The Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine

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EDITORIAL

For many years the magazine has been the responsibility of an editor working alone. This magazine was planned by the editor working together with an advisory group and a new policy has been developed. Each issue will have a theme and individuals will be asked to contribute articles on specific topics related to the theme. This issue is concerned with the relationship between music and dance. The articles by Jean Morley, by Olive Hunter and Roy Cooper and by Judith Holden were commissioned and deal with varied aspects of this relationship. (The fourth article — the second part of Carl Hare's account of his experimental workshops at the Studio—is unconnected with the theme, but we have no wish to preclude valuable contributions from writers with other ideas.) We feel that these articles are worthy of criticism and hope that members will make comments, however brief, in writing. The brief comments of many Guild members will add up to a considerable body of opinion and we would welcome this. We envisage the possibility of devoting the next issue to this 'feed back', particularly if some members are stimulated by these articles to contribute a longer piece of writing.

Our next theme is Creativity and we would welcome your ideas. We would also be interested to have your suggestions for future themes.

Council has suggested the incorporation of a regular feature called ' Notebook.' The success of this will depend upon the news items sent by members — submit advance notice of performances — reports of performances — work seen in arts centres, drama groups — new courses — TV or radio appearances — anything which you think may be of interest.

Publication of the Magazine is the biggest single item in the Guild's expenditure. In most other publications this cost is offset by advertising. If we advertised, we would have more money to spend on improving the magazine. We need an Advertising Secretary. Will you take on this job? Miss Pat Woodall, who lives in Ealing, was in charge of this section of the Kaleidoscopia Viva programmes and is willing to help anyone starting on this task. Another person is needed to distribute publications, a routine but important job, which requires some storage space and, on an average, one hour's time a week. Please write to the editor for further details of either of these positions.

Mrs. Pam Green will shortly be sending a questionnaire to Secretaries of Affiliated Groups. Please complete and return it promptly so that the ' Newsletter ' will be a comprehensive list of information about the groups.

The cover of the magazine has been changed — the design was borrowed with Miss Ullmann's permission, from ' Some Preparatory Stages for the Study of Space Harmony in Art of Movement.' We invite the artists within our membership to submit alternative designs. We hope that the change of cover indicates a more positive approach to the publication. The success of this approach depends largely upon the response of the membership. This editorial is full of requests for action from you. Please take the action !

MUSIC, DANCE AND SPEECH — A UNITY

The natural affinity between moving and making sounds is, we believe, as old as man himself. In the process of development from a simple uncomplicated type of community into our present mechanised, complex society, spontaneous activity (incorporating in an unconscious way these different yet closely linked forms of expression) has been largely glossed over, hidden under layers of sophistication and stylisation.

It is fitting that, in a highly civilised society, those arts which have evolved from more primitive movement and sound should exist each in their own right. There could, however, in these days, be no live presentation of drama without some reliance on movement, no concert or recital of music which is not enlivened or enriched by it and in dance, a performance without sound of any kind is practically unthinkable. In opera, of them all probably the most highly sophisticated and stylised, there is a planned, conscious effort to incorporate several of the arts in one artistic whole.

Finding the over-refinement and the stress laid on rules and procedures irksome, restricting and unnatural, several pioneers during the last hundred years or so have attempted to work at a more fundamental level. What they were principally seeking, it seems to me, was a sense of freedom, allowing commitment uncluttered by intellectual or social fetters. This simpler approach was to give the individual opportunity for total involvement, a linking of body, mind and spirit.

As is so often the case, we can look back to the ancient Greeks and find that ideas which come to the surface in our own times were, at least to some extent, carried out in their way of life. And, consciously or unconsciously, our nineteenth and twentieth century pioneers reflect something of the 'music' of the Greeks in which they recognised and exploited the natural compatibility of music dance and poetry. No doubt, among the Greeks, although they appreciated the overall unity of the three strands, there were poets, musicians, dancers who, however interested they were with the other modes of expression, nevertheless performed, and probably instructed others, only in their own particular field. Many artists of our own age, however much they believe in the possibilities of interplay and of welding sound with movement, on account of their own expertise, highlight and develop furthest the aspect in which their own talent lies.

Perhaps François Delsarte (1811-1871) was rather an exception to this. His voice ruined, due it is said to bad training, he was forced to abandon his career as a singer and turned instead to the task of discovering general laws of art and expression. A perfectionist, who believed that his work was incomplete and still evolving, Delsarte refused to have any of his ideas published; what is known and understood has been gathered from the notes he left or by what was written down by his pupils. He was, during his lifetime, known chiefly for his teaching of

singing, diction and declamation and thus his great interest in movement and, in particular, of gesture was overshadowed. But he gave considerable thought to movement, formulated a set of laws for gesture and his followers used 'exercises' known as 'aesthetic gymnastics.' Much of his work is obscure; he was philosopher as well as musician and actor, and how far he was a forerunner of later pioneers is difficult to assess. But there is no doubt that for him movement was a vital force, closely allied with music and speech. He not only recognised that feelings and emotions were reflected in bodily motion, but also that movement itself can create or evoke feeling. Some of the divisions he suggested, and terminology he used, have an oddly familiar ring. Everything in his philosophy hinged on groups of three, a trinity of things "each of which is essential to the other two, each co-existing in time, co-penetrating in space, and co-operative in motion" [1]. This idea of trinity may be seen, for instance, in the physical sensations a young child has and which he expresses in the tone of the sounds he makes: these feelings he carries into action, reaching out with gesture and finally, able to think, he acquires articulate speech to express his thoughts. Delsarte divided the body itself into three main regions, the space surrounding it was also divided into three zones, then sub-divided again. He spoke, too, of a fundamental principle and pattern in all human movement and in movements of nature — a range of dynamics from tension to relaxation. He would thus seem to have considered and attempted at least a partial classification of aspects of movement, together with music and speech, in which others such as Dalcroze, Laban and Orff have subsequently been interested.

Of Dalcroze it has been said that he was fortunate in being able to combine his two great loves — music and dramatic art. He chose to train as a musician and it was as part of education in music that movement was used in his system of Eurhythmics. Yet I feel that whatever others have made of the ideas of Dalcroze, and some have categorically stated that movement was to be the handmaid of music in their work, his intention was to have a unified experience. Claire-Lise Dutoit[2] insists that it was for the individual to develop into a 'whole personality' that Dalcroze wanted to include dance as part of his teaching. She sums-up the principles which for him were essential in this way:—

> "The music of sounds and the music of gestures should be animated by the same emotion.
>
> Music should so transfigure the body that it becomes visible sound. Dance thereby becomes the embodiment of man himself, effective, aesthetic and social".

He owed some inspiration to Isadora Duncan, seeing her as a revolutionary and a prophetess calling for freedom of expression in dance. He was strongly opposed to professional dancers of the time who, after a

long and painful training, he said, were destined to "jump as high as possible and to spin like tops". But since he believed that genius and instinct alone are not sufficient, he deplored Duncan's complete rejection of technique.

Though he was aware that others before him — Grétry, Gluck, Schiller and Goethe, for instance — had each tried to create work in the combined arts, his main inspiration it seems came directly from the Greek choral trinity. If his methods in rhythmical education seem limited, restricting movement expression, this is because he intended to increase musical knowledge and the rhythmic content in particular. Others, who studied with him — Laban, Mary Wigman, Sylvia Bodmer, Marie Rambert, Jerome Robbins, Paul Taylor, to mention but a few — were, in their various ways, to rectify the balance and have dance as the centre of their work.

Nowadays, perhaps, the name most often associated with creative music in education is that of Carl Orff (b. 1895), who readily acknowledges his debt to Laban (1879-1958). Initially, both Laban and Orff were concerned with art rather than education. In both cases it became evident that their approach was right for the child who sees and feels things as a unity; where the adult tends to be analytical, to split 'thinking' from 'doing' and 'feeling,' the child naturally gives a total response involving all three. It is this spontaneity and wholeness which both Laban and Orff, through the application of their ideas, aimed to preserve, and to awaken and retain into adult life.

Orff, disclaiming any originality for his ideas, said that they were in the air, and that he, "having specially long antennae"[3] simply picked them up. But, clearly, he has been responsible for initiating and developing work with children, using a creative approach. The adjective 'creative,' a sorely overworked word as it now seems to be, when describing music or dance applies to that which we 'make up' and participate in ourselves as distinct from merely performing someone else's composition.

Orff's own statement regarding the principles upon which his work is based is:—

i) unity exists and is to be preserved between music, movement and speech,

ii) it is child-centred — for development of the whole personality rather than education in music

iii) simple, especially melodic percussive instruments are to be used with a limited number of notes in the early stages (pentatonic scale) so improvisation shall not be hindered.

Orff's approach could be described as a 'method' which, from its Greek derivation, means 'a way of doing things.' This way is still in the process of growing and changing.

The Orff Schulwerk books are intended primarily for the guidance and inspiration of teachers as Orff Schulwerk is not an inflexible system. It is interesting to compare his work with that of the Hungarian composer, Kodaly (1882-1967), whose widow, writing in the preface to "The Kodaly Concept of Music Education", said : "May it thus help to serve the development of the child's body and soul alike, providing an opportunity for him to satisfy his desire for singing and playing, his need for movement, and his creative instincts"[4]. The Kodaly work is based on and logically develops from early aural training through use of the voice and body actions. (It is fair to interpolate here that Orff's approach does not preclude inclusion of parts of Kodaly's system, but discussion of this would take us away from the theme of 'unity.')

The Orff method is not intended or expected to cover the whole of an individual's music training. Neither has Orff set out to do where music is concerned what, I believe, Laban did for movement — that is to write significantly and throw fresh light on principles and the underlying theory.

It was largely through his experience at the Guentherschule in Munich in the early 1920's, improvising for dance and working in close co-operation with Maja Lex that Orff began to experiment with ideas leading towards the realisation of a "reciprocal interpenetration of movement and music 'education.'"

About this time, with help from his friend Curt Sachs, he acquired a quartet of recorders copied from old models; combining these with plucked stringed instruments he encouraged and helped the Guentherschule students to improvise and to build up their own accompaniments to movement. It was not until after World War II, when he was asked to provide a series of broadcast lessons, that the contribution of singing and the spoken word was realised. But then he said "everything fell quite naturally into place; elementary music, elementary speech and movement forms". Orff explained that the word in its Latin form, 'elementarius,' means 'pertaining to the elements, primeval, rudimentary, treating of first principles.' Here is no suggestion of anything at a low rather than a high level, just a declaration of something fundamental. And to quote Orff again — "Elementary music is near the earth, natural, physical, within the range of everyone to learn it and to experience it . . . Elementary music is never much alone but forms a unity with movement, dance, speech"[5].

We may use the spoken word, be it in the form of nonsense rhyme, prose or poetry, as a starting point for dance composition. Here the

sense, i.e. the literal rather than the abstract symbolic aspect, is probably the more important, but when used concurrently with movement, the sound seems to take precedence. Some of the actual words may be retained as an integral part of the composition, as is possible, for instance, with dance inspired by T. S. Eliot's "Cats", when such phrases as 'no less liquid than their shadows' are spoken as part of the 'performance.' It is such things as tone, pitch, accent, phrasing and timing with the movement, those things which make for quality of sound, which are important. Or, to quote another example, when using the poem "Seeds",[6] words e.g. 'thistledown', 'hooked', 'pop' and similar vocal sounds were used to support the movement. The total result depended not so much on the sense of the words as on the tone, pitch and inflection of voices and the rhythmic phrasing within the group. In such cases the use of voice could be described as music for it has the essential ingredients of rhythm, pitch, timbre and dynamics. At any rate, where movement and sound are encouraged together, they may be so blended (as in the example just quoted) that they would, as separate movement and sound, become meaningless fragments.

But this kind of experience is quite different from starting with some speech, be it phrase, rhyme or piece of prose and organising it into a stylised production as in choral speaking with set gestures and instrumental accompaniment conforming to traditional music notation.

Sensitivity and flexibility are obviously called for if sound and movement are to grow creatively together. Orff has said that teachers doing this sort of work should be 'artistically inclined'. But he also insists on technical training. There are times when, for instance, emphasis is placed, not on experimentation and the creation of patterns in movement or sound for their own sake, but on techniques required for the playing of instruments. In my own experience, I vividly remember a session at the Orff Institute in which we first experimented with and then practised using different parts of the hand, and especially of the thumb, for playing the tambour. We were encouraged, through the senses of hearing and of touch, to discover from which part of the stretched skin the most pleasing response would come. Of course the better the instrument the more sensitive it is and the greater its range of variation. I had not previously been so aware of the differing potential of instruments of the same kind. But realisation of such individuality calls attention to the infinite possibilities in the shadings of sound for harmonising with the subtleties of movement. While it is unlikely that the technical knowledge and expertise in all three fields can be equally supplied by one and the same person, at least (I suppose) it can be our aim. If nothing else, an acknowledgment that we none of us know sufficient for successful integration or for the ideal support of our movement ideas is a step in the right direction. It may lead to a greater humility on our part, as dancers and teachers of dance, in seeking advice

from gifted musicians sympathetic to dance, of enlisting their help rather than relying on our own, presumably lesser, musical expertise. There are times, of course, when quite sincerely we rightly reject, because of our present purpose, some of the suggestions offered. In just the same way, those who have their 'strength' in speech or music may disagree with recommendations relating to the movement content. Sincerity must accompany sensitivity. This is the great virtue, that each individual, within the 'elemental' approach, works out his own 'salvation.'

We can, and probably should, set out to learn whatever in music seems particularly relevant to our needs as dancers, choreographers, teachers of dance: such things as the ability to 'pick out' a tune on a simple melodic instrument, to understand the elements of form in music and to interpret an easy score.

Is there such a person as a completely unmusical dancer? I doubt it. Probably those who proclaim that they are 'unmusical,' 'know nothing about music' do so mistakenly, equating musicianship with the ability to read and perform music. The kind of people to whom I refer indicate by the way they relate movement phrase to music, timbre to quality of movement, or by the significance they attach to pause, to silence or stillness, reveal that they have (or have not) a true feeling for the relatedness of the music and the movement.

One doesn't have to be a good performer oneself or to read music fluently in order to know what, in the interests of dance, is wanted; but participation, at whatever level, is helpful experience. The more we can, through our experience and accumulated knowledge, get on the same wavelength and talk the same language as those whose first interest lies in another field, the more likely it is that our problems and aspirations will be understood.

Just as 'humus' in nature makes growth possible, so the fundamental 'unity' and the 'elemental' approach generate powers of development in human beings. "This elementary music, word and movement, everything that awakens and develops the powers of the spirit, this is the 'humus' of the spirit, the 'humus' without which we face the danger of spiritual erosion"[7].

JEAN MORLEY

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1 Delsarte, F., quoted Shawn, T. in "Every Little Movement", 2nd ed. 1963, republished Dance Horizons Inc. N.Y.

2 Dutoit, C-L., "Music, Movement, Therapy", Dalcroze Society Eng. trans. 1971 (this book forms part of the 1965 Centenary edition of "Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, l'homme, le compositeur, le créateur de la Rythmique").

3 quoted verbatim from a lecture given by Orff, interpreted by Margaret Murray, during the Orff Schulwerk Summer School, July 1965.

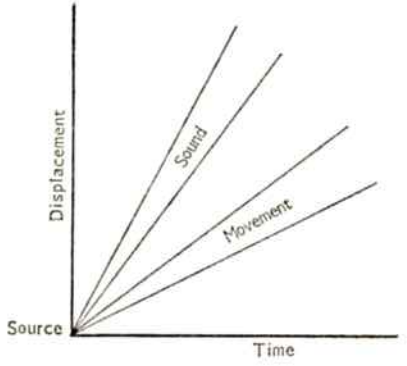
4 Book and records, English Edition, Boosey & Hawkes, 1969.

5 & 7 from the speech "Orff Schulwerk: Past and Present" given by Orff at the opening of the Orff Institute, Salzburg, translated Margaret Murray, printed in "Music in Education", September/October 1964.

6 Woodland, E. J. M., ed., "Poems for Movement", Evans Brothers 1966.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DANCE AND MUSIC

In any discussion of the relationship between dance and music, it is first of all important to underline those factors within the two forms which make such a relationship possible. Movement and sound, the raw materials of dance and music are both forms of energy dissipation and usually occur together as simultaneous derivatives of the same source of energy. What enables us to distinguish between them is simply their time base measured against our own reactions. Fast movement is sound. Slow sound is movement. They can therefore be conceived as different ends of the same spectrum.



When movement and sound become art forms as in dance and music, the connotations we assume from their temporal morphology become in addition, most important linking factors. Both dance and music may be described as time arts and, as such, the processes found in all temporal forms are intrinsic in both. Audible forms occur between the poles of sound and silence, visible forms between the poles of motion and stillness. Both are thus characterised by an ebb and flow of energy, each with a distinctive form but each existing in time and marked by duration. Each form may be described in rhythmic terms as 'the preparation of a new event by the ending of a previous one'. (Langer)[1]. A relationship between sound and movement may therefore be based on the **perception** of this flow of energy in each form.

The suggestion of an inter-relatedness between dance and music is not a negation of the fact that dance can and does exist in its own right without the partnership and stimulus of other arts. None the less dance whether conceived as an educational or recreational activity or as a theatre form has traditionally made much use of music.

In life, sound and movement usually occur simultaneously and we are conditioned to expect one as a by-product of the other. We are used to using sound as a means of information about movement, as a label or as a signal. The opposite is also true, in fact the perception of sound plus the observation of movement often helps us to recognise significance or

meaning in an event. Laban[2] observed 'Effort is visible in the action-movement of a worker, or a dancer, and it is audible in song or speech. If one hears a laugh, or a cry of despair, one can visualise in imagination the movement accompanying the audible effort'.

There are many examples of this duality:—from the sound of moving feet—unseen—we can build up a moving image of a person; we can do this actually or in the imagination. The sound of clapping hands carries the same connotation as the gesture and may conjure the visual image. Our language contains many examples of inseparable sound and movement images, onomatopoeic but descriptive sounds and action ideas contained in words and phrases—indeed words are often used in this context in movement study. It is interesting that an insistence on this duality sometimes leads to confusion as for example when it is said of electronic sound 'It doesn't sound like anything'.

It is natural therefore because of our intuitive response to the simultaneity of sound and movement that we should attempt to make relationships between music and dance. Unfortunately this relationship has tended to gather up an increasing number of clichés which through hazy analysis in usage has led to some pseudo relationships and, inevitably a disassociation at an organic level. For example, piano arpeggios are sometimes used to represent flowing movement. In actual fact the piano is incapable of 'flowing' and what we actually hear is a rapid succession of impacts characteristic of the piano's percussive nature. This traditional representation is an analogue developed to support a particular need. In the same way pitch in sound and melodic line have both been associated with a spatial orientation of the body. More accurately, pitch in sound represents an intensifying or dispersal of sound wave forms and should more properly be associated with dynamic aspects of movement. Children who speak of "thick" and "thin" sounds in this context are much nearer the truth.

Music is sometimes described as a stimulus to dance and is so used to such an extent as to imply that dance cannot begin until a dynamic response has been caused by sound or that ideas in movement must proceed from ideas in sound. There is a notion too, still in evidence in dance composition, that music engenders a kind of refined sensual pleasure which can in turn be translated by the dancer into visual movement forms.

When dance and music occur together the implication is that the dancer, whether working with or against the sound, is in fact identified with the sound, our conditioning to the simultaneity of sound and movement underlines this. Therefore the sound may be used to reveal something of the characteristic or quality of the movement. Conversely the movement may be being used to reveal in visual form, something of the sound. Eurhythmics is based on this latter kind of association.

When a dancer uses music, written or recorded, which already exists as a completed form in its own right and which was not written for dance in the first place, this not only indicates a dependence of one form upon the other but is a contrived construction rather than a creative composition. This may be a justifiable means of coming to an understanding of the basic behaviour of the two media at study level, when rhythmic pattern or phrase, structure, accent, mood or event may be experienced from one form to the other, but if movement and sound are to be extended in their inter-relatedness into art form then their relationship must be based on a much more organic unity and one which allows each partner fullness of expression in the total concept of the composition. Sound and movement can be inter-related in composition with an inseparability of intention and yet a co-existence which allows the two statements to be followed simultaneously or independently, each or both underlining the theme or extending it and with an organic development from within the composition itself to the final form.

This implies an inseparable growth throughout a composition of the two forms and poses immediate problems of the feasibility of this working relationship between music and dance and so between instrumentalists and dancers.

Recorded music is easier to come by than an instrumentalist who is both available and sensitive to a dancer's needs!

There have been useful and fruitful experiments by dancers in the use of percussion instruments as a source of sound, once the limitation of mere rhythmic accompaniment have been overcome, but it is in the field of modern technology that the possibilities of a truer relationship between movement and sound now lie. Music is at present undergoing a tremendous metamorphosis, both in terms of its basic material and also in its philosophical premises, and it is possible that this change and re-appraisal is more formidable than any other art form has ever had to contend with in the past. It is therefore to be expected that the reverberations of this change will be felt in other arts and especially in one so closely related as dance.

From the beginning, musicians have grappled with the need to control sound, that is to predict the form of its recurrence. Until the twentieth century the proportion of usable sound compared with the possible totality has remained quite small and has been controlled by the use of musical instruments and it is an amazing example of man's resourcefulness that music has continued to flourish so marvellously even with slender means. With the invention of sound recording and latterly sound synthesis, all sounds are now usable. The magnitude and shock of this potential, arriving as it has done, all at once has created a traumatic situation for many musicians and indeed a paralysing one.

Tradition is no longer sufficient and the need for agonizing reappraisal has produced the usual crop of self-placatory comments: 'too gimmicky', 'too scientific', 'too difficult'. In actual fact the new possibilities in the use of sound offer an even greater potential in terms of ease, sensitivity, depth and expression and the implications of inter-relationship between dance and music are very exciting. Already we are able to create music which springs organically from the same concept as the dance and also set up relationships which were previously difficult or impossible to achieve, e.g. spatial concepts of sound in relation to dance. Dance and music can now be composed simultaneously and co-exist as two aspects of the same totality, and traditional relationships of one form servicing the other can be discarded at will.

By using the tape recorder and portable synthesiser in creative ways, the dancer is now free to compose his own music or to work alongside a composer in a studio workshop situation, and within this situation a composition can be conceived, developed and realised without further process. By using 'found' sound, that is sound collected from the environment or from such materials as glass, wood, metal, fabric, skins, etc. and by manipulating these sounds on tape, sound and movement can be integrated and explored together at an early stage in composition. Similarly in working with a portable synthesiser the dancer enters into a true partnership with sound, whether at a level of improvisation or conscious composition. Complete control over sound by means of synthesis, tape manipulation and amplification is now established as standard compositional procedure and when realised together with spatial modulation, i.e., the ability to move sound around an environment, the new found potential pushes the possibilities of music and dance composition into the forefront of artistic freedom.

Sound and movement are both media which can be developed by man into art forms—both can be transformed into perceptible forms which serve as symbols of man's consciousness and enable him to create new descriptions of his experience. It is in this process of symbolising meaning that an inter-relatedness of the media available to man as channels for communication becomes significant.

Laban believed that the stimulus and partnership of other fields of creative work was used more readily in dance than in any other single art form.

Langer[4] suggests "the fact that the primary illusion of one art may appear like an echo as a secondary illusion in another, gives us a hint of the basic community of the arts" and Nikolais[5] speaks of "a polygomy" of the arts.

Newer and more closely integrated relationships are now possible but we will only inherit this vast potential if we are willing to review

our traditional formulae and we can fulfil this intention without supplanting what is already of value but rather by understanding that technology has so changed our material environment that previous limiting factors now no longer apply.

Isadora Duncan believed she danced music, but in 1946 Mary Wigman[6] was writing: "After years of trial, I have come to realise in a very final way, that for me the creation of dance to music already written cannot be complete and satisfactory . . . the parallel development of the dance with the already completely worked-out musical idea is what I find in most instances to be functionaly wrong. Each dance demands organic autonomy".

Today in his writing, John Cage[7] speaks of "sound-dance compositions" and "a necessary working together of the two parts".

At a simple creative level for child, student or teacher or at a more advanced or experimental level of composition, new and exciting means are now available for the inter-relationship of movement and sound.

OLIVE HUNTER. ROY COOPER

1 Langer, Susanne, 1953. "Feeling and Form", London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
2 Laban, Rudolf, 1950. "Mastery of Movement on the Stage". London, Macdonald & Evans.
4 Langer, Susanne, 1953. "Feeling and Form". London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
5 Nikolais, Alwin, in Cohen, S. J. (edit), 1966. "Modern Dance: Seven Statements of Belief". Middleton, Wesleyan University Press.
6 Wigman, Mary, in Ghiselin, Brewster (edit.), 1952. "The Creative Process" Berkeley, University of California Press.
7 Cage, John, 1969. "Silence". London, M.I.T. Press.

THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON THE DANCER

There are many considerations of a practical nature which need to be borne in mind when choosing music for dance. The suitability of the music for the particular age of the people participating needs careful thought. When choosing music for children, where music is used to help to give an experience of a particular movement idea, the music should be simple in phrasing and form, and short in length. Music written especially for dance is most suitable as it fulfils these requirements.

The size of the group participating influences the choice of music. As a general rule a full-blooded orchestral piece is not appropriate for a solo dance. The sound is too rich and overshadows the movement, much to the detriment of the dance. A single instrument or some trio combinations are more appropriate.

In a similar way really great music is not usually satisfactory. Its very greatness makes it complete in itself. More often than not the length of the music makes it impossible to use it in its entirety and to cut it would be sacrilege.

Another important consideration is the function of the music to be selected. Is its function to provide the bone structure of the dance, or is its function simply to provide the atmosphere and set the mood of the dance? If it is to do the former, the music itself, its rhythms, form and structure, its shades of colour and texture tend to dictate and dominate, and the movement is, as it were, subservient to the music. This use of music often comes about when one is inspired by a piece of music perhaps heard at a concert or listened to on the radio. The movement ideas are then chosen to fit the music. In the latter instance the movement ideas assume a greater role and become of prime importance. The music becomes an accompaniment only, a "backcloth" if you like for the dance. In this case the music selected will probably be rather free in structure and evocative of the mood or changing moods of the dance — music one can move "through" rather than "with". The music is chosen to serve the movement.

Most often perhaps there is a compromise between these possible functions of music, in that a piece of music is selected because it contains something of the particular movement qualities or shape content one wishes to use, or is suitable for the movement idea or dance theme chosen. Because of the close link between dance and music however, the music also provides a clear framework for the action. The music contributes to the movement ideas and can prove to be a great help and source of further inspiration to the dancers.

While dancers tend to be conscious of such factors in music as rhythm, intensity, speed and pitch, there are other less familiar factors which evoke intuitive responses. The main purpose of this article is to consider some of the means employed by composers to call forth such responses. The factors to be considered are cadences, modulation,

harmonic rhythm and concord and discord. Knowledge of the ways in which different composers use these factors can be helpful in the selection of appropriate music for particular dance themes and can lead to a greater understanding of the links between music and dance.

A musical composition can be divided up into sections, a small unit of which is termed a phrase. Cadences (i.e. a succession of two chords) are used at the end of each phrase to indicate "commas" or "full stops". There are two "full stops". Firstly, the perfect cadence, which is very emphatic, denotes a clear point of repose. Sing or play the last lines of most hymn tunes and you will be singing or playing a perfect cadence at the end. Secondly, the plagal cadence, sometimes called the Amen cadence, is not so emphatic but is nevertheless a definite ending, or if occurring in the middle of a piece, indicates a moment of repose. The imperfect cadence acts as a "comma" at the end of a phrase, and a further phrase ending in a "full stop" cadence is needed before one feels a sense of completion. For instance, sing the third line of the hymn "Immortal, invisible, God only wise", to the tune St. Denio (ending in an imperfect cadence) and you will feel sure that you must sing the fourth line in order to achieve a satisfying ending (perfect cadence). Now sing Amen and you have the plagal cadence. The interrupted cadence also acts as a "comma" but this differs from the imperfect cadence in that it gives the feeling of an ending being avoided. One feels an abrupt change in the music as though its course has been altered or diverted. It is more dramatic in nature than the imperfect cadence. Both the imperfect and the interrupted cadences suggest a certain degree of onward movement.

In music where the major and minor scale systems are used, i.e. from the end of the 16th century to the end of the 19th century (and in some 20th century compositions) the harmonic cadences just described feature largely and almost every composition ends with a perfect cadence. The phrasing of the music of this period is therefore easy to discern. In contemporary music, where the major and minor scale systems are not used, cadential effects are achieved, but it is much more difficult to classify them. Nevertheless "breathing spaces" do occur, which correspond with the ends of our movement phrases.

Modulation is another feature of music which is connected with the system of key. (The key note—tonic—is the home note of the scale. Each key has two modes: the major and the minor.) Unless a composition is very small in length it will not remain in the same key throughout. Variety will be achieved by **changes** of key, effected by the process of modulation.

We recognise and respond to modulation in music by experiencing an alteration in the colour or a change in the mood of the music. A

change from a major to a minor key or vice versa gives very different quality to the music. (Baroque music does not differentiate major and minor as happy and sad. It was the 19th century composers who made this differentiation more keenly.) Schubert brings out striking modulations and manipulates the emotions in a sensual and beautiful way in his String Quartet in A minor Opus 29. Beethoven and Brahms use modulation as a structural aid as well as for colour purposes. In the fourth movement of Brahms' Serenade in D, modulation is used in this way and it helps to create a delightful lyrical mood throughout.

Modulation can be used to create tensions and produce a feeling of instability, unease and restlessness, and composers sometimes modulate to provide drama and a variety of interest. Schubert uses modulation purely for colour and interest in his Quintet in C major. The rather trite tune is made more attractive by the use of modulation. The first movement of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony contains an example of a dramatic change of key—just three notes to accomplish modulation. This idea might correspond movement-wise to abrupt changes in effort, i.e. two or three element changes. In Haydn's Military Symphony the composer uses silence to accomplish modulation. In a similar way we might use stillness in movement to create a dramatic change of mood.

A more gentle growth into a new key is used by Brahms in his Serenade in G major Opus 11. There is nothing to shock here. Different instruments are used to help to provide a change of mood rather than abrupt key changes. In terms of movement this of course indicates easier transitions in effort.

In general, composers of the 19th century use modulation with more freedom than in previous centuries and this has led to a greater emotional and dramatic impact in their music.

We are all familiar with rhythm—metric and free—but are not perhaps so conversant with harmonic rhythm. We do, I am sure, respond to it unknowingly or unconsciously when listening to music, when using music for dance, or when freely improvising to a piece of music. Harmonic rhythm is concerned with the rate at which the harmonic chords are changed. Harmonic rhythm can build up a climax, broaden music and create tensions giving the music a nervous quality.

Different periods of musical history reveal different characteristics with regard to harmonic rhythm. For instance, a quicker harmonic rhythm was used by Bach and Handel than by Mozart and Haydn.

As a general rule, a slow harmonic rhythm gives a rather stately feel to the music. A quicker harmonic rhythm can produce more excitement and an onward-going feeling. The exception which proves the rule is the opening of Wagner's Rheingold. This is the slowest harmonic rhythm ever — one hundred and thirty six bars of E♭ major — which

far from creating an atmosphere of calm and peace, builds up such tension and anticipation in the listener that when the chord does change the relief is considerable. Since the whole work in performance takes sixteen hours, perhaps Wagner may be forgiven his slow beginning!

Climaxes in music can be brought about by speeding up the chordal changes towards a cadence point. In Bartok's Rumanian Dance No. 3, Der Stampfer, the harmonic rhythm gradually gets quicker making for a gradual build up of excitement towards the end. In Alkan's Prelude No. 13 Opus 25 the slow harmonic rhythm helps to create a placid majestic mood at the beginning. Quicker changing harmonies later bring a little stir or ripple on the surface only to subside with the slow chordal changes towards the end.

Clearly harmonic rhythm as a feature in music affects the response of the dancer.

Another feature of music which influences us is that of concord and discord. Concord gives a feeling of stability and self-sufficiency. Discord introduced into music gives a certain restless quality to it. When discordant notes are introduced they make a piece more exciting, the sound automatically moves on, or is pushed on to the next chord. More flow is engendered by introducing discords or decorating notes of melodies. Mozart's piano sonatas serve as excellent exampes of the above.

The early Romantic composers, e.g. Schubert, used discords to create dramatic tensions. Wagner decorates a note of a chord at a time, never resolving it and therefore giving a very emotional, restless feeling to his music. Many pieces by Brahms, Liszt, Bruckner and Mahler have this quality and are excellent for work on effort or for dances with a stress on dramatic movement. Richard Strauss experimented so much with that idea that his music became atonal, i.e. the key became obscure. It is the late 19th century and contemporary musicians who used discordant notes more and more and who eventually got away from a key altogether

Debussy, the founder of the Impressionist School, used the whole tone scale, and the vague dreamy atmosphere which charms us in much of his music may be attributed partly to its use.

The Neo-classical composers still use the language of the past but use it differently. Instead of one key, two keys are used at once (Bi-tonality) or several keys are used at once (Polytonality). Bartok's Mikrokosmos is an example of the former and Stravinsky's Rite of Spring has a bi-tonal beginning, later becoming polytonal. This latter is very rhythmic—a study in chords chosen because of their colour. It has a primitive rhythmic impact and appeals perhaps to the physical side of our nature. Discordant harmonies are used to punch out the rhythm. The more dissonance you hear the more imposing is the

rhythm. The Rite of Spring in fact proved to be one of the turning points in Western music. For perhaps the first time the concept of noise was introduced as well as notes, and the harsh brutal side of human nature was revealed. Music could never be the same again.

Schoenberg's music and that of his two disciples, Webern and Berg, is more melodic than that of the Neo-classical composers which is chordal in structure and therefore has powerful rhythm and verve. His music stems perhaps more from Brahms and Bach with its simultaneous melodic lines, and is on the whole more sombre and introverted. The individual melodic life of the music and the interplay of the lines of melody pulling against each other make an intricate web of sound, and cause tensions which give his music a dramatic emphasis. Schoenberg's Ewartung (Expectation and Dread), written during the First World War while he was living in Germany, is atonal and atmospheric. The instruments rarely play together—each has its own individual life. It is highly emotional in content, full of expressionism and can be likened to some expressionist paintings. Schoenberg was himself a painter professing allegiance to the Expressionist School. His "Die Glucklische Hand" is also atonal and is linear throughout. It has a continuous melodic line and because it goes beyond the range of individual instruments it is therefore built up like a coloured bead necklace, each instrument taking over in turn. In 1924, he introduced the note-row method of composition where all twelve notes of the octave are employed, no one note being more important than any of the others.

Webern's music is more sparse and gentle than that of Schoenberg. It is precise and gem-like with dots and dashes of colour and is very highly concentrated music.

Messiaen, born in 1908, was influenced by birdsong, which he notated and wrote into his music. He is a mystic, religious man with an ability to turn sound into colour. There is rhythmic freedom in his music, which is sharply defined and almost brutal in concept. He writes for conventional instruments with a leaning towards the wind family. In "Colours of the Celestial City" each instrument plays the same melody starting on a different note, therefore giving discordant sounds. He achieves a spacious monumental feeling in his music.

The avant-garde composers of today explore all the possibilities of sound including what had previously been termed noise. Noise occurs when all harmonic partials are of equal intensity. The sound produced has a sculptural quality, presenting a series of different aural sensations and textures. In Aleatory music, which is music of chance, there is structure with freedom within it. New techniques are being explored in order to exploit the full potential of the human voice and the range of electronic sounds. The music of Stockhausen, Penderecki and Berio are relevant in this connection.

Thus it may be seen that composers have used cadences, modulation, harmonic rhythm and concord and discord in different ways, and this different usage influences our response to their music.

The music of the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, written before the emergence of the key system, has an intellectual stress. It has little emotional content. Its emphasis is on form and structure and mirror images. It has stability and symmetry of pattern, and the ordering of musical thoughts gives a feeling of satisfaction to the listener.

The Classical period (late 16th century to late 18th century) is characterised by balance and restraint and a devotion to a formalistic scheme of design. Beauty is important and the music appeals to both the intellect and the emotions.

Expression of emotion dominates the Romantic period of the 19th century with its subordination of form to theme, colourful harmonies being of the utmost importance. The influence of contemporary poetry and art is more keenly shown in music of this era.

The Impressionist period, in which Debussy plays by far the greatest role, also reflects the influence of contemporary arts. Hints rather than statements, atmosphere rather than emotion prevail.

The break away from the emotional impact heralds the birth of the Neo-Classical period. Stravinsky and Bartok tried to abolish the expression of strong emotion. Their concern was with patterns of sounds and rhythmic content rather than music as an expression of human feeling, and it is perhaps more to the physical side of our natures that their music makes its appeal. Simultaneously, Schoenberg, a Neo-Romantic composer, abandoned any idea of distinction between concord and discord with the introduction of the twelve note scale. His music, however, still retains a strong emotional appeal.

The composers of today are still discovering and exploring all the possibilities of sound and continue to provide new and exciting stimuli for dance.

It would be an over-simplification to make too direct an analogy between movement terms and musical terms. Nevertheless it may be seen that, when freely improvising to music, the dancer may respond to rhythm, intensity, speed, pitch, phrasing, modulation, harmonic rhythm and concord and discord or a combination of several of these elements.

It can be a stimulating experience to observe the spontaneous response of groups of students to musical examples aptly chosen to illustrate the factors that have been discussed in this article. My own knowledge of music has been enhanced and deepened through co-operating in such experiments with Miss Janet Beat, sometime Lecturer in Music at Worcester College of Education and currently Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. It is upon this co-operative work that this article is based and I am much indebted to her.

JUDITH HOLDEN

NIGHTPLAY AT THE STUDIO: EXERCISES AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In "Nightplay at the Studio"[1] an account was given of seven experimental workshops in improvisation conducted at the Art of Movement Studio in the Spring Term of 1970. The article was concerned generally with describing the intentions of the exercises performed in the workshops and with showing that there are a number of possibilities in the use of improvisation to explore the nature of movement and to examine the relationship between Educational Movement and Educational Drama. The purpose of this present article is to examine in greater detail some of the exercises used in the workshop and to consider the possibilities of further research suggested by these exercises.

Shadow exercises

In order to free the body and the imagination of the player for further exploration, we devised a set of exercises which were based on the use of the player's shadow. The set-up for these exercises was simple: the instructor sat on the floor some distance away from the far wall and held in his lap a 500-watt mirror spot, which he aimed from the floor towards the wall. The group of players sat on either side, before the area of the wall thus lit, with the performers standing behind the "audience" and in front of the spotlight.

The first series of exercises took place in white light. As a warm-up, all the players moved around in front of the light, exploring the kinds of shadows they could make and the ways they could make them. During this time they discovered for themselves that shadows could be made larger or smaller by moving closer to, or farther away from, the light: that combinations of their shadows could make new forms of "creatures" and shapes, and that the periphery of the light was important for the entrance of the shadow. They also learned to concentrate, not on themselves, but on their shadows; absorbed in this way, they soon lost any self-consciousness over their movements.

After the warm-up, one player moved into the light to explore the movements and possibilities of his single shadow: usually, the player began by using lyric movement. Then, two players explored ways in which their shadows could relate—this was the point at which dramatic situations normally began to develop. A voice was then added to each of the shadows, not by the players creating the shadows, but by players seated on either side of the space, so that the players had to make voices relate to the personality expressed by the shadow, and **vice versa.** This exercise was particularly valuable in allowing the players to develop dialogue unaffectedly, in triggering imaginative connections between voice and body, and in helping the players to gain insight into the intimate connection between voice and body when communicating to someone else.

When the relationship between voice and shadow had been explored sufficiently, the attention was turned to the environment. Two players created shadows, but no voices were added; instead, the players on each side of the space made sounds (by whatever means they chose—voice, objects, etc.) to create the sense of a place. At this stage of the exercise, the place usually became a jungle, with many animal sounds, to which the shadows responded. After a sense of an environment was created in this way, voices were again added to the shadows as before, so that the scenes became more complex. Finally, more than two shadows could enter the space, and a series of scenes began to occur inhabited by extraordinary creatures composed of many shadows and emitting strange noises. (Players normally get very enthusiastic about this kind of scene, but it should not be continued too long if further work is intended in the session because of the enormous energy generated; the players need a rest period following several of these scenes.)

The second set of exercises took place in coloured light, in this particular case created by the attachment of a colour wheel to the spotlight. Mood created by colour was the first area of exploration. A player would make a shadow and explore the different moods suggested to him by different colours. Two or more players would then make the same exploration. As before, voices were added to enrich the scenes, and then the use of sounds to create the environment. It was evident from the beginning of these exercises that colour provides a strong stimulus; but what is interesting is that the players began to move into the use of dramatic materials that they had not previously considered and to explore a broader range of emotional states.

The qualities of the colour wheel itself were then used to explore transformation of the scene. If a colour wheel is stopped directly between two contrasting colours, the shadow takes on two distinct outlines. We used this effect for dramatic purposes: when the shadows had only one edge, they related normally and their voices talked to each other; but when two edges occurred, although the shadows continued to relate in the social situation, the voices expressed what the characters were thinking rather than saying. As a consequence the scenes were greatly enriched, particularly since the players never knew when the shadows would be transformed.

If a colour wheel is spun, it creates by the flickering of the different colours passing by, a crude strobe effect. Inserted in the middle of an otherwise normal scene, this effect can have startling consequences. For the purposes of this particular exercise, the strobe effect was the signal for the player to let the character of the shadow perform whatever action it secretly desired. As with the previous exercise, such transformations took place within the action of a normal scene, and when the transformation finished, the normal scene continued. The results of the exercise were similar to those of the previous exercise.

The shadow exercises have proven to be a very useful tool in expanding the imaginative and movement horizons of the player. Because the attention is not on himself but on the shadow, the player soon develops a sense of great freedom and begins to reveal a greater expressiveness than he had heretofore known. Similarly, the use of separate voices increases the ability of the performer to interplay with others, as well as further triggering his imagination. Not the least important effect of the shadow exercises is their capacity to provide insights into the creation of mood and atmosphere, and the effect of these on a character. In fact, of all the exercises attempted, the shadow scenes perhaps provided the easiest and simplest means for the player to rid himself of self-consciousness and to explore movement and dramatic possibilities freely.

Exercises dealing with the nature of an action

In improvised work, the player learns to absorb himself completely in each moment while he explores the task that is the impetus for his present activity. It is vital to him, therefore, to understand and to sense the action in which he is involved — how it is prepared for, how it is developed, and when it is completed. In dramatic improvisation the player becomes his own playwright, creating the scene as he goes along, with only a hint as to its future conclusion; premeditation is minimal, determined only by the "rule of the game" he is playing. Similarly, the improviser in movement, conditioned as he may be by the movement task that is set, must be able to sense the possibilities of his movement action in order to allow himself the rich potential of exploration.

The following exercises were devised to permit the player to examine the nature of a movement or a series of movements in an action; to develop an awareness of continuing and advancing an action; and to become sensitive to yielding to, or blocking, the offer of an action.[2]

In the first exercise, the player began by making a completed movement — for example, in the mimetic mode, he mimed the swing and release of a bowling ball — in front of a bright, concentrated light. The light was then turned off and on rhythmically, and the player transformed the bowling motion into a series of "posed snapshots", moving to each position of the original movement during the dark periods, and freezing into each "pose" when the light was on; the player's point of concentration was on exploring the spatial and pathway aspects of the now-segmented activity while keeping in mind the general awareness of the total movement. After the player had finished this exploration, he changed his point of concentration again, moving during the moments when the light was on, freezing when it was off, and thereby creating a

series of "action pictures". It was particularly evident in those players trained in formal dance that their attitude to the action was one of constant anticipation of the next moment of the movement: to think "retrospectively" in the particular terms of the exercise they found at first to be contradictory to their normal attitude; yet after they had gained insight into the concept of the continuum they came to enjoy the possibilities afforded by the exercise and could explore more deeply different aspects of the action. And, finally, the extension of the time factor in the slow-motion exercise, combined with the previous factors, permitted the player to explore still further the implications of his action, now strengthened by his awareness of its continuum.

In improvisation, the preparation for an action is important for the successful fulfilment of the action's implications; consequently, a series of exercises was devised to examine the moment of preparation. In the first exercise, the player performed a complete action, then returned to the moment before the beginning of the action and "snapped" a picture of the moment of presentation by freezing at that moment; the point of concentration was that the player shares with the observers his attitudes toward the action — the preparation of his body for the movement, his own feeling toward the action, etc. In the second exercise, called the "attitude game", the players formed groups of three; then each player in turn "snapped" the moment before his intended action, his partners guessed what his intended action might be, and their responses were checked by the player's performance of the action. In an advanced variation of this game, the player's task was to conceal his attitude toward the action he was to perform.

The player was now ready to move to the advanced stages of the exercise. The light remained on throughout the remainder of the exercise. The player normally performed his original action—bowling the ball, in this case. He then repeated it, but as he did it, he put together and retained in his mind the sequence of posed and action pictures explored in the earlier stages of the exercise. Again he repeated the action, concentrating this time on remembering all the past pictures together as he moved through each movement—much as if he saw himself filmed in stop action, with all the previous motions printed with the immediate one, and with each preceding motion "pushing" the next along.[3] The action was again repeated, but with the player's concentration on the future pictures, so that one motion was "sucked" into the next. Finally, the action was performed with the sequence of "pictures" drawn out so that the player moved in slow motion.

What did the exercises reveal about the player's understanding of the nature of an action? For the purposes of this examination we shall eliminate discussion of the problem of successfully repeating an action, and assume that the problem has been solved.[4] In the exploration of

the "posed" and "action" pictures, the player finds that, because of the continual, interrupted, and sudden binding of his movement, he must concentrate deeply to retain the original effort qualities of his action — and in so doing, he becomes far more aware of what those qualities are. In the advanced stages of the exercise, the player becomes conscious of what his expectations of the action are, for he must think in terms of the images pushing him along or pulling him forward in the action while at the same time he keeps in mind the total continuum of the images either before the present moment or after it. In performing all the exercises, the players found an increased awareness of the nature and possibilities of the moment of preparation for the action, both in the way in which they were forced to a greater understanding of what their action might be and in the greater perception of the extent to which shadow movements reveal intention and attitude.

A further set of exercises were designed to promote an understanding of the relationship between actions, and the possibilities of continuing or extending an action, or advancing to a new action. In the earliest of these exercises, the player performed an action, but his point of concentration was on emphasising the completion of the action; in the next exercise, the player attempted to anticipate the beginning of another action before the present one was completed; and in the third exercise the player concentrated on the objective or task implied by the action, tried to continue the action beyond its apparent limits and at the same time to make it more interesting. In all of these exercises, the awareness was stressed of knowing the moment when one action had advanced to the next.

Finally, exercises were used to strengthen the player's ability to relate in an action to another player. The players became accustomed to the concept of one player making the offer of an action to another, who could then yield to the offer by continuing the action with his fellow-player (later to advance the action by making the offer of a new action), or who could block the offer by himself making the offer of a totally different action.[5]

Exercises using prismatic lenses

One of the methods discovered to break down movement habits was to change the visual frame of reference of the player to the space around him and to his own body. To accomplish this purpose, standard prisms were attached to frames to make prismatic spectacles, through which the player could see only at the prisms and not at the sides of the frames. The disorientation factor of such spectacles is extremely high, for each eye is confronted with three separate and conflicting foci, and both eyes therefore feed the mind continuously with six different statements about where the player is in space.

Exercises were devised to take the performer using the spectacles through a variety of experiences. The player first explored by himself the different sensations of space caused by the prisms; then he attempted to make contact with others also wearing the spectacles. During these exercises it was noted that the player frequently tried to use as a consistent frame of reference only one of the six foci, and in these early stages he was permitted to do so without comment. (It also became evident that the spectacles should be worn only for short periods of time in the early stages because of the visual and mental strain. They were therefore used for no more than five minutes at a time, followed by a brief rest period.) However, in the next stage of the exercise he attempted to move using all six foci simultaneously. It was at this point that the player's normal movement habits began to break down; in a kneeling position, for example, with his arms crossed and supporting his torso on the floor, the player was aware of three sets of arms supporting him from different areas of the body and head, and his sense of right and left disappeared. As he learned to move under these conditions, more changes were made to the space: coloured light wheels on two spotlights continually changed the quality of the light; the player became aware of other players in the space; and he began to travel with them through the space.

The player was now ready to move on to an advanced set of exercises dealing with his relationships with other players. He began with a mirror exercise, in which one player makes movements that the other mirrors exactly and simultaneously; the players then reverse roles; and finally they change roles when they wish, concentrating on making smooth the transitions between changes. When the player had mastered this exercise, he began to make physical contact with fellow players by playing the machine game, in which each player became a functional part of a machine that grew as each moving part was added. The players were acquainted with the mirror and machine exercises, having performed them previously without wearing prismatic lenses. It was interesting to see the far wider range of movements, levels and body positions that the players explored under the new conditions of the exercise.

One other exercise was performed, this time examining possible imaginative aspects of the new vision afforded by the prisms. The player was asked to explore the implications of the following questions: What kind of creature would see as the spectacles make you see? What do its eyes look like? Do they move, and if so, how do they move? What does its head look like, and how does it move? What kind of body has it? How does it travel—with legs, or with other limbs and appendages? What limbs or appendages does it have to help it to perform tasks other than travelling? When the players had discovered their "creature", they then began to explore the space around the

creature; what kind of world does it live on? What is the atmosphere? Move through the atmosphere as the creature. What is the world's surface like—hard? Oozy? Sticky? Make the surface different from the earth's and explore it as the creature. Finally, the players set up a different environment for their creatures: The creature is stranded on earth—have it explore the atmosphere and the surface.

The results of the exercises show that it would be valuable to pursue further the use of prismatic lenses. The new frame of reference did have a definite effect in breaking down movement habits and in making the players aware of movement possibilities they would not otherwise have explored. The exercises also produced a heightened awareness of the way in which we relate to space—an awareness disturbing to some of the players, but intriguing to all. Further work is needed to examine the implications of the players' attitudes toward their relationship to their environment under these conditions; to explore more fully the imaginative possibilities afforded by the prisms; and to determine whether the involuntary widening of the player's movement vocabulary can have a lasting effect.

Exercises dealing with space

The awareness of body parts, the instrumental use of body parts, and the awareness of the body in space were themes for which two sets of exercises were designed: conditions were set up in the space in such a way that the player could not help but relate to it differently; or aspects of the player's person were changed to force him to relate to the space in new ways.

One set of exercises used ordinary string or twine to effect changes in the space. The players filled the entire room, from floor to ceiling, with a maze of taut strings connected at random, like a confused spider web; no space between the strings was more than a foot or so wide in any direction; and only three spotlights, using steel-grey gels, lit the strings. The players then explored the sensation of moving among the strings, trying not to touch or to break them.

The first exercise following the general orientation to the strings involved the group of players working together: they took a one-inch thick manilla rope twenty feet long and passed it among the strings from one side of the room to the other, taking care that neither the rope nor themselves ever touched the strings; the rope was then collected on the other side of the room, with the same precautions still in effect. In the second exercise, the players gripped hands to form a chain, then followed the leader of the chain through the spaces between the strings, keeping the chain intact at all times and avoiding contact with the strings.

As the players became more accustomed to moving among the strings, the exercises became more complex. A tag game was set up

with the following conditions: the players who was "it" had to tag all the other players, who, when touched, "died" and collapsed at that spot; the strings themselves were "electrified", so that, if a player accidentally touched one he was "electrocuted" and collapsed on the spot. The game continued until all the players had been tagged or until the tagger accidentally touched a string. A second tag game was then played, including all the conditions of the first but adding the condition of moving in slow motion. Both games forced the player to find new ways of coping with his space in the exigencies of the moment.

As a final exercise, the players lay on the floor and looked up through the strings at their patterns in space. This exercise was particularly useful in making players aware of the volume of the entire space, for the strings split up the space without interfering with the ability to see the whole area. (The string exercises have been extended further in my classes at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Following the completion of the previously described exercises, the players each took possession of a section of the web and fully explored its dimensions and spaces; then they showed the player closest to them through their space, and **vice-versa**; couples showed couples through combined spaces; until finally the dimensions and spaces of the whole web had been thoroughly explored. The chain-grip exercise was then repeated. It was found that as a group of players became familiar with the web they could move with surprising freedom and ease, and in fact enjoyed travelling through the intricacies of the maze. Their spatial awareness seems to be considerably enhanced by the exercise.)

The second set of exercises dealt with a change in the player's bulk in relationship to the space around him. The player's limbs and torso were swathed in clothing and cloth until they were at least twice as thick as before, and styrofoam "clogs" were attached to the feet so that the player was more than four inches higher than normal. An attempt was made to keep the new bulk as light as possible so that restriction in movement would result mainly from size and not from weight. The players then individually explored the possibilities of moving their new "bodies".

After the players had become acustomed to moving comfortably, they were given more explicit instructions, emphasising specific effort qualities such as firmness or fine touch, and then emphasising two qualities at once. Following these explorations, the players were asked to find the qualities that seemed to be most comfortable to their new bulk.

The players then determined what kind of character would suit the qualities that they had fixed upon from the previous exercise, and followed a series of simple directions as the character: walking, running, sitting, lying down, crawling, pointing, touching something, shading

eyes, looking for a pin on the floor, and performing an action of the player's choice. With their "character" established, the players explored sudden changes, from walking as the characters to walking as themselves, and then as the characters again. Then, while walking, they related, in character, to other characters they encountered when a command was given.

The exercises then returned from character exploration to the player's personal movements exploration. In walking about the space, the players sensed their bulk in space, then sensed their own bodies within the outfits, and again sensed their total bulk. With the players placed at either end of the space, the lights were turned off, and the players moved slowly in the dark, listening, touching objects, and attempting to reach the opposite ends of the space.

Finally, the padding and clogs were removed, and the players moved about retaining the qualities of the outfits and the characters, relating as in the exercise above.

The two sets of exercises dealing with space were interesting for the questions they raised. It soon became apparent in both sets that the player's own attitude toward space was somewhat restricted. This attitude had been anticipated; but what was intriguing was that when the players had managed to break through their accustomed attitudes and assimilate the new frames of reference invoked by the exercises, they also began to develop their own ways of defining the space. The rapid transition from player to character also showed the importance of the concept of the **persona** in establishing attitudes to movement.[6]

Exercises dealing with focus

In group movement, awareness of where focus of attention is placed in viewing the group is vital for the members taking part. A set of exercises was developed to heighten and make habitual the ability of the performer to give or to take focus.[7]

Players were divided into groups of three for the exercises. Each group began by moving independently of other groups. In response to a signal from the instructor, members of the group would arrange themselves to place the attention upon the designated individual, who also took focus himself as strongly as possible; each player received opportunities to be in focus during repetitions of the exercise. In this early stage the players tended to form static, tableau-like positions on the signal to focus; as they became more accustomed to the exercise, however, they learned to give and to take focus while in constant motion, the focus on a particular player continuing as the players moved and until the next signal was given. In the final stage of this first exercise, the players themselves chose to take focus without the external aid of a signal, the other players giving focus to the one who took focus; dialogue and sounds were also added.

To aid in strengthening the sense of giving and taking focus, to the previous exercise were added two further conditions. The first was that on a signal all the players should try to **take** focus simultaneously — the energy level of the exercise rose dramatically as a result! The second was that all players should try to **give** focus simultaneously — an action which the players found harder to do, but which proved valuable in giving insight into the giving of focus to those players who instinctively and habitually took focus in group activities. The players then returned to giving and taking focus as before.

The principles of the basic exercise were then used to develop a sense of focus between groups. As before, in the earlier stage of the exercise, groups learned to give and to take focus on signal, and the groupings tended to be static; later, focus changed while the groups constantly moved; and finally, individual groups took focus and the others gave without the aid of a signal. Again, concentration solely on taking or giving focus was emphasised at one point in the exercise.

The final exercise combined aspects of the first two. Either a player or a group would take focus without a signal; but in either case the identities of the groups had to be kept. As a result, the exercise became free-wheeling in both the space it occupied and the action it generated, yet there always appeared to be a sense of form in the activities and continually changing groupings.

The effects of the exercises on the players were various. In terms of space, the players, for whom there was no specific audience direction, quickly learned to relate in sculptural rather than pictorial ways, sensing their relative positions to each other in space and extending the physical means by which they could give focus to, or take focus from, others without the obvious device of staring at one another. In terms of attitude, they found that after a period of doing the exercises the sense of focussing in this fashion became a less conscious and more habitual act, and that as a result of the security of being able to accept or give focus without effort, they could move far more freely and with a greater variety of possibilities within their groups.

Insight was also gained into the awareness of being part of a group, even when the group was stretched to the limits of the space and other groups intruded between its members.[8]

Conclusion

It is impossible, given the limited time and conditions of the **Nightplay** workshops, to affirm as general laws the conclusions which the results of the exercises suggest. However, an examination of some of the principles which can be inferred from these exercises may at the least provoke discussion and at the most suggest possibilities for future exploration.

It is evident that most of the exercises described put the player into a new relationship with the area and with the other players working with him — the shadow games, the exercises on space, focus and action all illustrate this point. In many cases, the change in context for the player is so strong that he is unable to rely on his normal frames of reference. He has, for example, no "standards" by which he can judge whether he is performing "better" or "worse" than anyone else, for the variabilities in solving the problems of such exercises as moving through the space web are too many to permit a rigid code of performance rightness or wrongness. Instead, the problem is either immediately solved or not — and since the "skills" involved in the solution are within the means of all the players, they find that in a very short time they can cope happily with the task. Similarly, because each player finds his own personal and individual means to arrive at the solution, the normal social sense of approval or disapproval disappears; and the player, freed from worry about "success" or "failure", yet with the confidence that he can cope with the situation, can allow his imaginative energy to work without restriction on the objective: he can play. Underlying these games and exercises, therefore, is the premise that the threshold over which the player crosses to enter into the action must initiate the confidence and freedom necessary for him to allow his imagination to work fully.

But although the player can work freely, it does not mean that he can work with licence. The problems of the exercises cannot be solved without deep concentration. Improvisational exercises have been distrusted by many because they were felt to be vague or to lead to gross excesses of energy with very little point. Such exercises should indeed be distrusted; but the improvisational exercises described in this article show that a good exercise must have a definite, valid function and a specific point of concentration. The way in which a task is set and the precise area in which the player's attention should be fixed is important in any exercise. Some movement exercises have had the effect of putting the player's attention on the wrong aspects of his movement, on the awareness of the difficulty he has in performing a particular skill and on the exterior form of his movement divorced from its inner impetus. Concentration in inprovisational terms involves the player's attention being so strongly placed upon the task that he cannot be concerned with himself apart from the situation, in which he becomes totally absorbed. In most of the exercises described, the task may pre-suppose normal movement flexibility, but also assume within it the particular movement or other skills necessary to fulfill it; so that, as in the case of the space web, the player normally becomes aware of the increased flexibility of his movement only after he has finished the exercise. Thus, the traps of exteriorization and self-consciousness arising from a fear of lack of ability are avoided.

The problem of skill acquisition and the notion of talent, the ap-

prehension over both of which tends to inhibit the freedom of the performer to explore, are dealt with in different ways in improvisational work. In terms of skill-producing functions, the **Nightplay** exercises reveal that greater perception into the nature of an action, a space or a performance relationship is a skill in itself, bringing with it an ability to explore these aspects of performance in increasing depth and with greater clarity. In some instances, such as in the action exercises, concentration on the task also can reveal what physical habits have to be acquired by practice to allow for a deeper exploration of a particular action. It is a basic tenet of improvisational theory that skills and abilities can be acquired through the use of game and dramatic situations and that creative material is fostered by the complete acceptance of the given point of concentration and the situation in which the player is placed.

It is also a basic assumption of improvisational theory that talent is not an inherent, but an acquired characteristic. This point is usually stated by asserting that each person has equal imaginative ability, but that some are able to release it more freely than others, the function of improvisational exercises being to aid in this release by the conditions which they set up. It is interesting to see how this assumption has developed independently among many creative artists and teachers working today. Shinichi Suzuki, for example, noted for his "Talent Education" programme that has at its centre the playing of the violin, bases his work on this premise:

> "From old times it has been said that talent or superior qualities are inborn, or inherited . . . In the matter of disposition and heredity, I am convinced that it is **only** the body's physiological functioning ability that can be measured as either superior or inferior at the time of birth. It is only **from then on** that the psychological influences are received, **from the child's environment**. And it is the conditions of that environment that shape the core of his ability . . . We don't have to look for specific innate abilities or talents. It is a superior environment that has the greatest effect in creating superior abilities . . . I firmly believe that cultural and musical aptitude does not come from within, and is not inherited, but occurs through suitable environmental conditions. It is only a question of sensitivity and adaptive speed. Therefore, to be born with excellent or superior qualities only means to be born with an ability to adapt more speedily and sensitively to one's environment . . .[9]. The human life force, by seeing and feeling its surroundings, trains itself and develops ability. This ability by further constant training overcomes difficulties and becomes a very high ability. This is the relationship between a human being and ability."[10]

It would seem from the above that Suzuki chooses an extreme behaviourist way to train his students in the difficult art of violin playing; but in fact his exercises are remarkably similar to those used in dramatic improvisation. His students are involved in game situations from the first lesson; and while acquiring habits through practice and listening (records of music are constantly played in a Suzuki-orientated household), they also learn to cope with unexpected situations. For example,

advanced students continue to play the first piece they learned, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star"; but while they play it together they may be walking around the room, shaking the hand of the first player they meet, then taking up the tune immediately again with the others; or they may be counting all the objects in the room while playing — an old double concentration game in improvisational terms. The **Nightplay** exercises suggest the same conclusions that Suzuki propounds: players adapted at different rates of speed to the conditions of the exercises and showed a range of behaviour suggested by their backgrounds; yet once they had become accustomed to an exercise they all showed equally imaginative responses to solving the problem.

It is possible to describe other conclusions as well from the **Nightplay** exercises, but for the purposes of this article these will suffice. What the general conclusions suggest is that we are still in the early stages of discovering what the potentials of improvisations are in the exploration of movement; that a great deal of further study, for example, needs to be undertaken to determine how the triggering of the imagination aids in the establishment of so-called movement skills and in the increased awareness of movement possibilities. And they also suggest that we must see more clearly the relationships that may exist among present approaches to education and performance such as gestalt theory, improvisation, Talent Education, and mask exercises, among others. The **Nightplay** sessions were not unique but only another example of the tendency for exploration of the roots of the arts typical of this period. If they can help to foster further exploration, then they have been well worth the efforts of those who participated in them.

CARL HARE.

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1 Carl Hare, "Nightplay at the Studio," **The Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine**, No. 46, May 1971, pp. 13-20.

2 The term "action" can be notoriously vague: the following analysis may help to convey its meaning in the context of this article.

The dictionary defines action as "The act or process of producing an effect or performing a function; the doing of something; as, an emergency requiring **action**; a press in **action**." **(Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)**. Two characteristics of action seem evident from this definition: first, that an activity takes place, whether physical or mental; and, second, that the concept of function is also important, i.e., that the act fulfils an intention; whether instinctive of conscious — the word "effect" reinforces the direction of this second aspect.

Laban's conception of action enlarges the above definition, then extends it to include the expressive or communicative nature of an action. To him action is ". . . a particular movement drive of the human being . . . This action drive is characterised by performing a function which has a concrete effect in space and time through the use of muscular energy or force.

"In a living being such actions are never devoid of expressive elements, which means that they cannot be determined by logical reasoning, nor grasped by measurable factors only. They are pervaded by elements which bring out the quality and the attributes of particular species.

"Whilst animals' movements are instinctive and mainly done in response to external stimuli, those of man are charged with human qualities and he expresses himself and communicates through his movements something of his inner being. He has the faculty of becoming aware of the patterns which his effort impulses create and of learning to develop, to re-shape and to use them.

"The actor, the dancer, the mimic, whose job it is to convey thoughts, feelings and experiences through bodily actions, has not only to master these patterns but also to understand their significance. In this way imagination is enriched and expression developed." (**The Mastery of Movement**, p. 75).

In improvisation, where the performer is concerned with exploring the demands of a task or objective, the emphasis in the definition of acting is on its expressive effect in fulfilling a specific function. Consequently, Viola Spolin describes action as "the energy released in working a problem . . ." But she also would consider that action takes place as a result of the imaginative relationship between performers in solving the task: "The play between actors: playing." (**Improvisation for the Theatre**, Northwestern University Press (c. 1963), p. 377). The concept of playing is central to improvised work and is the means of fulfilling the expressive aspect of action as described above by Laban. As conceived by Spolin, playing is "fun, enjoyment, enthusiasm, trust; heightening the object (which is the mutual problem to be solved between the actors); having relationship with fellow players; involvement with the (point of concentration) . . .; the physical expression of the life force; a term usuable instead of rehearsal in improvisational theatre." (Ibid pp. 387-388).

The idea of actions as the basic narrative or story links is also essential to improvisational work. Here the assumption is that the simplest objective can be solved in a shorter or longer length of time depending upon the player's decision to "continue the action and make it more interesting", i.e. invent obstacles that force further and more imaginative means to solve the problem or to "advance the action", i.e. to solve the initial objective and to move to solving the new problem or objective that may have arisen out of solving the former problem. (The terms "continuing" and "advancing" an action are Keith Johnstone's.) Improvised scenes, therefore, become a series of actions, continued, or advanced, one to the next.

It would seem that there is nothing incompatible between Laban's conception of action and that of improvisers; rather, they all are concerned with the same aspects of action, differing only in the emphasis given to the different aspects and in the means of instigating action. With these variations and differences in mind, I have written this description of the exercises exploring the nature of an action, assuming that our study should properly rest on a single action and its relationship to the next immediate action without concern for the narrative structure that may begin to develop and that warrants a study in itself, but a study too broad to be explored here.

3 Spolin uses a similar exercise which she entitles "NO-MOTION WARM-UP" (ibid, p. 85). Her players are asked to concentrate "on the still moments between the movement", and she comments, "Properly executed this exercise gives the players a physical feeling and understanding of keeping out of their own way. By concentrating on No Motion hands, legs, etc. move effortlessly without conscious volition . . . As one player remarked, "It is as if someone else is moving us about". Another player said, "It's like being on a vacation".

4 It must also be understood that these results are merely suggestive, the number of times the exercise was performed being too small to permit any final conclusions to be definitely proven. However, the sample appeared to be sufficiently consistent to permit us at least to formulate and to present these speculations as worthy of further study.

5 The concepts of "offering" and "yielding" were formulated by Keith Johnstone, formerly of the Royal Court Theatre Studio, London, England, and are an important part of his interpretation of an action (cf. ftnt. 2 above). George Morrison, an improviser in New York, also has developed a series of exercises dealing with action that he calls "Rebound" exercises.

In the first Rebound exercise, two players face each other; one player performs a single action directed towards the other player, who immediately responds to the action. The first player recovers to a neutral position; then the second player does the same. The action and response are repeated at least twice. The response then becomes the new action, with the first player responding as did the second player above. The points of concentration in the exercise are to respond immediately, without premeditation, to an action, and to repeat the action, recreating the spontaneity and feeling of both it and the response to it.

In extensions of the exercise, sounds and words can be added to the actions and responses. However, the most interesting of these exercises in terms of movement is one entitled "Space Rebound". As in "Rebound", one player moves and the other responds, but with the intention of using the space surrounding the other player. Each action progresses from the one before as a series of responses (which are not repeated as in "Rebound"). The exercise has many possibilities for practical use — for example, the spatial responses can lead to the development of an improvised dance; or the players can freeze in an action, then begin a scene from those positions.

6 The concept of the **persona** is also an important element in mask work, in which a "character" may be developed instantly upon adoption of the mask, and where the whole body surface must reflect sensitively the qualities implied by the mask. As in dance, so in mask work there can be extensions of a **persona** beyond a realistic characterisation to more abstract forms. Conversely, the player can also become familiar with the **persona** that he habitually portrays and can develop it further. Much more exploration of this area needs to be done.

7 For a brief description of focus exercises, see "Nightplay at the Studio", p.15.

8 Spolin has a chapter dealing with focus which she calls "Non-Directional Blocking". Those games related most directly with the exercises described in this article are: "TWO SCENES", "CONVERGE AND RE-DIVIDE", and "LONE WOLF" (ibid, pp. 160-165).

9 Shinichi Suzuki, **Nurtured by Love; A new Approach to Education**, Waltraud Suzuki, trans. (New York: Exposition Press, (c. 1969)), pp. 23-24.

10 Ibid, p. 29.

Biography of Laban

Anyone who has **reminiscences**
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