

A Goethean Knowing  
**Intelligence as Practice**



**Braving Artificial Intelligence**

A Proteus Initiative Encounter

Towerland Wilderness

September 2024 - arrive Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>; depart Friday 20<sup>th</sup>

## intentions

JW von Goethe developed a way of seeing which is also a way of thinking - he differentiated between seeing and thinking, yet brought them together as a unity. He revealed profound truths about the activities of life, not least that human beings participate in life's manifesting through our seeing and thinking; we are never merely onlookers.

Goethe's work forms a foundational approach for differentiating the living from the artificial, the developing from the constructed. The scientific materialism that has invaded our attitudes to the natural world begins to strand us in a world resembling a factory site. Goethe's approach allows us to foreground life once more. It helps us to enter into a holistic relationship with the natural world. And extends this into the social sphere.

Now, we face the rise of what has become known as Artificial Intelligence. This provokes much debate. Its premise is usefulness - if it increases our ability to fashion our material world, we must give it rein. Some wonder at this. Goethe would have. His yardstick was never usefulness, but rather understanding, which leads, of its own accord, without manipulation, to fruitfulness. If we can think into the different implications inherent in the notions of usefulness and fruitfulness, we already have an inkling of the difference between Artificial Intelligence and a properly realised human intelligence.

In this encounter, we will be looking deeply into the human practice of intelligence that lies at the heart of Goethe's methodologies for approaching the living world. For intelligence is a practice, this is the source of its warmth; perhaps the only practice that might maintain our freedom in the face of Artificial Intelligence (which has no practice at all).

### notes

The process will be participatory and experiential - the overarching method is immersion in experience followed by contemplation of that experience, and conversation. The process will be intentional and consequent. We will dig to the roots. We will create something as whole as Goethe's gaze.

It will take place over a ten day period - less will not enable the wholeness of intelligence to arise in its fullness. There is a lot of ground to cover.

We do this, for this first time, on Towerland Wilderness, South Africa. Artificial Intelligence touts a virtual world; on Towerland, earth and cosmos are open to each other, and we are opened to ourselves.

This is for those already with experience, and for those without (there are none without).

There will be some prior reading.  
Allan Kaplan and Sue Davidoff will lead the process.

### costs

Given the length of time and therefore the costs involved, we will be charging only for Towerland accommodation (full board and lodging) - there will be no workshop or facilitation fee.

We are suggesting that those who wish to participate choose one of three fee options, depending on their means - subsidised, real, or extra to subsidise others.

Subsidised: R13,500

Real: R16,800

Extra to subsidise others: R21,000

**If you are interested in participating, please contact Ainsley at:**

**[proteusinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:proteusinitiative@gmail.com)**

