

THE LABAN
ART OF MOVEMENT
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WHEN—15th and 16th FEBRUARY, 1969

WHERE—The Studio, Addlestone, Surrey

WHAT—The TWO DAY Annual Conference

OFFICERS OF THE GUILD

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EDITORIAL

The Guild is now embarked on the most exciting project it has so far undertaken; the Festival at the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate our growth during twenty-five years. A small group of members have already been working for two years, more are even now becoming involved and, as 1970 draws nearer, many more will be asked to take an active part in the preparations.

There is one thing which we have all been asked to do now—and one hundred people have already done it—send in our contributions. Whether we can afford five shillings, or one pound, or five pounds, or fifteen pounds, or—well there is no limit—we must send it now. The address is given after John Pool's report of the Financial Committee on page 16.

On 30th May 1970 most of us will be united in the Royal Albert Hall either as participants or audience at this Festival. We shall be pleased to know then that we supported this venture from the beginning—that this is, in fact, a Guild Festival.

CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

MODERN EDUCATIONAL DANCE

The desirability of holding an examination in Dance is arguable. For the benefit of those wishing to enter candidates in this subject, the following suggested syllabus has been prepared. It is for guidance only, and it is hoped that those using it will interpret it according to the needs of their own pupils, and encourage as wide a range of movement expression as possible.

SYLLABUS

PART I. PRACTICAL WORK

Everything attempted should be within the framework of the sixteen themes as set out in "Modern Educational Dance" by Rudolf Laban. (Publisher: Macdonald & Evans. Price 10/-).

The following aspects of the work should be covered:—

- a) body awareness;
- b) rhythmic or effort changes;
- c) spatial awareness
- d) movement sensitivity in relation to others.

PART II. COURSE WORK

Candidate's project file, containing a record and description of, and comments upon work done during the preceding year.

EXAMINATION

The examination should consist of two parts:—

PART I. PRACTICAL WORK

- a) Four dances or dance studies, prepared under the guidance of the teacher, covering the four aspects mentioned in Part I of the Syllabus.
- b) A prepared solo on a theme of the candidate's own choice.
- c) Spontaneous improvisation on a theme set by the external examiner or moderator. In mode 2 the theme will be set initially by the teacher. The moderator will select a further theme for those candidates selected to show their work.

N.B.—A variety of accompaniment is desirable and some un-accompanied work should be shown.

The standard to be aimed at should be such as might reasonably be expected after five years' work based on one lesson weekly.

CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

PART II. COURSE WORK

- d) Teachers' assessment and grading of candidate's practical work and project file.
- e) Candidate's project file.

ASSESSMENT

1. It is recommended that the examination should be conducted according to mode 2 or 3, (i.e. internally set and marked, externally moderated, or internally set, externally marked). In the former case, the scale of marks should be fixed by the teacher; in the latter, by the external examiner.
2. a) Every section of the examination should carry the same number of marks.
b) Low marks in any one or more of the five sections of the examination may be offset by correspondingly high marks in the remaining sections, provided that a minimum of 25% of the marks allotted to each section is obtained.

HOW TO USE C.S.E.

OLIVE CHAPMAN

It is my opinion that the teaching of modern educational dance in our secondary schools is neither so successful nor so well established that we can afford to be complacent. I receive the impression that in a few secondary schools dance is a firmly established subject which is taught regularly and competently throughout the age groups, but in the majority of schools it is a hit and miss affair which, if it appears on the timetable at all, very quickly disappears after the first or second year. It seems therefore to me that dance in secondary schools has made very slow progress and that a situation prevails which would not be tolerated in any other subject. Many children are at present denied any access at all to one particular medium of expression, many others are granted it for such a limited time, that they can have only a very restricted experience of its possibilities. It is for us who teach dance to look again and suggest how this situation may be improved.

I believe that one method is to look upon dance not as something set apart, but as a subject in the school which stands equally with other subjects. Of course, ideally, we want dance for all, because it is equally educable for all, but so might the mathematics teacher say, so might the art teacher say, so might all teachers say who believe in the values of their subject; dance would have a better chance of being for all if it took its place alongside the other subjects in the curriculum and were not regarded as something too precious to stand up to the rigours to which other disciplines are exposed. Logically then, since many secondary schools have now embarked upon programmes in all subjects which lead to examination in the Certificate of Secondary Education, it is time that teachers of dance looked at this examination and seriously considered the possibilities which it offers.

I am aware that there are those who hold up horrified hands at the suggestion that dance should be examined, but I would remind them that already there are numerous examinations in modern educational dance, that many dance teachers who read this article have, in fact, in the course of their training been examined in dance, and that others are themselves conducting examinations; an annual standard examination for those who wish to qualify as Graduates is organized by the Guild itself. One must conclude, therefore, that it is possible for dance to be examined, and that the Laban Art of Movement Guild sanctions the idea of examinations. Indeed, in May 1966 (stating that 'the desirability of holding an examination in Dance is arguable'), the Guild prepared a suggested syllabus for the guidance of those who wished to enter candidates for an examination in dance in the C.S.E.

Perhaps it is also time that we acknowledged that at the older secondary stage, there are children who are good at dance and children who are not so good, that even in the best managed classes there are those who work hard and those who work not so hard, and that we have all at some time or other recognized this in spite of the beliefs that we may hold that every child has the innate ability to dance. Many fifteen year olds who have had good experience of dance would choose movement as their particular medium of expression, but others would undoubtedly prefer, and show more ability in, other media, in paint, or clay or words or sound. The C.S.E. seems to me to give opportunities for appropriate recognition of such preferences and abilities, and teachers should make it possible for children to gain that recognition in any subject of their choice. Why should not the girl or (hopefully) the boy whose particular gifts are in the field of dance be given a similar chance of recognition as those gifted in mathematics, in history, in music?

Recognition seems to me to be the key word when considering the examination itself. I have wondered when listening to opponents of the C.S.E. if in fact what they are really opposing is the kind of public examination from which they may themselves have suffered, that is, one which is set on an external syllabus and externally marked. Mode 1 of the C.S.E. does in fact, conform to this pattern, except that the syllabus is prepared by a panel of teachers of the subject drawn from schools in the area of the Regional Examination Board. Mode 2 differs from Mode 1 in that the syllabus is presented by a school or group of schools, and is moderated by a teacher appointed by the Board. But Mode 3, which I consider would be the most appropriate examination for our subject, provides for an internal examination, set on a syllabus presented by the school, both syllabus and examination are moderated by teacher-moderators appointed by the Board. The C.S.E. examinations are quite clearly intended to be teacher controlled, Examinations Bulletin No. 1 says that 'it is to ensure that what is examined is what teachers want to teach, and that we shall not be obliged to teach what someone else has decided to examine.' Unlike the General Certificate of Education, C.S.E. Mode 3 clearly gives the major responsibility for syllabus and examination to the individual teacher in his own school, and the examination can therefore provide appropriate recognition of the pupil's attainment.

Examinations Bulletin No. 3. 'The C.S.E.; an introduction to some techniques of examining,' is a most useful guide and is especially reassuring in the flexible attitude adopted towards 'a wide range of educational objectives—using a skill appropriately, speaking, working with material and tools—which cannot be

assessed directly by written paper.' It says, 'If these ways of working or behaving are considered to be valid objectives of a course of study, they should be examined by the appropriate form of examination.' The bulletin later gives several reasons for suggesting that teachers' assessments are the best means of estimating the level of attainment of the pupils, of which I quote three: "Assessments reflect the normal work of the pupil under everyday conditions. Assessments do not have a harmful backwash effect on the curriculum and on teaching. Each teacher is teaching what he considers appropriate and in the way he considers right, and without reference to what may be in the mind of the examiner. Assessments can take into account the performance of the pupil in many dimensions; his written work, his oral work, his practical work, his contribution to group work, his interest and enthusiasm as well as his creative and imaginative flair can all be given weight." It takes very little then, to see that there need be no fear that dance may be dominated by the examination nor that practical participation of the whole person may be replaced by theory, studied for the sake of the examination.

Now this article may be seen as an argument in favour of examinations, but it is merely a proposal that, since we have the C.S.E., which provides for an appropriate method of examining dance, that we should make use of it, as all other subjects do, in the promotion of our own subject. The benefits which may accrue in a school where dance is to be a C.S.E. subject are numerous. The head of the school having agreed to its being offered in the C.S.E., it is to be assumed that dance will appear regularly on the time table. (The standard of the examination is defined as 'that standard which ought reasonably to be reached in a subject by a pupil of average ability who has worked diligently for the period of the five year course at the end of which the examination is to be taken.'). Linked with the regularity of lessons one can envisage improved continuity of teaching and a new appraisal of teaching methods, both children and teacher might gain from the extra spur which a suitable form of examination provides. When the dance teacher leaves the school, having established dance in the C.S.E. it is likely that the headmaster will make more attempt than he often appears to do now, to fill the vacancy with someone who is able to continue the work. Again, dance could only benefit from the parity of esteem (from both staff and pupils), granted it by placing it in the same category as other examinable subjects. Although the examination system may be abhorrent to some or many the only hope for a little appreciated or understood subject like dance is for it to be recognized along with the other arts. If it is to be examined it will be discussed far more in common rooms with other colleagues, amongst the pupils, and in the home. Better understanding

HOW TO USE C.S.E.

and a wider appreciation may then result for a subject which at present is regarded by many as a mere eccentricity. The extra drive and the extra emphasis given to the work, the additional time spent, the additional preparation made, the thought given by the pupil to his chosen subject, the extra depth of teaching, the goals in view, might give us all what we are looking for to establish dance as a worthwhile subject in the curriculum.

Creative dance is a cinderella subject in our secondary schools—the C.S.E. may help to put it on the map.

All references in this article are to the Bulletins of the Schools Council, published by H.M.S.O.

EXAMINATIONS?

DIANA JORDAN

I am concerned in this article, to explain why I and many others, would stress the importance of keeping free from any kind of examination or external assessment, those areas of education which should provide, par excellence, media for the development of human virtues, such as creative endeavour, imagination, aesthetic values, human vigour and sensitivity and social awareness and response. Dance is obviously an outstanding area for this kind of education.

It is a fact that as man invents more and better ways of living and producing more in less time, that the focus of education is turned more upon all that seeks to prepare children for the highly specialised and competitive world in which they must live and earn a livelihood. For a few the prospect would seem to be increasing responsibility, for many more, increased leisure, for some, unemployability. For all these groups, "the good life", which if unspecified dwells in the vision of all young people, cannot begin to materialise unless education attempts to challenge and develop all those human virtues and resources which form the most elusive and yet the most important part of the human being.

The aims of education to-day, seem to be the acquisition of skill and knowledge rather than the development of the whole person. There is acknowledgement that brain power must not only be culled from all walks of society by educational opportunity, but it must also be sifted, tested and examined at various stages of the child's or young adult's progress through educational establishments. To-day this is thought to be necessary. Yet by the anxiety to increase the number of tested and selected candidates, the danger is that those who fail to reach the standard set quite arbitrarily at a specific time, will also become the rejects and even the unemployable. Education which pays less and less attention to the development of all human virtues not examinable, is obviously making problems for society—not only will this neglect operate against the less academic children but also to the detriment of their more able fellows who pursue even now, a rapidly narrowing education in the service of specialisation. This is an alarming aspect when the world is showing each day the desperate need for quality and human virtues without which society cannot successfully face and overcome its own man-made problems. It would seem crystal clear that education should not place all its emphasis on trimming its pupils to the shape of examination requirements, making examinations both a narrow gateway and a status symbol.

It is easy to capitulate and say that unless all educational activities rate for examinations that those left out will disappear

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from the curriculum. This already happens. It is easy to make testing a motivating force, but we then must resign ourselves to succeeding generations with no experience of those activities and experiences likely to provide lasting enjoyment and cultural influence if cultivated in freedom at school, such as Dance, Music, visual arts and crafts, creative writing and drama. Alternatively we can include them and so trim them to examination requirements that their powers of creative vitality are withered. Dance could become either a test of physical expertise or an academic study or both, music already becomes technical exercises, and the arts and English follow the same dismal dessicated fate—

Even worse, these very areas in which the less academic children can flourish and moreover in which the most gifted artistic ones can emerge are either denied to them on the one hand, or on the other, offered to them in a competitive and narrowed field least likely to help them to develop and emerge as people with a creative contribution to make and having a recognised value amongst their fellows.

What is the alternative? It is for all those teachers of Dance and the Arts to take a firm stand and regain what they have lost or may lose, a place in its own right in education for these media. Teachers must also cultivate the ability to convince their colleagues of their concern for areas of creative endeavour which can above all foster the child as a unity, body, mind and spirit and prove that this is an essential which education owes to all children—Dance is of course a unique factor in this education of unity—Alone it must rely on the activity and sensitivity of the trinity of body, mind and spirit equally, and to the fullest extent and stretch of the child's ability.

But if Dance is to accomplish this, its primary role in education, teachers must be free to plan and develop their work in accordance with the age, ability and aptitude of their pupils. Moreover long experience has shown that classes do not flourish by giving them the same diet. Every year, fresh interests, the human composition of the group, all call for different approaches and different emphasis. Some groups take much longer than others before they can work creatively with each other for a variety of reasons, some groups have a flare for dramatic experience and expression, others less so. Many children are not happy as solo dancers, some are. Once a common syllabus is laid down by people who do not know the children or the teacher, this is bound to restrict them and interfere with the close relationship between the good teacher and her class. The weaker teacher may well cease to follow the approach which he or she knows is most likely to be

EXAMINATIONS?

successful creatively or aesthetically for the group because her goal will inevitably be diverted from the effect of Dance on every individual as well as the group interactions in her class, and focussed on the near view of the requirements of the Test. The two aims are unlikely to converge year after year. What will be likely to happen is that just at the time of the child's development when one could hope to see a rich diversity of work and indeed new and original developments, we shall see a growing conformity and dying back of the very qualities which alone justify and speak for the educational success of Dance—examinations in English, Art and Music have aptly demonstrated this result. Do we wish to add Dance to the melancholy skeletons of a rich cultural field of learning and growing for all children. Do we wish to see the pressures of anxiety stretched to include Dance for the examinable children and the equally painful rejection of children we delude into thinking that unless they can reach C.S.E. standard in Dance, they cannot Dance?

Let us think carefully of the effects most examination and testing has demonstrated upon teachers, teaching and learning before we abandon yet another field of educational freedom and one which must attain status in its own right with the other Arts; a status of primary necessity in the education of all those human qualities and virtues which cannot be "marked out of ten" nor assessed validly by any modes in C.S.E.

If teachers do not believe that Dance has the prime responsibility of developing each child as a unique unity of body, mind and spirit individually and in relationship with his and her fellows, and that this task can only hope for success in areas free from competitive pressures, then the battle for Dance as the great educational force it is, will be lost for a very long time.

The great educationalist of his time and of all time, the late headmaster of Uppingham, the Rev. E. Thring in his wisdom, recorded many of his beliefs born of long experience. Let his words echo in our ears, long after this article has been forgotten.

"If any seriously believe that the dead hand of external power can successfully deal with the most living, delicate and progressive of works, true education, their armour is impenetrable by any words. Any original kind of teaching, any real advance, that is, or change of old methods, is absolutely outside the examiner's tether; any original kind of teaching and real advance in method is accordingly killed at once under the shadow of this death. The dead hand is heavy on it. It cannot live."

25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

GERALDINE STEPHENSON

In the last issue of the Guild magazine I asked all members to keep watch in each subsequent issue for further news of the 1970 Celebration.

The main fact to announce is that the date for the Dance Festival has now been fixed. It is **May 30th 1970**. Please print this on your hearts and in your diaries . . . **May 30th 1970**.

It is difficult to relate in words all the activities that the committee are engaged in to ensure that this occasion will be a great one, not only for Guild members but also for the vast audience of adults and children who will come to the Royal Albert Hall. I am continually being asked by members what they can do now to help and I well understand that many people feel that they are not yet involved at all. The wheels of an enterprise such as this turn slowly and I ask you to be patient, but ready to leap into action when the right moments come. One of them is here now, so please leap at once! We still need more money. Some have already done excellent work in this direction, some have not. If you are feeling guilty, now is the time to remove that guilt! Please take heed of the Financial Committee. Do all you can to help them. Also, begin to **talk** about the date of the event to build a Publicity Campaign. Soon, now, a special committee will be formed to help with this, but so much is up to YOU to spread interest in your own area of the country.

Miss Frances Hickey and Miss Margaret Watson have now been commissioned to design the production. Both are teachers (A.T.D.) as well as designers and both have worked in the professional theatre as well as in education. They are at present members of the staff at Bretton Hall College of Education. Frances Hickey is Head of the Department of Needlecraft and Dress and Margaret Watson is a Senior Lecturer in the Drama Department. Both are keenly interested in movement and dance and having been previously associated in demonstrations and lectures and in design for the theatre, they look forward to collaborating in this new assignment . . . and have already begun work on ideas and sketches for costumes.

I would like to add a personal word in this report. In my own work in movement I travel a great deal in this country and abroad. I work in education and in the theatre and have much opportunity to see other people's activities in similar fields.

Earlier this year I was in Sweden directing a Movement Course for teachers in Stockholm. Later, I was in Lisbon choreographing

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

a massive opera in the San Carlos Opera House (working with a classical ballet company, opera chorus and solo singers). Recently I have been in the B.B.C. Television Studios choreographing a mediaeval battle in stylised movement. The more I see around me, the more I am convinced of how much Laban's work has to offer. On the occasion of the mediaeval battle I was allowed to cast the 'dancers' myself. To my joy the director of this particular scene insisted with me that the cast should have been, as he called it, 'Laban trained'. I was able to gather together some 24 men who had trained at the Art of Movement Studio or danced in various Affiliated Groups. I can only say that the effect in the rehearsals and in the Television Studio was electric. Everyone asked 'where did you find these dancers?'. The point of the story is clear. There was a dynamism, a sensitivity and relationship in the group which studio technicians, producers, actors and extras had not seen before.

As Guild members, all working in our various ways in education, in therapy, in recreation, in theatre, or in the home bringing up a family, we are able to bring so much to this dynamic job of 'living'. It is this that my committee and I earnestly believe will be the essence of the Celebration of the Guild in 1970.

A REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION
25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, ALBERT HALL, 1970

JOHN POOL

To date the total of £1,220 has been raised for the Festival, £415 has already been spent.

On behalf of the Celebration Financial Committee I would like to most warmly thank those people who gave so generously to the membership appeal fund. Approx. £550 has been donated by a hundred individual members of the Guild and eleven dance groups. This encouraging response was all the more gratifying in that nearly half the amount was sent during the first week following the appeal.

To those people who have not yet managed to send their donation I would give assurance that we shall be absolutely delighted to receive it at any time, the sooner the better.

The committee's next task is to approach business firms for support but it does greatly add weight to our requests if we can state that the majority of our membership has already given financial support to the venture. This is not the case at the moment, but we hope it will be so, soon!

May we say again, many thanks to everyone who has already sent money. It really has given heart to Gerry Stephenson, those concerned with the production, and of course the financial committee; your generosity is most appreciated.

Please send your donations to:—

Mrs. Anne Latto,
8 The Mount,
Caversham,
Reading.

Forthcoming Courses

&
E F
P O
A R
H M
S 1969 —
CONFERENCE

DATE - 15th and 16th FEBRUARY
LOCATION - STUDIO, ADDLESTONE
THEME - SHAPE and FORM

INTENDING GRADUATES COURSE

MARCH 1st, 1969

FROEBEL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Lecturers—Mollie Davies, Mary Wilkinson

STEPPING

DAVID MCKITTRICK. Worcester College of Education.

"There is an immense variety of fancy foot movements proper to every kind of person and animal; shuffling and stepping, circling, turning, beating of the ground, and rapidly leaping off it, as if one had stepped on fire, or only a swift drawing up of the foot without the leap; there is even a classified movement for throwing water over cattle with the foot."

from *Dance and Drama in Bali*

by B. de Zoete.

A PLEA FOR THE SIMPLE ACTIVITIES IN DANCE

In talking to friends who have interests in dance and in reading articles in the *Guild* magazine I find a preoccupation with the philosophical, the complex, the academic—in general, the non-dance aspects of dance. It is my conviction that Laban spent his greater time on doing and dancing and his thoughts on the fringe aspects of dance were packed into a full day in which the larger part was spent on teaching dance and dancing. Together with this suspicion of the verbal in dance and the great limitations of writing about it I believe that teaching in schools and colleges goes too far in aspects of dance which can become intellectual when they are not laid on a mastery of basic movement such as stepping. I believe this to be so because it takes years to come to a kinesthetic understanding of the beginning work in dance—not terms but years of full time study, not a few lessons per week. I realise that to carry out such a philosophy would be impractical but I am extreme because I feel an imbalance in the opposite direction exists—that of stressing advanced choreutic forms and studies of notation and history. My slogan would be 'keep moving' think after, or whilst, doing.

Stepping is a rich activity not only involving infinite variation in its two elements 'transference of weight and gesture', but in its even more fundamental aspect 'touch or contact with the ground'. Stepping is too a matter of half steps and whole steps (see *Mastery of Movement*) which open up further possibilities for creative work. Stepping will bring in other basic themes; effort in its dynamic variants; space in its size, pathway, and especially in its gesture when the legs may penetrate, fill, contain, brush, cut, scoop, strew, and swing in the space; the body, in the concern for the parts of the foot emphasised in the touch with the floor whether it be the fluent roll from the heel to the toe, the inside to the outside of the foot, from one corner of the foot to the other or with which part of the body leads, follows, begins or terminates the gesture or step. A sliding step could start with the inside of the right foot, continue into the right knee and finish with the weight being taken on the right knee and the slide being taken over by the heel of the left foot. The stressing of touch would bring about all kinds of

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stamping, tapping, slapping, skiting, rubbing, brushing; indeed consider the possibilities in wringing, pressing, punching, slashing, dabbing, flicking, floating, and gliding touches of the feet, surfaces, of the legs, and joints on the floor.

Contact with the floor might begin the sequence and end it with the middle part bringing in varied touch of both feet in the air and transitory touch on the floor in landings. The relationship between the feet is a good theme for dance play. The feet may be in touch as though glued together, one foot may creep up on the other which then darts away: they may pass each other by whilst stepping on the ground, or in the air in jumps and then come together in the landing.

In the transference of the weight of the body in stepping lies another source for invention. The weight may be lowered gently from a high step with delicacy in the lowering or dropped from one foot onto another. This stresses the end of the transference but the same choice is possible in the beginning of the transference—the lowering would become a buoyant lifting where there was a little degree of indulgence in weight and the dropping would become a jerk or sudden pull of the weight upwards. The transference may begin, reach the middle of the movement, and then return to start again. Further exploration of the transferring of weight in stepping arises when transference is executed whilst the feet are kept in close proximity or far apart.

Very different expressions occur in these two movement ideas. The transferring foot has the further possibility of remaining near to the floor in the transference or lifting off and rising while keeping close in by the other leg. (In notation terms a rising movement while remaining in place). Among the various possible expressions occurring in these movements is firstly a rollicking one and secondly a smooth travelling across the floor as though on roller skates. This latter is used by the Russian ensembles in travelling moments in their dances. Alternating from one to the other is fun and an example of dance play. One of the best dances I have seen this year was called **Feet** and was a play of feet in control of the dancer and the dancer's struggle to regain control of the feet. Feet have to know who's boss after all. This idea of giving a life of their own to her feet inspired her to make a very humorous and moving dance. When two dancers use each other's feet for the floor very comic results occur. Many of the activities mentioned above can be put into situations where relationship between one dancer and another makes for further invention.

The falling out of fashion of the old tap dance, seen at its best in Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire, seems to mark the disappearance

of this foot play theme from entertainment. Gene Kelly's dances in the film **Singing in the Rain** were classic examples of the exploitation of the touch of the feet on the floor not only on the level but up and down steps, stairs, and around as well as virtually up and down lamp-posts.

Half steps, a step from a feet together position to an open one, or an open position to a closed one, and whole steps, from one open position to another open position make a further starting point for improvisation. Half steps give a timid, uncertain and depending on the accompanying body posture, comic effect. The flow becomes broken, the rhythms syncopated and the whole picture is one of unexpectedness. Whole steps are more confident and fluent. When direction and dynamics are varied the possibilities are limitless.

Normally the stepping in everyday life is stable but in moments of haste and with children in moments of surprise I have seen marked lability in stepping when the hips move out of the centre of gravity. In the negro stepping includes the hips more than in European stepping where it is more puppet like. The hip can be brought into stepping by making a larger than normal step. In doing this the hip has to move and body comes into a twisted position. This would make for a tendency towards lability. Exploration of this idea needs an allowance of more time in the transference of weight in order that the hip may be pushed out of the support line and in stepping in this way the feeling of being out of balance comes; for many inexperienced movers it is a new and exciting experience.

Stepping with attention on levels brings about an increased awareness of knees particularly in deep stepping but also in high stepping where action of the knees is chiefly noticed by its absence. In deep steps the knees are pushed out and down in the bending. Two factors may be concentrated on—one the action of the knees in pushing out and down or the gripping behind the knees in the bend. Both are to do with body awareness but the second is particularly linked with the feeling of contraction and corresponds to the gripping felt in the inside surface of the elbow joint in contraction of the arm. In focusing on this contraction in stepping in the deep level an all over body tension will be experienced which brings out rhythmic vitality when included in phrases of stepping with time and weight changes. High stepping is more difficult and the gesture part of the stepping tends to deteriorate because of the extension in the whole leg. Harmonious and fluent high stepping is only possible when the extension can be isolated in the instep and released a little in the knee to allow the knee to take part in the gesture. This is not to say that high stepping with straight legs is

not to be used but the mover should be aware of the straightness and have chosen it. There is a difficulty in deep stepping too in keeping the heels down so that the whole foot has contact with the floor. The heels tend to lift because untrained dancers have stiff achilles tendons but it is worth mastering the control of the heels. The flexibility that comes in the tendon plus the strength in the arch of the foot lay the foundation for good elevation. The historic dances of Europe like the Minuet use stepping and stress the half and whole step, with variety in direction and level. Spanish dance stresses more the touch with the floor and the parts of the foot which one can bring to the floor are used to bring about vital rhythms. Irish dance absorbs into its steps a host of subtleties in the part of the foot to make contact with the floor; the part of the foot or leg which is particularly active in the gesture and in the dynamics of the touch of the foot on the floor. The dance can hold you in its thrall—Leonide Massine on seeing one of the greatest Irish folk dancers asked to be taught one of the types because he had never realised how poetic it could be. It is not for nothing that the arms are relaxed by the side in Irish dance. It is a Bible of the rich variation inherent in stepping.

Stillness will be part of the carrying out of the movement ideas mentioned so far and it adds different expressions to the phrase if the pauses are placed in different places each time the movement is repeated. Stillness is never a stopping, it is a living part of the movement phrase; the sensation of movement should be continuing in the position and either what has gone before or what is to come or the suspension of the in between stage is crystallised. In other words one can stress the past, present or future in the moment of arrest.

It is taken for granted that the whole body is participating in these movement ideas but it should be recognised that a special movement of the rest of the body could be executed to counterpoint the action of the stepping. In high stepping for instance the body may move towards front and deep. This creates an extraordinary expression which is quite different from the normal accompaniment of the rest of the body in a stepping action.

In any of these stepping actions other things are happening which have not been mentioned. To mention all would paralyse the mover for not much more than one point of concentration is possible at any one time in a movement. When one is given too much to 'feel' all at once the performance becomes awkward and stiff. This is what happens if an insensitive teacher asks beginners to imitate a series of steps. It is however worth noting some of the other movement happenings for they can become the stressed part of any of the movements. The spatial action is one of these things.

STEPPING

An example is deep stepping where you may be not only sinking but crossing so that your feeling of being near the floor and either resisting gravity if your step is firm or indulging in weight and giving in to gravity if your step is heavy is combined with a feeling of restriction in the cross step with a narrowing effect on the body. If held for long this feeling becomes more obvious and more appreciation would come of the width, unhampered and freer expression of a succeeding opening step. This dual spatial action could become a trifold one if sinking, and crossing were combined with advancing. Then it would be a diagonal step and this is the most subtle to 'feel'. The hips must be kept 'Looking' forwards during the diagonal step if the expressive character of the step is to be experienced.

It will be appreciated from all that has been said that nobody could master all of these nuances in this one basic action in a month of full time training and it would be exhausting to approach dance with this microscopic vision all the time. It is detailed study. Fortunately the feet are for a great part of the time in dance merely transporting us and other aspects of the movement are claiming greater attention.

This wonderful variety inherent in one of the fundamental actions of dance surely should play a big part in dance education both in schools and colleges even if a little of the more advanced work is sacrificed. I believe there would be more "dance" and less "going through the motions". One need go no further than the first five themes to tap the very sources of the art of dance.

"They floated ethereally about the stage, varying slow poses with their rapid evolutions. Their toes grasped the ground like fingers, the foot being placed slowly down on the outside beginning from the heel, and gradually unrolling without any perceptible break. This gives the impression of immense smoothness, their bodies floating out into space, as if only held to the ground by a thread, almost like a kite. This exquisite "Redjang" dance seemed more than ever set free from earthly heaviness."

Beryl de Zoete

in *Dance and Drama in Bali*.

'PHILOSOPHIC FOUNDATIONS' (Part V)

GORDON F. CURL. Chelsea College of Physical Education.

UNITY AND ECSTASY

"In the ecstasy of the dance man bridges the chasm between this and the other world, to the realm of demons, spirits and God. Captivated and enhanced he bursts his earthly chains and trembling feels himself in tune with the whole world."

Curt Sachs,

"World History of the Dance," p. 4.

'Unity' and 'Ecstasy' are both frequently recurring themes in Laban's fundamental philosophy of dance; they follow inevitably from his general principle of the 'reigen' or 'circle-dance' and are an integral part of his all-embracing cosmic creed. Such ideas make strange and cryptic reading—they are couched in the esoteric language of the Mystic. Laban writes:

"The consciousness of the individual co-ordinates with the consciousness of the whole cosmos . . ." (WD 58); "Everything pulls him into the current of a strange rhythm . . ." (WD 47); man loses himself by "entering the stream of life and growth . . ." (GM N 58 8); "giving his soul to the pulsating world" (WD 44); "Since time began man has paid reverence to these mysteries and images of ancient power. He felt that he was included in the happenings of the world, felt a oneness with the presented world" (WD 137).

For Laban it is the intoxication of movement—particularly circular movement—which leads to an ecstasy of cosmic union, a state of complete identity with the Universe at large, a rapturous and mystical oblivion. "No separation is felt in the state of unitedness" says Laban, "oblivion of the world as well as of the creation of the world, floats through united Light-Darkness of space." (GM N60 17). As the spheres revolve in endless repetition, so must man find repetition in uniform circular motion, and by entering into the great cosmic rhythm he may engender powerful psychosomatic states—in fact an ecstasy! "The repetition of specific movements is able to bring people into a kind of frenzy in which agreeable and discordant attitudes are awakened, promoted, or at least intensified . . . ecstasy is a gift of Nature which benefits man and helps increase his life forces . . ." (GM M61 21).

The more child-centred—but none-the-less mystical—implications of Laban's cosmic creed can be gleaned from his allusions to the child and his 'world'. He claims that the child not only "tries to identify himself with the world . . . and with the infinite, but also to weave bonds between the infinite and the world . . . (and) even tries to influence the world around him . . ." (DK 126). Circling movements provide the key to a state of intoxication and an

ecstatic union with the cosmos. "How can circling a post give pleasure to a human being?" asks Laban, "It is only the intoxication that gives happiness, that brings oblivion of an oft felt melancholy and solitude . . . (only the) emphasis of certain areas of space which he would entwine and fill with his movement, thus giving him a feeling of unity . . ." (GM M61 14)*

And so with frequent references to ecstatic experience, religious dance, temple dancing and the Mysteries, we learn of Laban's deep interest in occult practices.

Comment

The assumption that a child by means of certain spatial exercises attempts to identify himself with the infinite or achieve a union with the whole cosmos must be the most mystical of all Laban's underlying educational ideas; it explains much of the mysterious terminology which pervades all his writings. Such notions are not the product of the poetic imagination, but the doctrines of a man intoxicated by the whirling dances of Dervish priests in the monasteries of Islam—of occult sects and secret societies.

We learn from our researches that Laban came under the influence of Islamic doctrines, particularly the secret sect of Sufism, and that he attempted to fashion movement scales based on the whirling dances of Mohammedan priests—among them the 'Jalal Scale'. But we should have to follow Islamic history more closely to learn that the Sufi doctrines themselves rest firmly on Pythagorean and Platonic soil and that they share a great deal of Ancient Greek and Hellenistic Mysticism. One of Islam's most revered spiritual leaders—Jalal-Luddin-Rumi—of whom Laban was undoubtedly a great admirer, extolled in his poetry the virtues of ecstatic communion with the cosmos, especially through the medium of the dance. Such knowledge helps us to recognise the true nature of the underlying mystical substance of Laban's philosophy of movement.

Has such mystically based practice any place in contemporary education? Has 'ecstasy' as such any purposeful role in dance education?

To the former of these questions we must conclude that the dancing rites of the Dervish priests, temple dances and Ancient Mysteries belong to monasteries of Islam and the secret societies of the ancient world and not to the movement studios of present day dance (except of course where they are serving as 'motifs' in the

* cf. Part 2 p. 4

dancer's imagination). But to the latter question we must seek more guidance, for 'ecstasy' appears to be a basic ingredient in the formulation and expression of the dance.

Professor Susanne Langer—an aesthete of pre-eminence in the field of dance philosophy—states that "the eternal popularity of the dance lies in its ecstatic function" (FF 201), and that "every dance which is to have balletic significance primarily for the people engaged in it, (it) is necessarily ecstatic (and) must take the dancer 'out of himself'" (FF 196). Few participants of the Art of Movement would deny the truth of these remarks, for most have enjoyed a genuinely ecstatic experience through the medium of the dance. As teachers also we know that carefully handled, the power of ecstasy can be harnessed to help create the illusory forces that operate in the dance; here lies its power as an instrument of genuinely creative and aesthetic expression. But—and this cannot be over-stressed—indulgence in the purely ecstatic element of the dance is neither art nor education; it lacks both disciplined technique and aesthetic judgment and has rightly earned for itself the name of 'wallowing'. Such self-indulgence we find—not unsurprisingly—is countenanced by Laban in his prolific writings, and this we attribute to his all-embracing cosmic philosophy which extolls 'abandoned' and intoxicating movement in the interests of mystical union with the universe. To "swim in the flow of movement which we call dance" says Laban, "is refreshing in many respects for the body, the mind, and for that dreamy part of the soul . . ." (MED 95). It is in Laban's view, to 'give up one's soul to the pulsating world'.

Whilst recognising in ecstasy a legitimate ingredient of the dance, we cannot subscribe to undisciplined self-indulgence nor to dreamy mystical devotion.

The need for discipline and the dangers of ecstatic indulgence can nowhere be more eloquently described than in the words of Mary Wigman. In 'The Language of Dance' she reveals how her artistic discipline prevails over the hypnotic effects of her own movement. She writes:

" . . . surging and ebbing, flowing back higher and faster, ever faster—the vortex seized me, the waters rose. The vortex dragged me down. Ever higher, ever faster, hunted, whipped, rushed. Will it never end? Why does no one speak the redeeming word, stopping this madness? With a last desperate exertion, control over one's will-power is found again.

A jerk pierces the body, compelling it to stand still at the moment of the fastest turn; now the body is stretched high, lifted on tiptoe, with the arms thrown up, grasping a non-existent support. A breathless pause, an eternity long, lasting, however, only for a few seconds. And then the sudden letting go, the fall of the relaxed body into the depth with only one sensation still alive; that of a complete incorporeal state. And in that state only one wish; never to be forced to get up again, to be allowed to lie there just like this, through all eternity.

But after a short moment of quiet there were people, there was an audience applauding. I had learned to discipline myself. Whether the auditorium turned around me, whether my head droned or my heart was beating like mad and my breath came in gasps—the minute the curtains went up again, I had to and wanted to be there again to take my bows. Once more it had turned out well. Once more I had got away by the skin of my teeth."

"The Language of Dance" p. 39.

We believe that the ecstatic element in Movement has been given rebirth by the teachings and philosophy of Rudolf Laban, and this fact accounts for a great deal of the enthusiasm generated by the Art of Movement; but we believe also that the dangers of ecstasy—only too vividly described by Mary Wigman—must be vigorously countered by artistic discipline in movement education if dance is to be distinguished from delirium. The ecstatic element in dance education is only a means—albeit a powerful one—to an end, and that means is the **conception and formulation** of 'felt life', a genuinely symbolic and aesthetic end.

Harmony

Of all the notions that lend themselves to vague, all-embracing theories, 'harmony' is perhaps the most persistent. For Laban, 'harmony' has musical, mathematical, psycho-physical, psychosomatic, social and cosmic significance; it strongly echoes the concept of harmony in Hellenistic times. The Heracleitean bow and lyre with its harmoniously 'held tension'; the Pythagorean harmony of the mathematically divided string with its precise proportions; the harmony of the spheres and the harmonia of the soul—all are thoroughly classical ideas with which we know Laban to have been only too familiar (see Parts 1 and 2). Even the determinism implicit in a 'pre-established harmony', to which man must conform, is a Heracleitean theme repeatedly referred to by Laban.

We recall Arthur Koestler's description of the Pythagorean heavens in which the orbits of the planets form a "kind of lyre

whose strings are curved in circles" (Part 1 p. 10), and of the glorious concord vouchsafed alone to Pythagoras' ears. Laban without doubt saw in miniature the orbits of the celestial spheres in man's own circular movements, and we suspect counted himself privileged to 'hear' their choreographic harmonies. There is in fact, no aspect of Laban's theory and philosophy which does not resound with Pythagorean doctrine, least of all his notion of 'harmony' and the analogy of the human body as a stringed instrument. In poetic mood we should find this analogy attractive, but when this image is pressed beyond its metaphorical limits and is enlisted in the service of a programme of 'space harmony' exercises, then the whole analogy becomes tedious, not to say ludicrous.

The philosophical foundation for such practices can be discovered in Pythagorean doctrine for:

"Pythagoreanism is a way of life; and it is characteristic of Pythagoreans to urge that human beings should (wherever possible) imitate the patterned rhythms of the cosmos, and should achieve thereby a kind of satisfaction which is at least aesthetic. They will still take pleasure (both as individuals and as members of their guild) in producing and in recognising the tones, scales and other patterns characteristic of their way of life. But they will also enjoy a deeper feeling of satisfaction from their faith that Pythagorean music is not superficial play, but 'imitates' and to some extent reproduces the tones and patterns of the great world around them. Their art is based upon something of a cosmic significance. (p. 248).

'Plato's Theory of Art' R. P. Lodge.

Any discussion therefore of the 'satisfaction' achieved by 'imitating the patterned rhythm of the cosmos' in Laban's icosahedral exercises with their mathematical and 'musical' harmonies, need not detain us. We should find that musical analysis likewise has suffered from the Pythagorean heritage of a mathematical basis of beauty, and as Professor Langer points out, "There is no use in discussing the sheer nonsense or the academic oddities to which this hope has given rise (for example)—to compute the exact degree of beauty in any art work (plastic, poetic and musical) by taking the 'aesthetic measure' of its components and integrating these to obtain a qualitative value judgement".

The nature of music or dance cannot be ascertained by any enquiry into the ingredients out of which these arts are created, and the wishful hope that mathematically determined vibrations in sound, or movements in space, will somehow find a psychological correspondence, is a futile exercise. It rests on the belief that—to

use Mrs. Langer's phrase—"a refined sort of sensuous pleasure . . . in turn evokes a well-timed variegated succession of feelings". (FF 107). Such a 'stimulus' theory we know has long been rejected as a criterion of art. Laban's 'Space Harmony' or 'Choreutics', rests upon a naive parallelism with the European tradition of musical harmony, and as such fails completely to take into account that this particular tradition is a **creative device** and not a 'principle' of music. The diatonic scale has led to a great tradition of music, but it carries no absolute law, and to have transposed this scale 'note for gesture' into a scale of exercises thus producing an alleged 'harmony of movement', is to have launched but one more of the 'academic oddities' if not 'sheer nonsense' to which Professor Langer has referred, only this time the transposition is choreographic.

We should also have to reject the parallel between music and dance on the grounds that its somatic effects are 'identical'; that for example, "The quietening effect upon the mind of harmonious movement is identical with the well-balanced proportions of harmonious sound arrangements". (GM M58 8). The affective power of music we know to have led to experiments in which a range of effects has been classified from 'sad' and 'serious' to 'patriotic' and 'irritated' (NK p. 213), but such experiments have been based on the assumption that music is self-expression—an emotional catharsis. But if music has any significance it is semantic and not symptomatic; the same principle applies of course, to dance. Dance gestures are symbolic and not expressive of actual states of feeling; only incidentally—and then to the detriment of the dance—do dance movements convey what the dancer **actually** feels.

Postscript

Our criticism of Laban's fundamental ideas of 'unity', 'ecstasy' and 'harmony' have been stringent, and we should have to ask why such mystical and mythical notions—still pervasive in our own practice—should have remained unchallenged for so long. The answer we feel lies in the particular difficulty in recognising the metaphorical status of Laban's so called 'scientific' theories. Dance in particular, of all the arts, seems vulnerable to pseudo-philosophical treatment, and in the hands of Rudolf Laban has produced a peculiarly fertile myth.

Professor Langer writes:

"No art suffers more misunderstanding, sentimental judgment, and mystical interpretation than the art of dancing. Its critical literature, or worse yet its uncritical literature, pseudo-ethnological and pseudo-aesthetic, makes weary reading. Yet this very confusion as to what dancing is—

what it expresses, what it creates, and how it is related to the other arts, to the artist, and to the actual world—has a philosophical significance of its own".

"Feeling and Form" p. 186.

And to Laban's theories in particular, she refers by saying:

"The chief source of such abortive speculations is the failure to distinguish between what is actual and what is virtual in the making of the 'symbol' . . . this telescoping of symbols and meanings, word and world, into one metaphysical entity is the very hallmark of what Cassirer has termed 'the mythical consciousness'."

We shall, in our next and final article in this series, examine the nature of Laban's 'myth' and its intimate correspondence to that ancient Pythagorean Myth of Creation—the 'Timaeus'.

ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES

WD	Rudolf Laban, 'Die Welt Des Tansers'.
GM	'Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine'.
DK	Rudolf Laban, 'Des Kindes Gymnastik und Tanz'.
FF	Susanne Langer, 'Feeling and Form'.
MED	Rudolf Laban, 'Modern Educational Dance'.
NK	Susanne Langer, 'Philosophy in a New Key'.

OTHER REFERENCES

Curt Sachs	'World History of the Dance'.
Mary Wigman	'The Language of Dance'.
R. P. Lodge	'Plato's Theory of Art'.

READERS IN KINETOGRAPHY LABAN,
 Series B Books 1 to 4, Motif writing for Dance
 By VALERIE PRESTON-DUNLOP

Kinetography Laban has already a History. ICKL, the International Council for Kinetography Laban is now part of this history. The author of this series of books has been a member of the council since its formation and her authority on the subject is revealed in each of these books.

Readers in Kinetography Laban, Series B deal with motif writing for dance, which is a development from full Kinetography Laban. In motif-writing the outline of a movement is given and the performer is free to decide on the manner of performance. This calls for powers of invention and interpretation and in education where these powers are of great importance motif writing has much to contribute.

The novelty of motif writing is not in the symbols themselves but in the use of the symbols, which is the author's invention and on the strength of this invention alone the books may claim importance. The symbols used in the books are in the main inventions of Knust and Laban. Some symbols however I cannot trace back to Knust or Laban; these I have taken to be new inventions. The gathering and the scattering symbol is one and the three dimensional extension is the other. The jump symbol is a derivation of a jump as written in full kinetography where two gestures in place may be denoted by action lines. In motif writing the two action lines have been curled at the ends. This is a preferable procedure if easy transference from motif writing to full kinetography is to be maintained. It will be easier to keep abreast of the two systems if the symbols used in both are kept closely related.

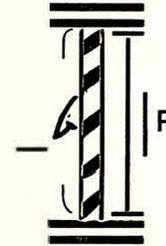
In taking concepts from advanced Kinetography Laban and presenting them in a simpler way the author has made more material available to the less experienced readers of notation. Examples may be found on page 12 of Bk. 1, approaching, going away from and arriving, page 10 of Bk. 2, directional detours, page 16 of Book 2, space retention, and in many parts of book 3, relationship. Further value may be attached to the books because of the author's success in devising ways of writing complex happenings economically. The following two examples illustrate this . . .



No. 9 Page 7 Bk. 3

move farther away from your partner as you circle round him; this will make a widen-spiral.

READERS IN KINETOGRAPHY LABAN



Bk. 4 Page 21 No. 13

A rising movement performed with sustainment, directness and lightness is done while travelling so that you pass your partner on your right.

The layout of material in these attractive books is excellent. Each page introduces new symbols or a rule and scores have been conveniently juxtaposed to the verbal explanation. Both are numbered clearly for quick cross reference. The scores themselves are accurate, clear and beautifully drawn.

The books make the reader familiar with basic movement ideas and indirectly illuminate the problem of selecting and ordering movement for composition.

The course of work develops well throughout the books from Bks. 1 and 2 which introduce the symbols, through Bk. 3 concerning relationship, to Bk. 4 given to movement dynamics. In each book interest is held and stimulus created by the varied presentation from page to page. Book 1 for instance on page 2 introduces symbols and gives examples in sequences; page 6 presents a dance revising the symbols introduced so far; page 8 scores a dance with a strict theme; and page 12 uses theme and variation form.

Book 1 is suitable for beginners in dance. The method for notating basic bodily actions is included and further examples show action combinations such as turning while jumping. The symbol combinations on pages 12 and 20 for writing pathways and writing spatial relationship respectively, are particularly striking in their effectively simple scoring of movement happenings frequently used in dance. The book ends with an enjoyable duo which could be dramatic or comic in character.

Book 2 material is more advanced and requires considerable body awareness from the reader. The passages in this book on leading with surfaces and edges of the hand; and leading with part of the trunk, produce interesting results, by stretching the movement imagination. The dance on page 2 is a very attractive outline suggesting exciting cutting turns, and penetrating travelling movements. Page 16 gives a dance which is over complex and strains the movement memory to the limit. The last dance in the book is a dance of great vitality. Page 20 includes interesting examples of varied experiences in lability. Books 1 and 2 have accompanying records Music for Dance B1 and B2.

Book 3 is an especially useful book covering substantially the theme of movement relationship with a partner. The early material consists of many single examples and from page 10 onwards there are dances for pairs which revise former symbols while continuing the theme. The scores include passages on approaching and leaving, leading and following, being near, and surrounding, lifting and supporting. The penultimate score, a duo, is a good outline for a dramatic dance. The last dance a trio is an effective contrast; it is full of fun derived from variations on lifts and supports. There are several passages in the book suitable for beginners in dance. The sifting of advanced Knust material and its ingenious adaptation for motif writing is well illustrated in this book. The record Music for Dance A.1 has been made to accompany the dances in this book.

Book 4 dealing with dynamics in movement not only gives single bar examples but includes three dances which have accompanying music on the record Music for Dance A.3. The coupling of actions to dynamics has been carefully considered in this book and apart from an error in Ex. 19 on page 5 where a jump is coupled with continuous sustainment, the examples are excellent. The score for Ex. 4 on page 7 is an obvious error in print, it should read 'flexible' and not 'light'. In the last dance, a trio, the score context and verbal explanation appear incompatible since bar 13 suggests suddenness more than sustainment. More examples on suddenness continued over a long duration would balance the frequent examples of suddenness coupled with short duration. This book is suitable for advanced student work but if used selectively will be useful in work with beginner students too.

From the mention of content above it will be clear that this set offers a wealth of first class material. It will be found that students learn to think in movement terms for their motif writing work, quickly improve their observation of movement, and develop an ability to think in phrases of movement.

DAVID MCKITTRICK.

The records, which accompany this series of books, will be reviewed in our next issue.

Reserve the date now

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ALBERT HALL**

NOTATION IN MOVEMENT EDUCATION

Dear Madam,

June Layson's letter to the Editor in the June 1968 issue of the Magazine, raises two questions:

- (1) Is a system of notation desirable in the study of movement?
- (2) Should the answer to (1) be Yes, how can the selection of an appropriate system of notation be made?

Miss Layson makes a plea for an investigation into the uses of notation in movement education. Should such an investigation take place, perhaps the following thoughts on questions (1) and (2) might be of use.

To evaluate the desirability of a notation system in the study of movement, knowledge of the work to be covered in this study is obviously essential. There is a basic likeness between the content of courses in Colleges of Education, and also differences. The differences are mainly in the amount of time which the head of the department allots to the parts of the course. As an example, participation in dance dramas may be stressed in one college, the acquisition of technical skill in another, or the comprehension of movement as a language in another. However, from my experience of teaching as a visitor I would say that some time is given in all colleges to these three aspects, amongst others. One would be reasonably safe, therefore, to presume that a common core exists, and comparison of actual syllabi substantiates this presumption.

For a notation system to be desirable means, to me, that it must aid the movement course as the course stands, and if possible enhance it. What it must not do is to be a stumbling block or in any way detract from the value of the course. Until a few years ago the only system available was kinetography. It was not widely used in movement education because it could well have been a stumbling block for many students, and time taken to learn it would have detracted from the value of the course.

Effort notation was also available and most colleges included knowledge of the effort symbols in the course, although the practical application of this knowledge was not pursued. Today the choice of systems is wider, namely, Benesh, Motif Writing and Eshkol have been added to the list. Circumstances in colleges have also altered and hence serious, and hopeful, thought is being given to the inclusion of a system of notation in courses.

(Should readers not be familiar with the basics of the systems available, articles have appeared in the recent editions of this magazine which outline them).

NOTATION IN MOVEMENT EDUCATION

How can any notation system aid a movement course, and how enhance it? Any aid should be geared to strengthen the impact of what is being taught so that it is more clearly perceived. An enhancement should cause something to be perceived which would otherwise have been passed by.

Notating dances which have been created by students or studies given by lecturers is hardly going to do either of these things without a tremendous amount of time being taken to learn one of the three main recording systems (Benesh, Eshkol and Kinetography) really well. Certainly writing movement down clarifies a dance or movement sequence, and pin points the parts of the movement which are still not clear. But this does not really aid the experience of the movement. The process is far more likely to cause a sense of dissatisfaction at the lack of grasp of the system used and the lack of knowledge of the movement performed. It is not enjoyable but a chore.

What then does notation have to offer beyond recording? From my own experience, I can say without any doubt that notation can be a powerful visual aid to the comprehension of what movement is all about. In order to be this it must be introduced in the same order as the movement work and at the same time. The written work and the movement work must be at one. This presupposes that there is a system of notation which can be used in this way. There was none, and so I made one, namely Motif Writing. It is likely that a teacher will aim at a full movement experience while pinpointing some special aspect of movement.

An example in dance, might be a creative situation, with a spatial base given, but with the importance on the ways in which dancers relate to one another and communicate to one another. How could notation be an aid in this situation? If thought fit, the spatial base could be presented in symbol form instead of, or as well as, a verbal form. Visually helpful symbols could be drawn on a board or duplicated. If thought fit, the facts about movement relationships could be presented in notation symbols. A basic chart of relationship symbols gives very simply 45 distinct kinds of relationship, from two people being mutually aware of each other to one person sliding over another. This material could be presented before the creative venture took place, or after, or during, as seemed most appropriate. What I know from experience is that such a chart aids dancers to see what kind of relationships there are in movement. It helps the less confident dancer in invention, and helps the confident one to understand what he or she has created. The visual impact of the symbols can well be described as having a revelatory effect on dancers who have been creating duos for

years and who for the first time become aware of their habits, their omissions and their unconscious preferences.

An example from gymnastics might be a task in which locomotion is to occur by transferring the weight from one part of the body to another. I know from experience that a chart of the symbols for the detailed parts of the body helps a gymnast to invent beyond the habitual roll, handstand, cartwheel, by systematic trial and error to find what combination of body parts and surfaces can produce points of balance not already within the movement vocabulary.

I can say from experience that the standard of creative work which I have been able to achieve with students since using notation in this way, is far higher than it was before. My judgment of the standard is not on whether what is produced is novel, but on whether what is new is perceived, on whether the individual's contribution is seen and felt to be what it is, unique.

Notation can be a visual aid within the grasp of everyone. It can also be literature. In the past, movement literature consisted of full scores, in detail, of finished works by other choreographers. It was available only to those who were already good readers of Benesh or Kinetography. This is no longer the case. There are now dances about dynamics written exclusively in dynamic symbols, dances about action written exclusively in action symbols. How can any of this literature be used? The most obvious way is to read it and reconstruct it. This is, of course, a possible way but not the way in which other forms of literature are used.

For instance, when I read a poem I do not automatically think I must recite it from memory. If it is a good poem I gain something by simply reading it and contemplating it. So it can be with a dance. I can be intrigued by its construction, comprehend its theme, be amused by its story, be sparked off by part of it to create a dance of my own. In my view it is as outdated to think that dances are read to be constructed as it is to think that the main purpose of notation is to record movement.

I turn now to the question of selecting one of the systems available. The question must be: is any one more capable than the others of providing a visual aid, literature, and a recording method within the grasp of the average student given no extra time for study? There is simply only one answer to this and it is Motif Writing. Although Mrs. Causley mentions "a system of generalised programming" similar in use to Motif Writing, the very nature of the Benesh system, its strength through visual likeness to actual movements, inhibits the development of a Benesh motif-writing.

However, should my judgment be wrong and should the "generalised programming" prove to be the potent visual aid which Motif Writing is, then the answer to the question "Which" must be Motif Writing or "Benesh generalised programming" and it should not matter which. However, in the present situation, Motif Writing is the only sensible selection, and from Motif Writing, the interested student can graduate without difficulty to Kinetography.

The fact that I advocate Motif Writing may well be regarded as worthless, because, it could well be said, if I invented it I obviously want people to use it, and because I am an active member of the International Council of Kinetography Laban obviously I want to encourage the use of Kinetography.

I doubt that anything I said to minimise this would make much difference. But I will say it all the same. I have no loyalties to Kinetography and no special affection for Motif Writing. I certainly do not think that either is ideal, and I intend to continue to improve them. Should another system prove better I would change to it without hesitation. In exactly the same way, if I felt that the Graham technique offered better educational possibilities than Modern Educational Dance, I would learn it and teach it without any qualms whatsoever. As for the Beechmont Movement Study Centre, we would switch to Benesh or Eshkol or Snooks overnight if they proved to be a better system for our purposes. Possibly the fact that the promotion of Motif Writing and Kinetography cost me £3,000 last year and this year will probably show a similar loss, might prove that I do not take lightly the view that movement education can be enhanced by the use of Motif Writing. Nor does this view presuppose that I think the Benesh and Eshkol systems are not good systems. They are both good systems. But not as good for movement education as Motif Writing. If my aim in life were to perpetuate ballet, I would become a choreologist tomorrow, for Benesh is, in my view, better for ballet than Kinetography. If I were interested in aiding research into the movement of cosmonauts, I would become a proficient Eshkol writer, for it would be a more suitable system. But I am not, and as a movement educator with probably more knowledge of notation systems and their application than most other movement educators, I must take a responsible stand.

Yours faithfully,

VALERIE PRESTON-DUNLOP.

Beechmont Movement Study Centre.

Swanley School,
Cherry Avenue,
Swanley,
Kent.

23/9/68.

Dear Guild Members,

After much wrangling with the South-East Regional Examining Board, my syllabus for Modern Educational Dance, Mode 3, at C.S.E. is a definite possibility for 1970.

However at Swanley we feel the need for support from other schools and wish to link up with and share our work with other teachers interested in this aspect of teaching Dance.

I would be willing to forward my syllabus, or to meet and discuss pros and cons whenever convenient.

Please contact me at the above address.

Yours sincerely,
PAM HOWARD
(née Hope).

Disabled Living Activities Group,
Central Council for the Disabled,
39, Victoria Street,
London S.W.1.

September, 1968

Dear Miss Osgathorp,

The Disabled Living Activities Group is undertaking a study of physical recreation for the disabled (but not, at present, the blind and deaf). A panel formed to direct this project is representative of government departments, professional associations and voluntary bodies concerned with youth and sport.

As a first step, the Panel wished me to collect as much information as possible about the opportunities now available for the physically disabled to take part in sport and other forms of physical recreation. I shall, therefore, be most grateful if you will be kind enough to make known through your magazine, the following:

1. that I shall be very pleased to hear from anyone concerned with such provision;
2. that as well as receiving factual information, I would like to be given some indication of the extent to which the disabled, particularly young people, are taking advantage of the opportunities open to them;
3. that I would welcome constructive suggestions as to the action which needs to be taken if the physically disabled are to be fully catered for in the field of physical recreation.

Replies, or requests for further information, should be sent to me at the above address.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,
K. E. EVANS.

Swanley School,
Cherry Avenue,
Swanley,
Kent.

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DR. ERNST BODMER

Through the death on February 19th 1968 of Ernst Bodmer, the Guild has lost a good friend. He knew Rudolf Laban well and, from the beginning he encouraged and supported the activities of the Guild. As Sylvia's husband he had of course both a great knowledge of and interest in the Laban Art of Movement and Dance.

In the Manchester area his loss is keenly felt as he was President of the Manchester Dance Circle, and as such he came to most performances of the Production Group and to many of the courses run by the Artistic Director, his wife Sylvia. He was a friend to all and everyone who met him and knew him felt his kindly interest in their doings and problems.

Ernst Bodmer was not only extremely able in his professional capacity, he was also a very remarkable person, with wide artistic and philosophical interests and a deep understanding of the problems and needs of those who came to him for advice. He was himself an outstanding example, a human being who had attained that, harmonious balance of all aspects of human personality for which he felt each individual should strive, and he believed in the value of Laban Art of Movement and Dance as a means to attain such balance.

MYFANWY DEWEY.

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Members are reminded that copies of Betty Redfern's booklet 'Introducing Laban Art of Movement' can be obtained, either singly or in bulk, from 3 Beech Grove, Burton-on-Stather, Scunthorpe, Lincs.