

The red west window of the first Goetheanum

The red west window of the first Goetheanum depicted in pictorial form the essence of imagination.

The path to imaginative knowledge was shown in the left side window. The warming red, in which the warmth ether manifests itself, permeates the whole picture. One sees, as self-knowledge begins, a bright figure that has climbed a high rock and is directing its gaze and arms downwards towards three grotesque bird- and snake-like animal-like figures that stretch upwards threateningly; the one on the right even shows a human-like face. This is the lower soul nature of man, the trinity of the still unpurified soul forces of thinking, feeling and willing, in which lower, animal astral forces still work. These are the three beasts from the abyss to which the Guardian of the Threshold points us, as Rudolf Steiner also described it in 1924 in the esoteric teachings for the first class of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum:

„He has called us, the guardian, so that we stand very close to him. He looks towards us with a serious face. And he shows us how our will, our feeling, our thinking appears before the face of the gods in imaginations. There it is not yet human, this wanting, this feeling, this thinking, there it is still animal. Self-recognition is still startling, devastating.

But we must pass through the knowledge of that self which our time, our world-time, gives us out of its formation of error, so that we can advance to true self-knowledge.“ (Lit.:GA 270c, p. 33)

At the same time, this is also an image for the still imperfect soul members: the sentient soul, the intellectual or mind soul and the consciousness soul. When the spiritually striving human being succeeds in detaching himself from this lower nature and looking at it objectively from the outside, the imagination can light up.

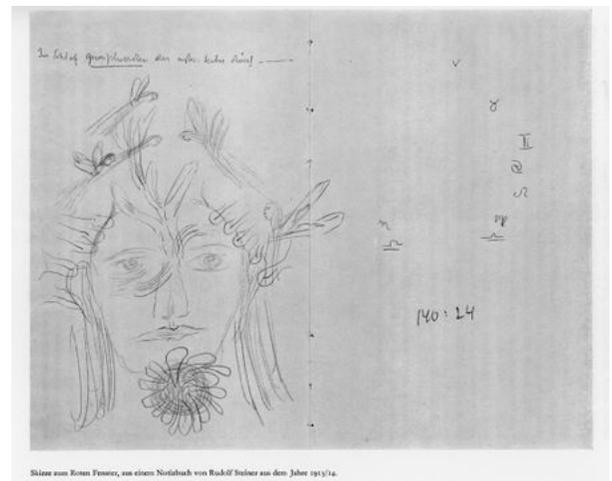
In Rudolf Steiner's design, the left side window bears the subtitle: *ES offenbart (IT reveals)*.

In the middle part of the window, the already awakened ability to imagine is depicted. The human face shown here bears the sign of the two-petalled lotus flower on its forehead, which is already activated. The eye area is particularly emphasised, the power of spiritual seeing, of imagination is awakened, because the experiences of the forehead lotus are expressed in the light ether part of the human etheric body.

Next to it, on the upper left and right, you see two winged angelic beings belonging to the first hierarchy. The left angelic figure shows the sign of the moon, the right one the symbol of the sun and above the human head Saturn. This refers to the planetary stages of evolution that preceded the earth's existence, to the old Saturn, where man re-



Rudolf Steiner's design for the red west window of the first Goetheanum, showing in pictorial form the essence of the imagination.



Detail sketch by Rudolf Steiner in a notebook from 1913/14.

ceived the physical body, to the Old Sun, which gave man the etheric body, and finally to the Old Moon, the planet of wisdom, on which man received his astral body.

Below this, two figures with animal heads are seen on the left and on the right, apparently murmuring something into man's ear. This is already an indication of a sound experience. The sound ether resounds. These two beings belong to the second hierarchy. The left figure wears a lion's head, symbolising the etheric forces; the right figure has a bull's head, a sign for the physical world.

The throat chakra is visible in the larynx area, which already points to the inspired cognition. The soul experiences are now also expressed in the word or life ether. Below this is Michael, the most important representative of the third hierarchy, the helper who helps to fight the dragon, the lower nature of man, and unites with the forces of man to bring him down.

The design for the middle window is subtitled: *ICH SCHAUE (I SEE)*.

In the right-hand side window, man is shown after he has attained the power of imagination. Again we see the bright human figure on the top of the towering rock, its arms and gaze now turned towards the spiritual sun, which fills the uppermost part of the picture with its radiant glow. Between the human being and the animals in the abyss hover three pairs of angels who hold out their hands to each other. At the same time they represent the purified higher soul forces of the human being. In their bosom they also carry the higher spiritual elements of the human being: the spirit self, the life spirit and the spirit man. Together with the human being at the top, the three pairs of angels form an image of the sacred number seven. The animal figures from the depths have sunk back. The consciousness soul has transformed itself into the imagination soul through spiritual training.

The subtitle in Steiner's design is: *ES hat geoffenbart (IT has revealed)*.

See also

- The glass windows of the first Goetheanum

Literature

- Georg Hartmann: *Goetheanum-Glasfenster*, Verlag Am Goetheanum, Dornach 2002, ISBN 3-7235-0049-8
- Rudolf Steiner: *Esoterische Unterweisungen für die erste Klasse der Freien Hochschule für Geisteswissenschaft am Goetheanum 1924*, GA 270/3 (1999), ISBN 3-7274-2700-0 English: rsarchive.org
German: [pdf](#) [pdf\(2\)](#) [html](#) [mobi](#) [epub](#) [archive.org](#)



References to the work of Rudolf Steiner follow Rudolf Steiner's Collected Works (CW or GA), Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach/Switzerland, unless otherwise stated.

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Rudolf Steiner Audio - Recorded and Read by Dale Brunsvold

steinersbooks.org - Anthroposophic Press Inc. (USA)

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