

## **Susan and Peter Pitzele – surprising like a Bibliolog**

### **A tribute due to the fact that they both turned 80**

*by Frank Muchlinsky*

Have you ever met Susan and Peter? If so, you were probably surprised. Not by their looks. They have been looking like friendly middle-aged people for decades now. But maybe you were surprised by what you experienced with the two of them. Whoever meets Susan and Peter Pitzele better have fun at playing games, being spontaneous and improvising. Susan and Peter are definitely capable of planning, but their greatest strength lies in throwing plans over the top and doing whatever is right in their view.

Bibliolog exists only thanks to this spontaneity. As many may know, Peter once stepped as a substitute to train rabbis. He had little to no idea in that area but it didn't stop him from doing it because, after all, he had many skills. Peter didn't take on the task as an expert on Judaism or leadership but as a Psychodramatist. The rabbis in training were surprised accordingly and overjoyed.

All the same, Susan's and Peter's first trip to Germany to an international Bibliodrama congress was a surprise for many people. The Pitzeles were surprised to find a large Bibliodrama scene here. I was surprised to find out how good it can feel to have an audience tell me what the position of my hand expresses when I took on the role of Abraham. German Bibliodramatists were surprised to find that Peter acted like a "therapist". All people present were surprised by the ease of this special kind of Bibliodrama "a la Pitzele", which offered deep insight into the text and oneself.

After that, training classes in Germany followed, taught at first by Peter and Susan themselves. Just like in Bibliolog when the play develops freely within a certain setting, the two of them allowed Bibliolog in Germany to evolve. Within running classes, they changed. Pitzele's Bibliodrama turned into Bibliolog in Europe. By the way, Susan and Peter do not use this term in their own country until today. It goes back to yet another big surprise. If you know the two of them, you know that they are very generous. That is why they put all their ideas, their ability and their concepts in the hands of others, which should come as a surprise to everyone who ever enjoyed Bibliolog.

It seems like it was the right decision in their eyes at that moment and apparently, they still don't regret this decision. Whoever lives in and loves the moment like Susan and Peter do is able to look back into the past with loving and gracious eyes.

Bibliolog always captures the moment. The things we say in our roles are born out of the spur of the moment. They are neither intended to last a long time nor should they. Important is that they are right in this very moment. For the parents of the Bibliolog this principle is valid for the method itself. If you've learned about Bibliolog in the last years and experienced how Peter and Susan acted, you might not only have been surprised but also confused by all the "mistakes" the both of them were making. Of course, this is due to the fact that today Bibliolog comes with a specific curriculum. Bibliodrama a la Pitzele, however, lives on and continues to change because it is supposed to fit, not only for the two who practice it. The title of Peter's book, in which he presents this method, is "Scripture Windows". You look at the scripture like through a window and at times you see more of yourself, at other times more of the scripture. By now, Peter is thinking about a new edition and wants to call it "Scripture Mirrors". At the moment it is right for them to emphasize the therapeutic element, which their method has in store.

I am very thankful for the gift Susan and Peter gave to the world more than twenty years ago. It taught us to be spontaneous even when working with the bible. Many times, it has been written that Bibliolog promotes an open attitude towards statements of others. I'd like to write it once again today and I'd like to add: Bibliolog promotes the willingness to let yourself be surprised by life and to act accordingly to what is right at that moment. This is not just thanks to the method itself but especially thanks to these two.

I wish them both many good years yet to come. I am confident making this wish because I trust that they both keep on knowing what is good and act accordingly. Oh, and of course I am looking forward to their next surprise.