organs are an exception as the character of appearance of the various zodiacal formforces are totally individual and one- sided. But the twelve build a whole organism together, like a large alphabet of a cosmic script. The twelve different "letters" of this script form amongst each other the most varied poetry: the archetypal ideas of every living thing.

Into these great, timeless, cosmic special formgestures, the processes of metamorphosis, of a development in time, works into it like the inner substance of the walnut is being shaped according to its shell-although the shell and the nut are quite individually shaped! But they are one in the idea: "unity lies in the living becoming".

Thus, there is never a form without zodiac gestures and there is never growth in time without the processes of metamorphosis: and both are intricately interwoven with each other. Thus, the Ram- gesture is present wherever a "head- formation" of one sort or another is present, the Taurus- gesture is always there where substance is spreading itself out into space, etc. It is important to see the archetypal universal gesture and then to study how it appears individually in every living being differently. In this sense, the description of the next zodiac gestures is then not following the plant's next development, but looking at the individual formgesture- wherever it appears.





ARIES

The motive of Aries is the beginning of the chorus of the twelve Zodiac moods- the overture with the theme: breakthrough towards the light! With enthusiasm and fire the Aries follows single-mindedly this purpose. In the physical birth, the head comes first- a deed in the truest sense. This pushing and reaching towards the light often goes against strong resistance and needs dedication and idealism to bring about this deed. And the strength of the will gains in the face of resistance, becomes stronger and doesn't break.

These were the principal qualities and guidelines to come to a sculptural gesture which is primarily a rising convexity from the bottom left to the top right, breaking through and relieved from its hold on the left side.

In nature, we see this force in the gesture and form of all buds and their striving to break through. Also, the uncurling fern and mush-rooms, growing even through concrete or tarmac, illustrate the gesture of this deed.



TAURUS

ttTaurus carries the Aries theme forward into the gesture of "spreading life and substance outwards into space". Taurus-forces are full of light, vitality and strength ever moving forward and outward, full of feeling and excitement for the love of the earth.

"...it weaves the thread of life through worlds imbued with being in mindful revelation..." we hear in Rudolf Steiner's meditation on the mood of the Taurus.

For the sculpture, these gestures manifested for me in forms of moving from inside out, forward and outward. In more differentiated forms, full of the juice of life, substance is being spread into space.

In nature, we can see this in all forms which spread themselves out: in the leaf to either side, in the plant as a whole, in the tree- everywhere where we have life pulsating through spreading substance.



GEMINI

In the beginning of Gemini lies the Pentecost experience, and at the end, the sun reaches its highest point. This highest time of the year is also full of tension, full of the mighty possibilities of unfolding. The plants reveal themselves fully, and they can do that through the typical Gemini of "expansion and contradiction, held in symmetry". Only the balance between right and left, and between centre and circumference makes it possible to hold the uprightness.

In the sculpture, this manifested in a form with two wings, spreading up and out- and held by a strong crossing and contraction below.

In nature, symmetry goes through every organism, in man and the animal in a particular way: in the crossing- over of the nerves lies the capability for consciousness, to be able to "lose oneself"-to "find oneself". In the plant symmetry is visible in every leaf, but also in the whole of the plant: never is one side overcrowded so that the plant or tree would fall over. This would be a kind of living and moving symmetry.

CANCER



After the summer solstice, the great dying begins already in nature. All activity is turned inward to enclose what is the whole purpose of development: the blossom. All forces are being collected to be intensified and made inward- "to meet with rigour each test". In man, the forces of Cancer build the shell of the chest and ribs which enclose heart and lungs. With each breath, we take in the jump from the outer to the inner world of our body has to be made, also from the old to the new.

In the relief, these forces manifested in a spiralling movement towards the within, closing itself off from the periphery. The three incoming waves are at a breaking point- thus the new seed can come into being in the inner space created.

LEO



Leo's relationship is with the sun: the sun being the heart for every growing life on earth. Through Leo, the sunforces manifest particularly where heart- qualities are present, our own heart being like a little sun in our own organism, where it relates between centre and circumference in an ongoing living rhythm. This faculty to relate between polarities, between centre and circumference, between concentration in a point and "flaming enthusiasm" is Leo's domain.

In the relief, the relationship between the centre and the circumference is also the main theme. The gentle rhythms emanating from the centre to the right side and then up, don't disperse outward, but are drawn back, and then over to the left and then down until they are gathered and called back into the centre.

Seeds are ripening in August: the plant has truly found its destiny and gathers all forces towards that aim-Leo's virtue is courage, and man needs this courage to make himself ready at every point in his life to take on his own karma out of the forces of his heart. This is how man searches with Leo forces, to unite himself (the microcosm) with his destiny in the macrocosm.

VIRGO



Virgo is always depicted with the ripe sheaf of grain as a sign for ripeness or ripening. In times of old, Virgo's cloak or mantle was seen as the whole of the zodiac, holding all of the universal wisdom. All forces are turned inward to accomplish this deed of ripening. This Virgo wisdom knows all substances, tastes, divides, selects and separates them for their further aim in the cosmic order and harmony.

In the relief, I tried to indicate the vastness of the eternal plane out of which every relief comes, but which is particularly grand and cosmic in Virgo. In this vastness, an inner space of great intimacy opens itself up and invites us to admire its treasure: the seed. There is a feeling of inwardness, awe and in that sign- maybe it is comparable to a mood when we watch a butterfly coming out of the pupa: if there is a great and sudden noise, the butterfly will die.

All of nature's greatest secrets are hidden to us either through a real physical sheath or through size, or both. The five-pointed star in the apple is one of these secrets.

LIBRA



In the time of Libra, we come to the equinox: the sun has reached a balance between her highest and her lowest point, and the quietness of autumn descends. This search for balance on every level is Libra's great domain: between levity and gravity, between giving and receiving, between inward and outward. In the great balance of polarities life unfolds and concludes.

The relief is spread out wide into the horizontal. Like two large wings the two sides reach out from the middle, where they are held in a conscious uprightness and an inner space, where the decision of all decisions is made-always moving, never still. The right side has the tendency downwards, the left side upwards- and maybe the moment of the change is depicted.

This search for balance it to be found everywhere in nature: the root is in proportion and size according to the whole of the plant, the branches are not too heavy for the trunk etc. If a tree grows on a slope, its branches and roots grow in such a way that they build a counterbalance to the slope. This can be seen even in the cut trunk, where every ring of growth is widening and becoming narrower according to where the tree grew: the rings at the side of the slope are narrow and contracted the wood is harder and on the other side the wood is wider and softer. Thus, the whole tree constantly balances itself to its surroundings.





At the end of October, we are going towards the darkest time of the year. All of nature is penetrated by death-forces: the withering, wilting and falling leaves all the life-forces retreat into the earth. But as every falling leaf keeps the force of the new bud in the shelter of its former place of attachment until the spring, the spirit forces will transcend all dying in the seed. Scorpio forces work from the spirits of form, which work on the earth through the light: thus shaping, forming and finalising all shapes. In our ego, we have qualities of the dividing intellect and the recognising ego-consciousness present, which show us the polarity of the Scorpion-which kills itself when exposed to the light- and the eagle which unfolds its overlooking flight high up in the sunlight.

In the relief, these forces of polarity build the theme: down to the left sharp, cold hard and narrow contracted shapes and edges are finally stuck together, whereas up above a wing-like gesture lifts itself generously out and opens up to the right in open planes. Both polarities can only be held together by a great dynamic movement in between.

In nature, death and life are always very near together: in the dead hard crust of a seedpod, the seed is kept.





The Greeks illustrated the archer in the image of the centaur: an upright upper half of a human body comes out of a horse's body. It was the depiction of man's ego forces becoming master over the lower animal drives within himself. The sun reaches its lowest point, and we need all our conscious ego-forces not to die into the darkness of midwinter-but to keep spiritually awake and aware of our goal.

Thus, the sculptural theme became the battle between the horizontal, heavy pressing down forces and the vertical uprightness, which needs to be strong enough to be victorious over the horizontal. Both forces meet in the diagonal, which is held by verticality.



CAPRICORN

When we move into the time of Capricorn, the had reached her lowest pint and is on her way up again. Into that tender hopeful sunlight in midwinter, the Christchild is born: the old year comes to an end and a new one begins. During the twelve Holy Nights, the twelve months of the coming new year are macrocosmically experienced in advance- the earth is spiritually open to receive a new impulse. Capricorntime is the time for new beginnings on many levels. It is the turning point of time and of the world! WE are called on to go towards the future joy and enthusiasm but not escape from our present tasks and to take careful decisions on the basis of past experiences. We can have the tendency to hold on to the past, the habits and dogmas, and to be afraid of the future- avoiding the present by clinging on to the past. Inwardly awake and outwardly courageous we can master and prepare for the future.

The sculptural gesture tries to show these two one- sided qualities of clinging to the past in hard mineralised and fixed forms on the bottom left- and hurrying off to the future in dissolving waves on the right. In between is the space where in wakeful quiescence the "I am" can be born in uprightness able to be in the presence and torn apart by the past- and future forces. In the Eurythmy- movement of the sound "L" those polarities can be held in balance and related to each other in the flow of time.



AQUARIUS

The sun goes further upwards and one lives with the hope towards the coming spring. In nature, it is the time when ice and snow begin to melt and all of earth's closed- off qualities of the wintertime get into a moving, melting and flowing process.

In Rudolf Steiner's meditation of the Aquarius we hear about boundaries and boundlessness, about currents flowing further and sustaining themselves: man is caught in his own boundary of his skin- and part of the boundless cosmos. This asks for a constant seeking of balance between the danger of losing oneself in the boundless- and to stay stuck in oneself. The continuous striving throughout our life is to bring our thinking, feeling and willing into a balance. Thus, the Aquarian forces are the archetypal forces of the streaming life forces, the foundation for everything living, of streams meeting and working together in their very particular laws: the laws of the flowing water, moving in continuous rhythmical double- bent surfaces.

In the relief, we see a broad stream moving principally from left to right- but also up and down and down and up. All the movements pause and breathe out in the centre, a round space, but also incorporate it and move on.

In the Eurythmy gesture, we have the only movement in the circle of the other eleven still zodiac gestures: a rhythmical movement of both arms undulating up and down.



PISCES

With Pisces, the circle of the zodiac is complete. WE have gone through the whole of our physical body, with the feet as the last parts being shaped by the Pisces- forces. With our feet, we walk the earth, we go from place to place, shaping our destiny. And in every destiny, we gain and we lose; and even when we lose can we accept the loss and thus gain in a new way, growing in our destiny. We hear about this gain and loss in Rudolf Steiner's meditation for Pisces, how the loss may be gain in itself. In our destiny, we feel that we are beings of two worlds: the physical and the spiritual. In the whole of the human form we can see ourselves standing on the earth and thus are firmly connected with the physical world. In our upright standing in levity we lift ourselves up into a different realm in our upper part, where we can perceive and think. This gesture is enhanced in the Eurythmy gesture for Pisces with our left foot firmly on the ground, the right foot touching the earth only with the toes. The left hand touches lightly the side of the pelvis whereas the right arm is stretched straight up. It is as though we are the bridge ourselves between these two realms!

The relief tries to show this movement up- and through a horizontal bridge into a new upper realm.

MEDITATIONS ON THE ZODIAC

Gertraud Goodwin

2004-05. 45-55 cm. Patinated Plaster.

This is the third time within a 17 year period that I have worked on the Zodiac for over a year each time. It is a subject which is fundamental to my teaching as well as to my own free artistic work. For me it is the archetypal language of form, the sculptural alphabet so to speak. Each time I work with it the gestures become simpler and clarify themselves further. These gestures are the basis of form in every living, becoming being in nature around us, but rarely we find one gesture at work – they work together in the most varied combinations. In the human form these twelve gestures have created the most sublime symphony.

During the work, the process of becoming of each sculpture is an experience of true metamorphosis. This is not physically visible as it is a process in time. Both forces, the form gesture forces of the Zodiac and the process of creation in time, metamorphosis, always work together.

- Without the Zodiac forces no visible form, only process in time like air and water.
- Without Metamorphosis a never-changing world of static forms.

In the circle, everything comes to rest – and everything is possible. Life's beginning and end in endless variations of seeds, eggs and cells, it offers itself naturally to a subject of cosmic dimension. The cosmos in itself is circular, and is visited by the earth's circular motion in the cyclical movement of the year.

The symmetry of the circle holds centre and periphery at the same time, and within it this peaceful eternal rest. It is. It wants nothing and gives everything: focus, contemplation, stillness, holding, coming to an essence.

It offers itself selflessly to these Zodiacal, twelve gestures, which are imprinted on the circle as in a sign-like cosmic choreography. This twelvefold sculptural script can be thought of as the foundation for every possible physical gesture on earth in stone, plant, animal and man. Working on the theme of "Resurrection" sculpturally, the last and most satisfactory part of a sequence on this subject impressed me in its clarity and simplicity. The circle within which it was held had, for me, an eternal peacefulness.

So I continued working with disc-like sculptural meditations, experimenting with symmetry and asymmetry. It was a new field for me to work with, geometry, simplicity and symmetry. And before long the arising gestures spoke strongly to me in a particular and more definite form language. I recognised the possibility of expressing the gestures of the Zodiac in this way.

I realised that this last disc for the theme of "Resurrection" had the right gesture for the expression of "Pisces"; the end of one group of work had become the beginning of a new group! This was a revelation. To be finally able to express so much with the greatest simplicity was like coming home.

This new-found simplicity within the circle has, for me, a strong biographical correlation to a new phase in my life.







CANCER



LEO



TAURUS



VIRGO



ARIES



LIBRA





AQUARIUS



CAPRICORN



SAGITTARIUS





ARIES

24th December 2004

The Upright

With the leading theme of "Breakthrough to the light in the uprightness", the forces of Aries make the overture to the twelve moods of the Zodiac. With idealistic fire this goal is pursued. Sculpturally this force concentrates itself into a triangle which breaks through the circle on top.



TAURUS

26th December 2004

Spreading, Enlarging

The forces of Taurus move and fill the earth forces with substance and strength in a life-filled gesture towards the outside and into space. In nature this inner fullness shows itself in the thickening and spreading of the buds and in everything which extends and broadens itself substantially in nature. The sculptural gesture is an earthen square which spreads substance into the circle, creating space and volume, pressing outwards.



GEMINI

Symmetry, Crossing

Through the forces of Gemini, complete unfolding is achieved, held in living symmetry. The sculptural gesture embraces a breakthrough, which is held symmetrically through a crossing.



CANCER

28th December 2004

The Spiral

The forces of Cancer bend themselves into two spirals towards within in such a way that they do not meet. In building an inner space together, they close themselves off from the periphery. Sculpturally the two spiral gestures begin to form an inner space.



LEO

29th December 2004

Periphery and Centre in Dynamic Tension

The forces of Leo form like the "heart core" of the Zodiac: sun-imbued extension into the periphery and contraction in the centre in dynamic tension have to be held together. Sculpturally, this is achieved through a vertical force, concentrated into a point. Whereas radial streams of forces reach out into the periphery.



VIRGO

30th December 2004

The Fulfilled Inner Space

The forces of Virgo harbour the fullness of cosmic wisdom and let them ripen with inwardness. Sculpturally, a half open, half closed, inner space embraces and shelters this abundance.



LIBRA

31st December 2004

Equilibrium

The forces of Libra hold the moveable equilibrium in the space between above and below, right and left, back and front. Sculpturally, the upper and lower half-circle are shifted slightly out of the circle; this tension is held in balance through a double-bent surface.



SCORPIO

1st January 2005

Healing the Split / Separation

Scorpio forces express themselves with great dynamic by means of separation, polarisation and even by death. All forms which have grown and become, achieve their ultimate materialisation – and through this also their death. But in every leaf axil of the dying leaf, there already rests the new bud for the coming year. Thus the forces of death are necessary to make room for new life. Sculpturally, the circle is divided into two halves; separating from each other they create a new space in between, full of tension.



SAGITTARIUS

2nd January 2005

The Diagonal

The forces of Sagittarius hold the dynamic between the forces of levity (movement) and the horizontal forces of gravity (rest), in the goal-orientated diagonal. Sculpturally, this dynamic tension expresses itself in a diagonal countermovement; held and anchored on the bottom left, it presses upwards, penetrating the circle above to the right.



CAPRICORN

3rd January 2005

Connection Between Past, Present and Future

The forces of Capricorn mark the end of the old and the beginning of the new year. Into the turning upwards again of the sun, the Christ child is born. The forces of the old (left side) and the forces of the new (right side) "look at each other". In waking up to each other a fulfilled space arises between them: the vessel (the "crib") of the "present mindfulness" into which the greatest and highest that can develop between man and man, and man and God, can live and develop.



AQUARIUS

4th January 2005

The Double-Bent Plane

All other eleven Zodiac forces have to go through the gate of Aquarius "in order to become efficient on earth". The forces of Aquarius bring all the other forces to their full efficacy; they are made human. The manifestation of Aquarius in Eurythmy is the only moving gesture, whereas all the other eleven gestures are still, quietly held gestures. Thus Aquarius is the great move and mediator in the dance of the twelve, which creates the relationship between cosmos and earth. Sculpturally, this expresses itself in the standing wave, the double-bent surface. Responding to this all-encompassing efficacy of Aquarius, I have applied quite consciously, the double-bent plane in all the other eleven meditational discs.



PISCES

5th January 2005

The Cross

In our upright human form we walk the destiny of our life with our feet; vertical and horizontal forces interpenetrate in the cross. Christ has accomplished the greatest deed on the cross for humanity and the earth. In our own life, we constantly search towards bringing all the things to cross, to come together, to unite; matter and spirit, death and life, holding tight and letting go. Man is put into this polarity, equipped with all the faculties necessary to bring the poles together.

ZODIAC - SCULPTURES

Gertraud Goodwin

2016-18. 70-95 cm. Glass Fibre, Plaster & Wire.

During the Holy Nights of 2015/2016 I worked with the Zodiac again, this time with small wire armatures which I covered in plasticine and wire. Again, I sensed I was as if partaking in a big flowing movement through the 12 Holy Nights, the small models becoming one by one, day by day, part of a cosmic whole sculptural language. My longing was to refine and lighten their physical manifestation, to achieve a certain fragility and thinness, with open edges and breakthroughs. I wanted the individual zodiacal form forces like taking hold of matter, interpenetrating it, shaping it into a kind of instrument or vessel, which would resound in a particular gesture, showing these form forces like "at work": the rough surface and open edges seemingly unfinished, the process still continuing, unfinished, its traces strongly engrained where the wires show up clearly. This unfinished, incomplete, fragile and perishable quality has a special attraction and beauty for me, similar to nature's autumnal displays of seedpods and seeds. The Japanese term of "wabi-sabi" signifying a turning away from Chinese perfection and the splendour of previous epochs, comes close to what I searched for. "Wabi" means humbleness, moderation and the beauty of the eternally changing energy. The word "sabi" comes from 12th and 13th century poetry, points us today towards the transient, the patina, the mild mourning over the ephemeral process of things as a metaphor for our own existence.

Aspects of these qualities have always moved me, in nature as well as in life: I have to become still, be patient, look and perceive exactly and sense what moves me inwardly.

Rainer Maria Rilke formulates it in the first of his *Duino Elegies* in the following way:

For beauty is only the infant of scarcely endurable terror, and we are amazed when it casually spares us. ...

(Translated by Stephen Cohn)

The open irregularly textured surfaces create traces, evidence of a becoming, transient gesture "in process", contrasting the finished, slick and hard surfaces, which repel us in their impenetrable enduring finality. Becoming more aware of my own transience getting older, I sensed a longing for these more spiritual qualities in my sculptures, at the borders of impermanence and liminality.

Transposing the form from the small model to a larger armature and then adding fibreglass and plaster to it to create the sculpture, is much more difficult than working with clay – the soft, flexible material so willing and giving to search for the actual form. To arrive at the finished work, the patinated plaster and fibreglass sculpture, takes longer than the actual creation of the theme in clay from which the cast has to be taken. I realised that this casting process has too much of a craft aspect and takes so much time. I decided to leave the last sculptures in clay, a material in which they could not be kept because of the armatures inside.





































ARIES

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The straight wires radiate in from above and from a wide periphery, shaping and contracting on their way towards a point, a V-shaped shield: a receiving of cosmic forces is manifesting in matter in a condensed but open vessel, which resounds, materialises and protects these forces.

TAURUS



The metal wires manifesting the formative forces begin to open and move in order to congregate into a forward moving spiral. Matter is moved, augmented and widened to embody and mould itself powerfully.

GEMINI

П

The receiving metal wires spread themselves ever more into space. Wing-like and symmetrical, the gestures cross each other free and relying on each other at the same time. They form an inner space together, expanding and contracting with great dynamic.







CANCER

9

Two separate spiral gestures move as if away from each other into opposite directions. Thus the space in between each other is moved and enlivened, communicating between the two gestures with inner warmth.

LEO

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A continuous circular spiral movement accelerates upwards and outwards, intensifying inwardly downwards. A pulsating expansion – systolic, and contraction – diastolic, embraces, enlivens and protects and inner space.

VIRGO

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A generous warm inner space is created by an embracing gesture. The movement gently spirals upwards where it is slowly and carefully released – and where new forces from above are received, and then protected below, in eternally exchanging motion.







LIBRA

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Wing-like, the double-bent surface spreads itself horizontally. The centre gently acts as a place of a sensitive exchange from top-right to bottom-left, and from the back to the front. The top edge is free and open to perceive, the wires guiding the forces to the centre. All activity is held and balanced by the quiet support of the bottom half.

SCORPIO

M

From out of the greatest expanse of two wing-like, open, reaching upwards and outwards gestures, a sharply formed, concentrated and contracting spear-like gesture points diagonally downwards. The two polarities hold each other in great tension and awareness. Their one-sided capacities can be healing as well as destructive – if not coordinated and balanced out between each other.

SAGITTARIUS

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In an open, spiralling circle, a diagonal sharp "arrow" is held in check – which in turn keeps the circular movement open and in tension. The round and the straight are in a mutual understanding between each other.





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With great dynamic and decisiveness the horizontal wing-like gestures receive, pass on, and are drawn out. Past and future reach out towards each other in a constant transition – a moment in time, a point of stillness in the open space, which holds and radiates at the same time.



AQUARIUS

m

These forces are the archetypal mediator in between. Between narrow and wide, thick and thin, open and closed, the double-bent surface stretches and contracts, always in movement and loyal to the laws of coherence.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that all the other Zodiac forces have to go through the gate of Aquarius to become capable to work on the earth. Thus the forces of Aquarius create the sublime harmony in the human being.

The eurythmy gesture is the only one within the twelve which moves the arms continuously.



PISCES

 \mathcal{H}

Tall, upright and open, the flexible centre swings out horizontally towards two sides – forwards to the future and backwards to the past. This creates a crossing as well as a cross which is held from the vertical centre, which gives and directs its forces into the horizontal.