

IN MEMORIAM, HERBERT HENKE  
1931-2015



## A GENTLE FORCE

DAVID FREGO  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

I first met Herb at CMU in 1989 in a solfège class that he was leading. I should preface that it was a blistering hot summer and the air conditioning consisted of open windows and a fan in the corner of the room. But the weather didn't make us all sweat; it was the mind-altering approach that Herb took in presenting tri-chords. I had never seen someone present such an elegant yet challenging lesson that lead us all to a deeper understanding. When we faltered, he was able to back up and gently lead us through the woods by a different route.

Yes, Herb was a gentle force and kept all of us moving forward with the goal to challenge ourselves. He always knew where he was going in any lesson, even though it might not have been revealed to us until close to the end. He also had the gift of correcting our problems in a positive light; making us want to get it right and set it in our minds and bodies for the next time.

What comes to mind thinking of Herb? His quick wit, his gentle laugh, the gleam in his eyes when you were on the verge of success, and the sentences that began with "Alright! Now we're going to..." Herb modeled teacher behaviors and helped us all to become better at our craft. We all grew with that gentle force.

DR. ANNABELLE JOSEPH  
PITTSBURGH, PA

Herb Henke was a giant not only in his appearance but most importantly in his humanity. He was a treasured friend and colleague, an outstanding musician/educator, and a valued mentor.

Being with Herb was being with a force of nature. When teaching, he was the essence of a facilitator, the wizard behind the curtain. The only time I remember Herb being the center of attention was during the farewell sessions of our CMU three week workshops. Herb would quietly walk to center stage, sit down, wait for the music to begin, then, with the impeccable timing of the great silent movie comedians, perform his 'take' on Mozart's *Rondo Alla Turca*. This always elicited hysterical laughter, amazement, amusement, and sheer joy at witnessing this aspect of Herb's persona. It is a moment forever etched in memory.

Words are not sufficient to describe this complex, gentle man whose wisdom, droll sense of humor, and ability to "cut to the core" of a situation kept him above the fray. Herb was my Solomon for problem solving.

Dr. Jody Kerchner, former student, later colleague of Herb, now Professor & Director of Music Education at Oberlin wrote this for the Memorial Minute at Oberlin in honor of Dr. Herbert Henke.

*"Our deeds that imbue simplicity, quietude, humility, and perseverance can be so powerful as to indelibly stir those with whom we engage"*

To me, this says it all.

LIANGMEI LIN  
[LOCATION]

When the news of Herb's passing away reached us, I felt the loss so deeply. For students of the Carnegie Mellon Dalcroze Satellite Program in Taiwan, Marta, Annabelle, and Herb made up the golden triangle of teachers. Of the three of them, we didn't see Herb so much, because he didn't come to Taiwan very often. But for those of us who had the chance to take his lessons in Pittsburgh, it was pure enjoyment. The logical way he constructed his lessons, his gentle and humorous delivery, and his intelligence, all made him an outstanding Dalcroze teacher. One time he came to Taipei alone to do a workshop, and I was the interpreter. It was a pleasant experience working so closely with him, and I found we both loved puzzles and crosswords!

Herb did not talk much, at least not to me. But just by a smile or a wink, you can feel his kindness, especially when I was so entangled with my license exams. I always felt his silent encouragement. I believe that all of us will always remember Herb with warmth and a smile.

Thank you very much for all you have done for Herb.

PETER MERRICK  
TORONTO, CANADA

I knew Herb Henke only in his retirement, at the Dalcroze Summer Workshops at Carnegie Mellon University. It was always clear that Herb, as skilled and dedicated a Dacrozian as he was, was first and foremost a music educator, with command over the whole field and a deep understanding of all the important approaches to music education. It was in his long tenure at Oberlin, sensitively and imaginatively training generations of music teachers, that his greatest influence must surely have been felt.

But I knew him at CMU, and in an exclusively Dalcroze context. And here his influence on me, and many others, was incalculable. When I first started teaching, it was to the games I learned from Herb that I turned most frequently, and

they never let me down. Of one, he said, "Whenever you do that, people always applaud, for some reason." And this they have never failed to do. "Rhythm Machines," one of his own creations, I believe, has always been a reliable hit with my teenaged boys, sparking delight and creativity. Anyone with even a passing acquaintance with Herb will remember his love of playing-cards, and the countless ways he had of transforming them into musical learning. Once a year my high school boys will find themselves on the floor, each with a pack of cards, intently listening to Liturgie de cristal from Messiaen's Quatuor. Their task is to lay out cards to show the durations in the piano ostinato; every time, the process begins with deepest mystification, continues with mounting excitement, and ends with high triumph for the boy who is first to solve the puzzle. A classic Herb experience!

But the irony is that Herb had a rather sober, if not sombre, personality. (Privately, I always thought of him as our very own Eeyore!) But his teaching was playful, joyful, and endlessly creative. Even when students were greatly challenged, the fun was never far away. And the musical choices! Always apt, often decidedly quirky. No-one who has experienced one of Herb's most memorable games will ever forget the Bassoon Brothers' wondrously weird recording of Delibes' *Pizzicati*.

It remains only to be said that if Herb had something of Eeyore's secret sadness, he also had that character's immense kindness. I was once subjected to an anti-gay rant from a fellow student. Did I not agree, she asked? I replied that I didn't, and explained why I *couldn't*. Herb was within earshot, and he immediately changed seats to sit by me and chat. It was subtle and delicate, but unmistakably a gesture of solidarity and support—one of those grace-filled actions that can leave a person grateful for a lifetime. And so I am.

STEPHEN MOORE  
REDLANDS, CA

Herb was a consummate educator. When I was first employed at Oberlin Conservatory (1998-2005), Herb was teaching his final year as a professor of eurhythmics. I had the good fortune of participating in around 50 Dalcroze classes that he taught until I replaced him the following year.

Herb's diverse background was apparent in his teaching: a Voice degree, Church Choir soloist/conductor, public school music teacher, avid researcher, world traveler, interest in all types of music, and puzzle enthusiast. His musical expertise can be viewed through the prism of his interest in games and puzzles. Eurhythmics with its "games" (follow, quick reaction, replacement, and canon) was a natural home for his talents.

When you began working in a Henke class you quickly learned you had to be at your best, mentally. The class proceeded like clockwork. Although Herb was not very

fluid as a pianist (he often confided in me how hard he had to work at the piano) his improvisations were worked out appropriately and logically and his voice/musical commands were impeccable. Moreover, no one in the Dalcroze work, that I have witnessed, was better at employing recorded music. Herb worked tirelessly to find just the right piece and to get the essential elements out of it—using various commands—for each class. Just when I would think I had a handle on what he was doing, Herb would present the class with a musical puzzle that left me with the feeling, I'm playing checkers while he's playing 3-dimensional chess!

Finally, Herb had another side that few people knew. Very rarely he would act out or make a statement that was completely out of character. An occasional statement, in his dry fashion, would send to the floor laughing. Without any warning, in his last official class at Oberlin, he threw a foot-high, indigenous American drum at me from half way across the room (Luckily, I caught it!). Then, he said, "The torch has been passed."

TORU SAKAI  
AICHI, JAPAN

I met Dr. Henke at Carnegie Mellon University's summer workshop in 1997. He was the tallest man and had the lowest voice of anyone I had ever met in my life. I liked his many unique ideas to teach *sofège*. They were so different from what I learned before. He came to Taiwan, Korea and Japan to help us to expand Dalcroze in Asia. We appreciated it so much. It is so sad to lose experienced and important teachers one by one. I pray for him.

ELDA NELLY TREVIÑO FLORES  
MONTERREY, MÉXICO

When I think of Herbert Henke, the first thing that comes to my mind is how clever he was at designing ingenious teaching strategies in his classes. I had the fortune to be one of his students at the Marta Sanchez Dalcroze Training Center at Carnegie Mellon University during my summer study to get my Certificate and License.

I first met Herb in the summer of 1997, the first time I was at CMU. At first he was somewhat intimidating to me because of his stature and deep bass voice; however, after I took the first *sofège* class with him, I discovered he was such a gentleman, always eager to help his students to learn in the most effective way.

I remember his "magical suitcase" where he used to keep his large collection of cd's with wonderful music examples for every eurhythmics or *sofège* class. He had a mind of a

"detective" in search of the most unthinkable ways to make his classes attractive and creative. Of course he could not miss his poker cards to create complex and fun games with intervals and chords.

Herbert had the gift of making difficult things easy for his students. His improvisation classes were perfectly structured to make the novice students feel comfortable and confident to try things out at the piano.

In 2001 he accepted my invitation to come to Monterrey, N.L., México, my hometown, to give a workshop, which was highly successful. I remember very well how persistent he was at finding good Mexican musical examples to use in his classes.

As a human being, Herb was an example of generosity, modesty, and respectfulness towards his colleagues, students, and friends. He will be always in my mind and in my heart...

LESLIE UPCHURCH  
NEW YORK CITY, NY

I first met Dr. Herb Henke when I was a senior at Carnegie Mellon University. I was finishing work on my Dalcroze certification. Herb was a professor of Music Education at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music but treated me as an equal. We even took a walk one evening to "talk shop" at one of our Dalcroze conferences. Besides Herb's congenial manner, I was so impressed with how he went about maintaining integrity in his work. Casting aside the notion that teachers who teach teachers cannot themselves teach, he spent sabbaticals teaching school children music in various countries. He noticed trends in how singing was changing, once lecturing about this at a Dalcroze conference. I remember that he said children were singing jazz or popular chord progressions more easily in choruses than he had first encountered when teaching.

Herb was a gentleman. I found him to be so charming. To this day I chuckle about the story that his wife, Sabra, fainted in his arms while dancing on their first date! We were partners-folk dancing when he shared this touching story.

Herb was a great champion of Dalcroze work. His vast knowledge of music was evident in his pedagogy and interpretations of music. One example is that he taught "Frère Jacques" anacrusically, starting on beat 3 in 4/4 time. This is completely in sync with the French prosody. I recently unearthed a book "Songs and Silhouettes" by Laura Pendleton MacCartney where "Frère Jacques" was notated this way. It is ironic that this beginner's piano book is the only time I have seen a printed version of Herb's interpretation.

Herb was also one to share useful information. We became colleagues at the Marta Sanchez Dalcroze Training Center

(MSDTC) at Carnegie Mellon University in 2003. I could ask him for advice or for a critique if he had seen me teach. He was quick with a compliment or suggestion for improvement without ever being judgmental. Knowing how to help each other is not easy in this sometimes slippery slope that is Dalcroze teaching.

Certificate candidates in the summer program are required to play for a gesture as part of their exam. Herb was the faculty member who performed the gesture and he always did this so effortlessly and elegantly. The past couple of years I have performed the gesture. I realized how much Herb's influence shaped my approach to this. I keep his example in mind, hoping to honor his memory.

M.A. GUILLERMO VILLARREAL  
MONTERREY, MEXICO

In this world there are persons who stand out in a certain field but their personality betrays them and they become unbearable. On the other hand, there are persons with extraordinary qualities as artists who at the same time possess unique attributes as human beings. That is the case with Herbert Henke.

I met Herbert in 2002 when he went to Monterrey, Mexico, to give a workshop organized by my wife, and since she was very busy with the details of the event, I had the opportunity to talk to him very much. He was a very tall man with a silhouette similar to Don Quijote, the emblematic character of Miguel de Cervantes. Since the first moment I saw him teaching, I observed his high quality as a musician and teacher, taking all the students by hand to the wonderful world of Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

A couple of years later in 2004 I was his student for three weeks at the CMU summer workshop. As the orchestra conductor, this experience of having Marta Sanchez, Annabelle Joseph and Herbert Henke as my teachers that summer became a landmark in my conducting career. I knew I was being taught by icons of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and Music Education in general.

In Herb's improvisation classes I noticed the way he got the best from his students. On one hand he was a very strict teacher, and on the other a very sweet person. I remember him as a serious man with wise judgment. He had a deep and melancholic appearance, but at any time could make a joke to make the atmosphere lighter.

"Hasta la vista caballero" You have left us an example for life...