

The Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine

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EDITORIAL

This magazine contains Diana Jordan's well-researched, lucid account of the beginnings and development of movement in the West Riding; "----a rough and certainly very bad translation of an extract from my address on the occasion of the last Bewegungschor (community dance or movement choirs) before their dissolution and my flight", a previously unpublished paper of Laban's, held by the Dartington Hall Records Office. We are delighted to be able to publish this and grateful to Mr. William Elmhirst for making it available to us. Together with Joan Russell's Laban Lecture, these two articles make this an outstanding magazine. Two of the three were written as speeches and they are divided by nearly forty years, but all three have an underlying similarity: a concern for people and the quality of life.

Two members who were at The Studio in Manchester wrote their reminiscences as a result of the request in the November editorial. They will be published in November 1974 together with another article about Mary Wigman. There will be enough material to make that magazine, also, an 'historical' one, so that any further reminiscences will be received with interest.

The Guild now has a Press Officer, Miss Olive Hunter, Greenhill Grange, Lady Lane, Bingley, Yorkshire. Her brief is to represent the policy of the Guild in the press and reply to or comment upon articles which make reference to, or have some bearing on our work. In order to do this a service of readers who would supply relevant articles is necessary. If you are willing to undertake such a service, will you write to Olive Hunter.

It was decided at the A.G.M. to discontinue the Newsletter and to publish annually a list of Affiliated Groups in the magazine.

Extract from an address

held by Mr. LABAN on a meeting for community-dance in 1936

The idea of psycho-physiological training, fitness, movement-culture etc. deals with the only and absolute reality which mankind possesses: with the human body and its functions. Here lies the key, the point of departure, the collective centre of will and understanding, of doing the right or the wrong thing. Even dreaming and thinking about beauty, the future and this strange world which surrounds us, touching our sensitiveness in an eternal stream of events, is rooted in our body and its functions.

We do not need to believe in dogmatic explanations, in philosophical systems or in circumstantial calculations to understand the will of Life, which fills our whole being. It upsets our natural harmonic condition if we try to find the first source and the final goal outside ourselves, while we are happy and inspired if we become aware of the primary importance of the living body and its functions.

Which is the way to achieve this blessed awareness, and to keep it pure and genuine? How can we make the best use of the never drying up stream of strength? These two questions only can be met by the clarification of our conception of our bodily being, and of the right employment of this god-given instrument.

This conception of the body certainly lies on a higher level than a merely anatomical and materialistic one. We must, however, have the necessary appreciation for the physical functions. But a special attention we have to pay to the psycho-physiological relations which play the most important part in our movements, since all our undertakings are based on movements including the whole of the educative, therapeutic, artistic and social activities. Only thus are we able to distinguish the values of keeping fit, of gymnastics, of educational dancing and all such activities which become to-day increasingly respected and cultivated.

Interest in the idea of the modern community-dancing seems also to have very far spread, since I am able to-day to look on your assembly of nearly a thousand people who have come here as representatives from our movement-choruses in more than 60 cities.

Is not it that the rapid growth of the number of enthusiastic members is only caused by the amazing simplicity of our faith? Is not it because we have tried to unite all body-mind questions by concentrating ourselves on the basic functions of Life and Being: on movement, and especially on the bodily movement of man?

What does the faith consist of? What is its essence? We believe in a psycho-physiological way to health and happiness and on this way we search for a right functioning of our individual as well as community life. The spiritual vision of the world, and the question of the connection and communication with the life-force also finds its natural ground here.

EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS

HELD BY MR. LABAN ON A MEETING FOR COMMUNITY-DANCE IN 1936

Unity in the mastering of life is our undogmatic aim, and we try to reach it through the most fundamental means: our living strength. We are convinced that the synthesis of our internal and external movements is the central function from which all actions derive, with their causes, consequences and aims.

From this collective point of view we can judge the rightness, the beauty, the usefulness of our expectancies, decisions and actions. We enjoy a pleasant, healthy and peaceful feeling, when we work together in our groups. Is not this feeling of belonging to one another also the basic condition for a better and more human common life?

Our exercises and festivals are just as much work, as our daily life work is. It is the work organizing our leisure-time, the work on our individual and collective perfectioning. This work demands from us the utmost devotion and great efforts. With these efforts we do not want to cheat or to over-reach anybody, we do not want to make a competition and draw external profits. We do not need to fight each other, or envy the other's possession. We carry all we need within ourselves. For this leisure time work we have at our disposal the inexhaustible treasure of our living strength. It is hidden in our recreational work itself. Its discovery frees us from a lot of futile aspirations, and turns our interest towards an inborn desire to come into contract with the universe and the laws of life. Thus we can give and abandon without envy, without jealousy, as the treasure of our inner richness is always open to us, and this treasure is not to be found in another Life, but in this life we actually live.

The way from bodily movements to the highest ideas is much shorter than we generally think; ideas are also movements. Movement is a real and easily perceptible fact. If we learn to understand the language of movement we can read in the open book of Nature, and apprehend her will and her purpose. By the means of our personal and of our collective movements we can communicate with the powerful strength of Nature. No more does she appear menacing and mysterious to us, but becomes a unity with us. This feeling of oneness with Nature, resulting from the psycho-physiological culture of movements, frees us from all doubts. Doubts are very easily possible if one thinks of the contrasts — the two necessities — of external everyday work, and internal continuous striving to perfect ourselves.

Is it not strange that it becomes possible to subdue this apparent contrast of daily-life-work and leisure-time? To-day the complaints about troubles and difficulties in professional work have become less. We know we have to take only a little jump to get in or to get out of the world of recreation. Though not being in a life beyond, our recreation and happiness is however in another world. The necessities of daily life force us sometimes to leave this world of happiness. But why could not we also be happy in our daily life activities? Have not we found the hope, that

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EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS HELD BY MR. LABAN ON A MEETING FOR COMMUNITY-DANCE IN 1936

in a right community the every day life activities become a part of the recreative life? Do not we need little for our feeding, clothing and lodging, if we become aware of Life's real and true values, of happiness and contentment through the employment of our inner strength?

Is it then an unbearable burden and restraint to procure these modest necessities for the living of ourselves, of our children, parents and friends? No, that is not the trouble. It is moreover this, that many people were obliged to slave for the satisfaction of a lot of unreasonable desires, passions and amusements. Instead of increasing the feeling of comfort and contentment, these insane desires lead to an inner emptiness which results in avarice, hatred and greediness for futile and only harmful things.

You, however, have introduced your relatives and friends into our circle and work. They have become acquainted with the fact that there are other values and pleasures than the expensive and destructive entertainments, requirements and appetites of a tired and overstimulated civilisation.

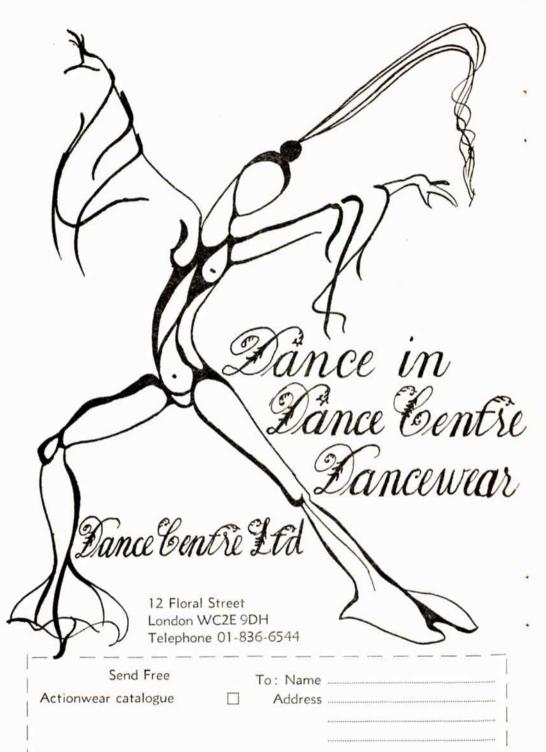
These are the main causes for the rapid growth and spread of our modern community-dance circles. Let us hope, that one day the general opinion, which has already become attentive towards our doings will deal much more generally and intensely with our discoveries and experiences. People will then see that it is a pity to waste good time in the production of false values, instead of using this time for the badly needed human unfolding.

The psycho-physiological synthesis means an eminent economy of time and strength. There were epochs in which idealists, tired of the evil engines, new forms of working organisations, etc., which help us to spare time and strength. There were epochs in which idealists, tired to the evil influences of a wrong civilisation, opposed any technical and economic development. Their motto was: back to nature, back to primitive forms of living. Our motto is: go ahead towards oneness with nature, towards psycho-physiological synthesis. For this we need those time saving improvements of civilisation, and therefore also your work and your fresh spirit in the factories and offices. For this we need firstly the unifying point of view which is given to us by the discovery of the power of movement.

Finally I should like to answer a question which so many outsiders, and often also enthusiastic friends of our work put to me.

Why do don't we make a code of our system? Why do not we establish rules and prohibitions? Most of you have already experienced that the laws of movement cannot be forced upon anybody by a violent and spasmodic effort. They grow slowly within us, as Life in Nature does: the laws of movement are the laws of Life.

We can admire the values and the beauty of Life, and we can emulate the examples given by Nature, but her laws cannot be either explained or



EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS HELD BY MR. LABAN ON A MEETING FOR COMMUNITY-DANCE IN 1936

forced upon us. To become aware of this fact is just what we are doing in our leisure-time-work. Our groups, our meetings, our festivals show at first sight a harmonious community of content and healthy individuals. Thus we are giving an obvious example of man's natural destination.

Just as little as we want to become the slaves of our economic, technic and social organisations, can we agree to loose (sic) our inner and outer freedom and to waste our time by futile dogmatizing.

Let us enjoy that we are able henceforth to jump each moment of our life into the always and everywhere present other world. Thus, as living examples of human happiness and freedom, we will be of more value than all codifications, songs of hatred and prohibition.

It seems to me that the so-called duties we feel towards ourselves and our community are rather more gifts than commands. Or is it not a gift from Nature that we can be conscious of our regenerative power and its functions, and that we have the inexstinguishable desire to employ this knowledge in the way always to keep fit?

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The Secretary, Art of Movement Studio, Woburn Hill, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2OD.

THE INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT AND DANCE IN THE WEST RIDING 1947-52

My alloted task is to give a brief account of how Movement and Dance came to develop in the schools of the West Riding of Yorkshire during the late 1940's and early 1950's. To do this it is necessary today, to give an outline both of the conditions that prevailed in schools and the circumstances which brought together a group of people who believed that both teachers and children needed opportunities to think and explore for themselves within educational methods if they were to discover and develop their own powers to the full. It is the part which this group played, rather than any one individual which is significant to what happened in the establishment of Movement and Dance in West Riding schools.

So it was that in 1947 Alec Clegg, recently appointed Chief Education Officer, decided to press his Committee to increase the number of advisers and inspectors to the authority. Margaret Dunn and I were part of this increase, as also were in due course, two art advisers, a music adviser other men and women physical education advisers and several general inspectors of education including Peter Stone.

Margaret Dunn and I had already been colleagues at St. Gabriel's Training College where I was a visiting Dance Lecturer before the 1940-45 War and where I had introduced Modern Dance. Peter Stone had discovered Modern Dance when he was Headmaster of Steward Street Junior School in Birmingham and had introduced it to his school. Later when he joined the Advisory Staff for Worcestershire when I was dance adviser during the war years, he and I had worked together and run courses for teachers in Dance Art and Drama. In 1947-48 when Margaret Dunn, Peter Stone and I came together in the West Riding there was no knowledge of Movement and Dance in the Primary Schools but there was in some Secondary Modern and Grammar Schools for Girls. Here were beginnings albeit slender ones. Some Head Teachers and specialists had discovered Modern Dance through courses which had been available during the war years and after, and also because Bedford College of Physical Education and I. M. Marsh College of P.E., were introducing Modern Dance to their students, and some of these were now in secondary schools.

Margaret Dunn and I were shortly joined by Elma Casson who had studied Modern Dance during the war by attending Moden Dance Holiday Courses regularly, had introduced Dance to the girls throughout High Storrs School, Sheffield with marked success, and had then in 1943 moved to Hockerill Training College and introduced it to the students in training. She had also taught Dance at the Loughborough Summer School for two or three years. Previous to our arrival in the West Riding, Ruth Foster H.M.I. had been responsible for Physical Education in this area of Inspection and had encouraged any beginnings in Dance she had found (including Elma Casson's work at High Storrs). She strongly urged Alec



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THE INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT AND DANCE IN THE WEST RIDING 1947-52

Clegg to increase his staff and to try to further Laban's work in Movement Education. Her words did not fall on deaf ears, as Alec Clegg had already seen my work with teachers in Worcestershire when he was Deputy Education Officer there, and had been deeply interested in its educational significance.

So the stage was set for our efforts. Backing by the Chief Education Officer, a body formed of men and women P.E. advisers, three of whom were experienced in Movement education, and the others open minded and interested; two very enlightened Art advisers and one Inspector who through his own experience of Movement in his own school and as an adviser, had come to believe firmly in the creative ability of children, and that Movement had a fundamental part to play in children's learning and in their personal and social development. So much for the team we were to become. But what of the schools?

A few words must be said about the prevailing conditions in the West Riding directly after the War when food, clothes, and petrol rationing were still in operation, and the schools were in poor physical condition especially those which were subject to the most wear and tear in the mining areas, and those were the majority.

Floors were hardly suitable to movement with bare feet and the shedding of garments (vests and pants for P.E. were hardly to be seen in any primary school and very few girls secondary schools). Gymnasium floors often showed the ravages of oiling combined with the grime from neighbouring pits which filled the atmosphere. All school playgrounds had to contain large heaps of coal and coke for boilers and fires, the stock delivered in the summer for the winter. In addition one remembers the air raid shelters in all playgrounds which became mud slides and poured continuous trickles of mud in wet weather into the playground, or in dry weather produced clouds of dust with any gust of wind. Washing facilities consisted in the primary schools of cold taps and a few usually cracked basins; toilets were out of doors where the tanks froze in winter despite the efforts of caretakers. They were usually a version of Mrs. Mop with buckets and mops and pails of sweeping powder. Floors despite, or because of, these treatments were knobbly with protruding knots which had resisted the washing and channelled with splintery grooves where the wood had succumbed to it.

Such was the setting for our great revolution in physical education when we felt moved to circumvent the 1933 syllabus and establish in its place a movement education based on Laban's principles and all that this entailed. How did we begin?

Obviously we could not wait for new floors, clothing, new equipment, some provision of records and gramophones and percussion intruments, nor for the badly needed reinforcement of small apparatus for skills and games. We could not hope to carry the majority of teachers with us and

make changes all at once and everywhere. Margaret Dunn, Elma Casson and I had in any case to show some evidence of what we believed in to our colleagues and strengthen the team - we chose therefore a few schools, secondary and primary, where the Heads were interested, and selecting certain classes, taught the children ourselves over a term or two. In this way we could demonstrate to our colleagues and also to groups of teachers. The latter were usually won over by evidence that we could ourselves teach and show that what we did held the interest of the children and indeed often revealed abilities that had not been in evidence in formal methods of teaching. We also held meetings by common consent of our women colleagues when we worked together to develop our own understanding of Movement principles and Dance and discussed ways of helping teachers to begin. Later when we felt confident as a team, we held meetings with our men colleagues to introduce them to Movement. Despite the leg-pulling and laughter they were willing to work practically with us and this helped us in our approach to men teachers. At this stage Peter Stone was a great support as he was able to fortify their interest by challenging them in question of what learning and teaching is all about the need for children and teachers to think for themselves and together. within methods which would offer ample opportunities. Obviously this struck at the root of the "command and response" method of P.E. It was a challenge not to their professional expertise but to their educational approach and responsibilities as partners in the overall education of children. To these discussions our men colleagues responded with interest. Leaving the field of Primary education for a moment, I turn to Secondary schools because the introduction of Movement and Dance arose in quite different ways in these two stages of education; and in those days, the secondary schools for girls led the way.

Teachers in secondary schools for girls arrived at knowledge of Dance in a variety of ways in the West Riding and it has been interesting to collect the reminiscences of some of these early pioneers for the purpose of this article. We asked them how they came into contact with Modern Dance and what it was that encouraged them either to support it or teach it in their schools.

By 1947 the Modern Dance Holiday Courses run by Lisa Ullmann, Joan Goodrich (Mrs. McKnight) and myself at which Laban and Sylvia Bodmer were always guest teachers, had been running for seven years. Other courses had begun to include Modern Dance as for example the Loughborough Summer Courses when Elma Casson taught. So when we began to establish it in the West Riding, some teachers had not only attended these courses, but even earlier ones before the war when Joan Goodrich and I had been invited to teach at various Summer Schools. The War had a special result for the West Riding too, because St. Gabriel's College was evacuated to Doncaster. This meant that Margaret Dunn who was already experienced in Dance through her association with me, continued to keep Dance in the curriculum for her students and invited

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Lisa Ullmann and myself to teach from time to time. Through the students' practise in the schools, interest began and was supported in the Doncaster schools by the P.E. Adviser Miss Winifred Traylen. But the students also used some schools in the West Riding on the outskirts of Doncaster and these too became interested. After St. Gabriel's College returned to London Miss Traylen organised teachers' courses in Dance and invited Margaret Dunn, Lisa Ullmann or myself to teach, and indeed gave very important support to Dance for many years. But Margaret's own contribution is remembered very warmly by several teachers and Heads whose first contact with Dance was through her and her students.

During the post war years when re-organisation was only partially established, the new Modern Schools had attracted a number of enlightened women Heads. In the main, in the south of the Riding the Modern Schools were single sex and these new Heads were seizing the opportunity to discover the needs of the girls they taught.

I was, and still am impressed by their vision and far sighted attitude towards education. Many of them believed that their pupils, daughters of mining families, needed the creative opportunities that Dance, Drama and the Arts offered, to establish self esteem and social standards and attitudes, and above all success for those less academic children. Such Heads gave support and a very free hand to teachers who would include Dance in their physical education programme, but they took a personal interest in what was happening and were prepared to wait and watch. If they were lucky, and many were, to have a teacher who stayed for many years in the school and who was able to establish dance throughout the school, they became wholeheartedly in support of the value of Modern Dance. There were also one or two Heads who taught Dance themselves for a time as well as encouraging their young members of staff. These schools of course welcomed all the help and support of the advisers they could get and there was often a splendid feeling of team work between Head, teacher(s) and adviser.

In 1948 we decided that the time had come to try the effect of a longer course for Secondary Teachers which meant a week's residential course over a half term break. We therefore followed the usual procedure for those days and selected a suitable school, a new Modern School, and we fitted it up with camp beds and blankets provided by the Authority, and enlisted the service of the School Meals department — Beds and blankets were delivered to the school and we ourselves, with the help of the caretaker had to arrange classrooms as dormitories. We took trouble to try to make the rooms as comfortable and convenient as possible, and the school generally attractive.

On looking at our old time-tables for these residential courses, I see that we always included displays of children's paintings and drawings, and talks by our Art advisers, Music sessions from a music adviser and

general educational talks from our Chief Inspector as well as from Alec Clegg himself. The development of Movement and Dance was never presented as something apart from education as a whole, so that the interdependence of the arts and principles of education could be considered in the part they have to play in the process of an adolescent's learning and growing. The fact that we as advisers in different specialist fields, and the general Inspectors supported each other in these courses, was, I am sure, of value to the Secondary teachers. For many of these. such courses were the first they had attended, but despite this, on one occasion we were able to invite a group of older girls from a grammar school with their teacher to show us some most vigorous and exciting dance. This teacher was Patricia Albone who had, from her own belief in children's creative powers, made it possible for these girls to develop a style and expressive powers which were remarkable, in dances embodying their own ideas. It was from this personal beginning that Patricia Albone came into Modern Dance and established it as a truly creative art for all the girls in the mixed grammar school where she taught. Such achievements were of great help and encouragement to other teachers. It remains to be recorded from these early days, that the enthusiasm engendered by these courses, brought about the request for more regular and frequent meetings and so the West Riding Movement Study Group was formed by twelve Secondary teachers in 1948.

For some years the members were mainly from Secondary Schools, but as Dance became a focus of interest in more Primary Schools, so the group became representative of Primary and Secondary Schools, the advisory staff and staffs of Colleges of Education, and of course included men and women.

But now I must turn to the Primary Schools to recall the beginnings of Dance for these younger children and their teachers. It is interesting to remember that although the Primary Teachers were later in developing dance in their schools than the specialist Secondary Teachers, there was a greater wind of change beginning to blow through their whole attitude to children's learning and development. This was of course only evident in some schools which were leading the way to much that is now practised and recognised as desirable. For these schools a way of physical education which allowed the children to use spontaneity, to think and feel for themselves and to explore their own abilities, was something which harmonised with the way in which they were developing children's capabilities in every way in school. Indeed in those days methods of physical education were often, with music, the two activities which were not adaptable to the ideas of education being pioneered in some Infant and Junior Schools. So for these schools the new principles of Movement education, presented no challenge although the practice did. For the others, the majority, it was the approach to Art and Movement which gradually began to introduce a whole new approach to children's learning.

THE INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT AND DANCE IN THE WEST RIDING 1947-52

For all schools in the West Riding therefore, we had to begin to establish movement teaching from a new basis. We began with skills, agilities and games in the Primary Schools because in this way teachers could see, in an activity which they accepted as part of school life, how children had been held back by formal methods and how by a new understanding and practice of how the body moves, children quickly revealed a confidence, skill and inventiveness that they had never before shown.

Of course as advisers, we had to show teachers how this could be done by working ourselves with selected classes in selected schools; also by running sessional courses and helping those teachers who were ready to venture change. It was a challenge more readily accepted in the field of skills and agilities than in Dance and Drama, because if dance existed at all in Primary Schools it consisted of Folk Dances and Maypole Dancing at the appropriate season. Radio lessons on Movement and Music by Ann Driver, were also followed. But gradually here and there, teachers began to show such an interest and ability in developing quality of movement, making this an end and satisfaction in its own right for their children, with emphasis on body-awareness and the elements of time, weight and space, that children inevitably produced dance like movement. With help and direction, the teachers then began to develop the enjoyment of rhythm, dynamics, sound, and personal and group expression. Dance and dance-drama had begun.

At this point I must turn to the words of Primary Heads and teachers who adopted Movement and Dance in those early days. In response to our request, they have written or spoken about their own experiences and views, but there seems to be general agreement on certain aspects. The emphasis on quality of movement, on "How I move" brought to the teachers a new awareness of the degree and extent to which children could become absorbed in their own movement, and an unsuspected inventiveness in exploring variations of "how". One teacher comments:-"For the first time our children were actively co-operating in tackling their own difficulties in self-control. We learned that the child had the belief that he could do something really well; that he could make a contribution to his class and it was up to us to give him the opportunity. We found that many of our children who were retarded in academic work, became absorbed and were excellent "movers". Another statement:-"I can think of many children who previously had been frustrated, but who when working in this way, found success and a sense of achievement. They gained individual pride and an ability to share and work with others in a meaningful way". Still another teacher records that her children "began to recognise quality in their own work and in the work of others".

This sensitivity and recognition was perhaps one of the most encouraging educational aspects, which as advisers we saw emerging. This and the confidence gained through the appreciation of their teachers and

of their peers helped the children to grow visibly in stature as people. This was of course fostered even further in schools which began to free and develop the children's powers in art, language and group studies of all kinds. It is not surprising that the Heads of a comprehensive and grammar school to which children went from one primary school, often asked the Primary Head how it was that his children were "so grown up".

There was no doubt in our view that this change of relationship between teacher and children to one of "combined learning" as one Head had put it ("the teacher no longer in front and over the children, but working with them") brought about marked changes in the discipline in some schools. At schools in the underprivileged mining areas with large classes, children began arriving early and leaving as late as possible. Allowed into school early, they would go to their classrooms and get out their materials, paper, books, paint, etc. and go on with the immediate work on hand. No longer were "breaks" a bedlam in the playground; children did not need to let off steam and play together in vigorous but friendly ways "using their space" with self control and consideration of others. These were some of the earliest results we saw. In connection with this social aspect, one Headmistress of a large Infant School says, "their relationships with each other were so much better after a movement lesson the whole class was integrated and they were much easier to teach; when all is said with 35 to 40 children it takes something to integrate them but after a good movement lesson they were always easy".

Meanwhile it should be said that the physical conditions of the schools gradually began to improve, but the fundamental changes, new or improved floors, better caretaking, repaired playgrounds and so forth only made real progress after the appointment to the West Riding of a gifted and dedicated caretaker Supervisor. Ernest Peet gradually revolutionised the caretaking service from mop and bucket to up to date professional standards. He changed the attitude and outlook of caretakers from cleaners to an educationally concerned and informed body and he was quick to appreciate the value of Movement and Dance in schools, the need for bare foot work and therefore clean and safe floor surfaces. This all took time, nevertheless it was Movement which demonstrated the importance of and showed where the priorities lay, in clean well serviced schools.

But how did the work spread? Again in many ways. Through sessional courses, through advisers' visits and also in some schools by the meeting of all the staff with the adviser for a few evenings or Saturday mornings, to participate actively themselves. The Head teacher of course was the most important factor. If he or she felt that Movement was a positive educational force for the children ("I'm for it because the children have to think for themselves" was often said) then it became accepted.

THE INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT AND DANCE IN THE WEST RIDING 1947-52

Members of staff received every encouragement but if a member was not interested and perhaps felt too insecure, no pressure was put upon him/her to change. Gradually and often if such teachers were finding security in art, language or environmental studies, they realised that teaching Movement implied the same relationships with the children, the same expectations of self discipline, thinking, feeling and discovering. It became obvious that it was senseless to teach in one way in the Hall and in another way in the classroom.

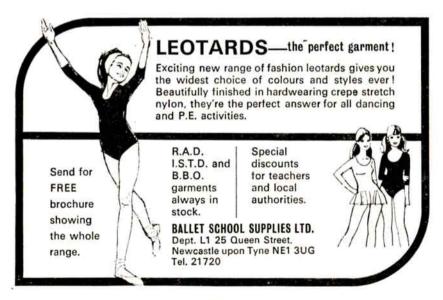
Our Movement progress in these early days owed much to the fact that specialist advisers and local Inspectors were fundamentally ploughing the same furrow. This could be said to be contained in the question we were constantly asking ourselves. "What is learning? How do children develop their own powers, intellectual, aesthetic, imaginative, expressive?" Pioneer teachers of Infants had begun to show how they could and did, and now in the years of 1947-52 it seemed that children of all ages could show us, term by term, year by year, that through many activities in school based on this "combined learning and working of teacher with children" they could develop their own powers and abilities beyond our expectations. One of the questions teachers came to ask themselves was "Am I preventing my children from developing their powers by my own limitations?" They realised that they could not paint or move or write as expressively and sincerely as the children they taught. What about adult standards by which we used to judge the children? What about failure experienced by so many children? One Infant Headmistress says:- "In my four nursery classes, I saw that the only failures the child experienced were self imposed, but in the infant department we were imposing failure, why was it?" When adult preconceived standards were removed from assessment of children's work in physical education as also in art and written expression, which had given rise to fear of failure as well as exposure of it, children's abilities, powers of absorption and determination began to emerge very clearly in those early days of which I speak. Very soon it was obvious that we had completely underestimated children's abilities and this gave a new spur to so many teachers and often to those who had seemed least successful in formal methods. It was the growth and expression of children's willingness to give and take responsibility between themselves and to appreciate the different abilities that each revealed, that was encouragement to teaching in this, to them, new way. Freedom for the child yes, but never license. This freedom was the freedom for choice, for self-discipline imposed by the child on himself because he both wanted success and felt he could achieve it in his own way, when released from adult standards as the final criteria and as such quite unrelated to his relevant stage of development as a human being.

I should like to conclude by a tribute to my colleagues of those days which was paid to us by a teacher from Norway who visited us in

1950. She wrote to me by my invitation before beginning this article about her recollections of her visit.

"First of all, a group of inspectors and advisers, bound together in a friendly, firm yet flexible team, where no personal ambition was allowed to spoil the common aim. Schools where the growth of each individual child meant more than marks or competition. Though I had not at that time met the Chief Education Officer, Mr. Clegg, I strongly felt the existence of a true educationalist behind the team of workers".

DIANA JORDAN, March, 1974.



LABAN LECTURE — MARCH, 1974

NOTE: The Laban Lecture took the form of an informal talk, of which these notes form the basis, to the thirty or so people attending the evening session at the Annual Conference and, as is clearly evident, it is not to be read as a formal lecture. It should also be noted that the talk was followed by two video tapes, one of an Infant class which I am currently engaged in teaching each week, and the other of the dance performed by second year students of Worcester College of Education for a recent B.B.C. programme "Seeing and Believing".

I should like to record my indebtedness to Miss Brenda Jones for the idea of establishing contrasting models and for helpful discussions on the theme of the talk.

DANCE IN EDUCATION — ARTEFACT OR EXPRESSION?

This is in fact the second time I have been asked to speak at a Guild Conference, the first being in my first year as a Guild member, while at the Studio in 1950, when Sheila Aste and I, the two members of the Studio Special Course, gave talks on 'The need for movement experience and dance in present education', published in the October magazine 1950. Now, nearly a quarter of a century later I am taking the opportunity to share with the small gathering of people attending this Conference some of my personal views about the present position of dance in education and, in particular, the role of the dance teacher.

First of all I should like to look back briefly to the beginning of 'modern educational dance' in this country in the 1940's. Dance developed here, it seems to me, because of people acting upon personal and empirical evidence. Pioneers like Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer, Lesley Burrows, Diana Jordan, Joan Goodrich and others were the first generation to introduce dance to teachers and children. The results caused an interest to develop and as a consequence there has been a considerable spread of dance in educational establishments. Why is this? Looking back to over 25 years ago I remember seeing the first children's dance in Birmingham. Kay Garvey's children gave a memorable performance of 'Pandora' at a teachers training course run by the Birmingham Local Education Authority. Many such performances have been given all over the country since then. This leads me to ask the questions: 'Has the development been on the basis of formulating dances for performance to give greater opportunities for larger numbers of children than the traditional stage play?' 'Has it provided an activity to support the corporate nature of the school, as the play or the concert, pleasing to head, teachers and children alike?'

Or was it that the introduction of modern dance coincided with a changing view of education — a change from the more authoritarian approach of the 30's to the child-centred ideas of the 40's? Was this new dance activity a vehicle for individual expression which many teachers

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felt was lacking in the authoritarian approach? Here I look back to perhaps 20 years ago when I went with Lisa Ullmann to visit a Special School in Birmingham and saw a group of children taught by Beatrice Freeman. They were dancing their idea of the parable of the Good Samaritan and to see and share their absorption was a moving experience.

In addition to looking back in an attempt to find reasons for a quite amazing development in the introduction of dance into the curriculum of so many colleges and schools, I want to look at the present position. It has been a deliberate policy in writing three books to try to present views and material in an impersonal manner but on this more informal occasion I intend to speak personally. My credentials for doing so lie not on a basis of any advanced study in philosophy, psychology or sociology but on a basis of a career as a practitioner in the field of dance — where I have found, and still find, scope for a rich variety of activity from teaching children of every age group, to students of all ages, to teachers on inservice courses, here and overseas, leading the Worcestershire Dance Group, producing dances for College performances, Church and Cathedral services, Women's Institutes, for B.B.C. and even recently working with a 'post-ordinand' group of clergy.

Clearly then, I have been concerned in actively teaching and promoting the work in dance rather than engaging in one of the higher order activities such as philosophy. However, this lecture has enabled me to stand back and review the current situation. It seems to me that we have reached a point where the road forks and the question is whether travel along the possible branches brings us to the same place. What are these roads? I think that I can best point their nature by setting up two extreme and contrasting models for us to examine and also by looking at each from the point of view of the assumptions made about the child. I shall call them — the **artefact** model and the **experiential** model.

In the artefact model, the achievement of the end product, the work of art — the painting, the poem, the play, the dance — is the important objective. In the dance performance, personal idiosyncracies must be subdued so that the dancers play their prescribed role. Emphasis must be given to technical skill — of whatever persuasion. The teacher is in fact a choreographer. Choreographed dances must be well performed and so the best dancers must be selected. We can compare this model with that of the school play, the team, the orchestra.

What are the assumptions for the child in this model?

That there is a subject content to be learned, a skill to be acquired, and this is important:

that children have no ideas of their own:

that children have no innate movement expression, everything must be prescribed:

LABAN LECTURE - MARCH, 1974

that children cannot formulate for themselves:

that children can copy movements:

that children can remember set sequences:

that children only get enjoyment from imposed ideas:

that the artefact is more important than the child.

In the experiential model the experience is more important than the end product — indeed, end products may be suspect. Self-knowledge and confidence are gained through placing the child in an environment in which he is free to express himself. In dance, music might be played and to this the child expresses himself freely in dance. The teacher is hardly needed except to provide a stimulus.

What are the assumptions for the child in this model?

That there is no subject content, no skill to be acquired, but rather individual emotions to be given expression:

that children are full of ideas:

that children are naturally expressive in movement, nothing need be prescribed:

that children can formulate dances without help — or formulation is a restriction:

that children cannot (and should not) copy:

that children cannot remember set dances can only remember their own dances:

that children only get enjoyment from using their own ideas:

that the child is more important than the artefact.

These models set out two caricatures but they serve to highlight two trends which I have associated with two branches of the road forward. The artefact model if followed exclusively has as a logical consequence a type of teaching which is entirely training and instruction. It does not provide opportunities for the less able or the handicapped. The experiential model if followed exclusively has as a logical consequence unformulated expressions of mood and feeling.

What has this to do with education and art education?

There seems to be some agreement that education is concerned with the transmission of what is intrinsically worthwhile. As Professor Peters put it in 'Aims of Education; a conceptual enquiry':

"Countless 'aims of education' are therefore possible depending upon what features of a worthwhile form of life any educator thinks it most important to foster". We see many attempts to identify the true and essential character of art. As Elliot Eisner writes in his book 'Educating Artistic Vision' when speaking of aestheticians from Plato to Dewey, Reid, Langer:

"... each of their formulations attempts to highlight that which is both unique and valuable about art; each in its own way provides a case for the unique function of art in human life and, by implication, in the educational process . . ."

"... Contextualist justifications argue the role of art education by first determining the needs of the child, the community, the nation. Art education is seen as a means of meeting those needs, whether they be needs directly related to art or not. Essentialist justifications argue the place of art in the schools by analysing the specific and unique character of art itself, and by pointing out that it has unique contributions to make and should not be subverted to other ends".

Here one sees two contrasting models presented by art educators in their polarisation of the contextualist and essentialist view of what is considered unique and worthwhile.

Perhaps it is worth reflecting that our own ideas of worthwhileness and value have much to do with our personal experiences as participants. We build up our judgments on the basis of personal participation and reflection. In the final analysis, personal convictions of worthwhileness influence our judgment of what is valuable in the curriculum. Remember what Peters said:

"Countless 'aims of education' are therefore possible depending upon what features of a worthwhile form of life any educator thinks it most important to foster".

I would therefore like to suggest that there is, in fact, a middle way which makes use of the strengths in both of these models examined. I would give weight to the following assumptions about the child and I can only speak on the basis of my own teaching experience and my view about worthwhileness.

There is a subject content and it is derived from bodily action, having its range drawn from the common elements and individual preferences in human movement. There is matter to be learned and at later stages to be studied in considerable detail.

Children do have ideas of their own but not all children have lots of ideas all the time. They have to be stimulated, be presented with ideas, have their attention drawn to possibilities. In introducing dance the teacher works hard but, as confidence grows the teacher can throw much more over to the children.

Children do reveal themselves in expression in movement but they need a good deal of guidance and prescription (it isn't easy to balance with the feet inturned!) good teaching is needed to improve quality of movement.

Children do copy and there is a time and place for this (follow my leader is fun!) but they can also make their own response to a teacher's suggestion.

Children are able to formulate their own dances — sometimes showing a surprising insight — possibly intuitive ability which humbles us all. However, they need a lot of help from teachers to explore, select, reject, formulate.

Children do tend to remember their own dances better than anything set for them, but they can remember dances worked out as a co-operative effort with the teacher.

Children do get enjoyment from their own ideas but can also enjoy taking part in a dance taught to them.

Finally — the artefact or the child? In the theatre one would say the former. In education who would ever suggest that a dance was in itself more important than the individuals taking part in it? But it certainly can be. It is one of the easiest traps for the keen teacher to fall into. Eager to establish dance through showing finished productions, children can be pushed around, their personal participation taking a low place in the teacher's priorities. The artefact in dance cannot be achieved without the child. The child however can gain experience through the artefact if his participation in its creation is meaningful. Knowledge and understanding come through his experience in the dance.

These assumptions about the child have led me to arrive at an approach in dance teaching which I feel takes a middle road drawing on the strengths of the two models I outlined earlier and avoiding polarisation. A different picture takes shape. In this approach dances are formed through the interaction of teacher and child. The teacher has an active role to play in terms of setting up situations within which the child can explore. In his book 'The Identity of Man', Bronowski writes of the knowledge of the self which underlies all the arts and of the idea of exploring all the ambiguities that lie hidden in every general idea. He writes:

"The imagination explores the alternatives of human action without ever deciding for one rather than another. And in the tense and happy indecision, and only in this, the work of art is different from the work of science".

The dance teacher not only sets up situations and suggests the material to be explored but through suggestions and questions opens up a world of possibilities to be experienced by the child so helping him 'to explore the alternatives of human action'. Here the scope is provided for

the personal expression and the individual response. The teacher therefore acts as a guide rather than a director. Pupils are guided firstly in the exploration of bodily action (and I use the term in the comprehensive manner which Laban used in Mastery of Movement) to help them to understand the symbolism at their disposal in their use of dance gesture. Secondly, they are guided in the manipulation of dance material from the simplest beginnings of repeating phrases and developing rhythms to the complexities available in dance composition proper, so that older pupils and students and adults can use the processes involved in all creative activity—exploration, selection, rejection, formulation, appraisal. Thirdly, they are guided in the exploration of the possibilities in dancing with others. Here I quote Bronowski again:

"I hold that each man has a self and enlarges his self by his experiences. That is, he learns from experience, from the experiences of others as well as his own, and from their inner experiences as well as their outer".

This concept of the knowledge of self being gained not only through the individual's own activity but through observation of others and response to them, is a concept which has been of importance for the teacher of dance and is one which we were concerned with in our practical session this morning.

The role of the teacher is, it seems to me, a versatile one and one which could be described thus:

Movement suggestions or tasks are presented:

comments are made on the responses:

attention may be drawn to individual's particular response. They may show their movement to others. Several contrasting ideas may be selected:

questions may be posed asking for verbal or non-verbal answers: verbal or other sound rhythms might be introduced as a stimulus or accompaniment:

further movement suggestions may be presented to introduce variations in the material

..., and so on as the lesson develops.

Work in pairs or groups might be introduced and a framework of a dance set.

The teacher stands back, observes.

General points may be made to the class.

The teacher goes around — asks questions, comments on what is seen, suggests a possibility here, shows something there, comments, encourages, discusses.

But that is only a stereotype of a lesson. It may be that the teacher feels it important to give far more scope to individual expression and sets up a situation within which a great deal of improvisation precedes the formulation or there is no formulation. Or again it may be that something already formulated is presented by the teacher as a dance composition. Then the teacher's skill is put to the test in introducing the material in such a way that the class can make it their own.

So the middle road forward is a route which is capable of flexibility — veering sometimes towards one side, sometimes another. It certainly avoids the dichotomy between the two models used earlier, a dichotomy which is not necessary and one which can bring about a polarisation of an unfortunate kind.

It seems to me an important element of the approach in 'modern educational dance', one which is perhaps unique, that one seeks to encourage the child to 'enlarge himself through his experiences' not only by providing opportunities for exploration of an idea, the ambiguities which Bronowski referred to, but also through creating dances — the artefacts.

There is, of course, nothing new in my picture of the way forward and of the role of the teacher, a role which is characterised by the activities of stimulation, challenge, questioning, discussions, sometimes holding back, sometimes getting highly involved. I have experienced this myself from early years in classes taken by Laban, Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer, Diana Jordan and others - all so different in their approach - but with fundamental strong convictions in common. Moreover the fruits of such a versatile approach are seen not only in the class explorations but in the completed dances performed in schools and colleges. I must share with you my concern that a contrary impression is sometimes given. I have tried to encourage teachers to embark on the exciting and rewarding activity of dance teaching through the written word. In setting pen to paper one attempts the impossible and in describing aims and processes one is a ready target for the analytical. Such terms as movement imagination, creativity, spontaneity give rise to debate. However, in using such words one is using them not in a stipulative sense but in a working sense and in a context where surely it is reasonable to presume that readers understand the usage. One consoles oneself with the thought that without some of us engaging in intensive practice as dance teachers and taking courage to set down ideas, there would be little material available for the higher order activity of philosophical analysis. I well remember having a talk with Laban and Lisa Ullmann one day when he spoke of resisting pressures to write 'Modern Educational Dance' for some time until he eventually gave in to persuasion. Perhaps he sometimes regretted it.

I think that it is as difficult to write and speak about the teaching of dance as to find words to describe a piece of music or a dance. As Bejart said in a recent television interview:

"I want to say something. If I could use words I should write a book. I can say very well what I want to say with movement, music and gesture. I work with real bodies not abstract ideas".

This holds for me in attempting to write about the art of teaching dance. Even though I cannot say with Bejart that I have not written — or today spoken about it — I can certainly agree most wholeheartedly with him that 'I work with real bodies not abstract ideas'.

In this Laban lecture, which I had the privilege of hearing from Laban himself on many occasions, we look back gratefully. There are those who would scorn a reference to the personality of Laban, seeing in it sentimentality. This is not my attitude. I salute a genious — the only one I expect to encounter in my span—without whose inspiration I should certainly not have experienced the excitements and pleasures that my career has given me. We also look forward, hoping to pass on something of the pleasure and enjoyment of 'free dance' to others. So I conclude with a final quotation from Bronowski which I find especially apt:

"Freedom is valued in a culture that wants to encourage dissent and to stimulate originality and independence. It belongs to a society which is open to change, which esteems the agent of change, the individual, above its peace of mind. But a culture must also have values which resist change. It must treat the truth of the past and the way it was found, with dignity. It must respect the man's way of working, more than what he finds, because the process of discovery is more important to it than any discovery".

JOAN RUSSELL.

(Copyright reserved by Joan Russell).

BOOK REVIEWS

DRAMA AND MOVEMENT IN THERAPY by Audrey Wethered

Published Macdonald and Evans. Price £1.50

This book is a pioneer, written by a pioneer in the therapeutic field. The Author's extensive experience is apparent in the many examples given to clarify the text.

The book is written for two groups of people: Therapists who would like to understand Movement as a therapeutic tool, and movement practioners who may be thinking of taking a therapeutic training. L.A.M.G. members will find some familiar material, as the movement principles are set out very clearly, but they should beware of skimming over this, as they will find a new slant; stress on the Meaning of Movement, its observation and the way in which the trained therapist can use this. Although the text is clear and practical, it is appreciated more fully when read with some knowledge of psychopathology and psychotherapeutic theories.

The Introduction includes a courageous attempt to define the meaning of the word "Therapy", and to clear up the current confusion over the question "What is a Therapist?"

The importance of physical play to a child's psychological growth is explained, and ways of adapting this to help the integration of the adult are suggested. The many examples given indicate the high degree of observation, movement knowledge, and understanding of the patient's illness, required to do this work.

The sections on fantasy and aggression are so fascinating that an inexperienced enthusiast might be tempted to plunge in without the backing of a psychotherapist. Drama is dealt with in a helpful and practical way, giving the impression that it is likely to be as deeply disturbing as pure movement. Many stimulating ideas are offered and examples given from experience with psychiatric patients. Relaxation is discussed as part of the whole of activity, and an aspect of the movement principles, and there is a helpful section on music; practical hints on choosing music and its use in treatment. The chapter on relationship is refreshingly clear and a valuable antidote to the muddled thinking on this subject which is fashionable now. The illustrations are charming, the layout and general presentation of the book attractive, and the bibliography is comprehensive. This book leaves the reader asking for more.

CHLOE GARDNER.

RECREATIVE MOVEMENT IN FURTHER EDUCATION W. Meier and M. Baranak

Published by Macdonald & Evans Ltd. pp. 96 Illustrated. £1.50 net.

The highlight of this book is the chapter concerned with 'The Lesson'. Here are practical suggestions based on the author's own experience and the ideas are clearly explained. The 'lesson curve' described in this chapter exemplifies the arrangement of the book with 'Preparation' in the form of general background to recreative movement, 'Training' as required knowledge of the subject, 'Climax' consisting of the application of movement, the lesson and stimuli, and 'Conclusion' as ideas regarding the development of work towards demonstrations.

A book such as this has long been needed and the authors have made a valiant effort to offer practical help to teachers of adult recreative movement classes. They describe the book as a handbook or manual for use and have adopted a simple, straightforward style in order to make it comprehensible to those teachers who have had a limited training. In some instances there is an over-simplification since Movement is a complex subject; only a single chapter is devoted to Laban's concepts of Movement about which whole books are already on the market and the chapter on body structure and function deals only superficially with this important topic. However, from these starting points teachers will be able to extend their knowledge from other sources, some of which are listed at the end of the book.

The lay-out of the book is attractive and the illustrations helpful though not always placed near to the script to which they refer.

The title 'Recreative Movement in Further Education' is certainly an all-embracing term and serves to illustrate the change of outlook on 'Keep Fit' that has taken place in recent years. The authors are sincere advocates of this change and their book has succeeded in presenting contemporary ideas in a common-sense way

E.H.P.

OBITUARIES

Bronwen Lloyd Williams

We must apologize that we are informing our readers only now of the death of Miss Bronwen Lloyd Williams which occurred last year, but the sad news reached us so belatedly. With her a good friend and supporter of our work has gone. When in 1941 Laban, Joan Goodrich, Diana Jordan and myself looked for a place where to run our then newly established "Modern Dance Holiday Courses" Bronwen generously opened her doors to us and received our course at her school in Moreton Hall in Shropshire that Christmas. It was no easy feat to accommodate a large number of people as it was in the middle of the war with shortages all around. But Bronwen gave us a home where we were able to hold a series of holiday courses both, during the Winter and Summer vacations. She and her sister Mary were wonderful hostesses who met the demands of a dancing crowd with sympathetic understanding.

Bronwen herself was devoted to music and dance. She was an admirer of Laban's work and at her school the arts featured prominently. She delighted in producing with the children music and dance programmes for which she trained them very thoroughly and with a professional flair. With her strong personality and most individual outlook she set an example to many, of discipline and dedication. She will be greatly missed.

Lisa Ullmann.

Kathleen Howard

We are sorry to report the death of Kathleen Howard who has been a loyal member of the Guild for many years.

Michael Bartle

It is with great regret that we report the untimely death of Michael Bartle. Since I have edited the magazine, he has been in charge of its printing. His advice, encouragement and interest in our work will be missed.

Elizabeth Smith.

NOTICES

Annual Subscriptions

Members of ten years' standing who have reached retirement age and are in receipt of a pension, may in future pay only half of the current annual subscription.

Overseas Members

We are sorry that overseas members are experiencing postal delays. The cost of sending all literature by air mail would be exorbitant. Courses are advertised well in advance in the magazine. Any interested enquiry would be answered by air mail and late applications will be accepted.

Art of Movement Studio Library

We have heard from Marion North, the Principal of the Studio, who says, 'all members of the Guild are welcome at the Studio at any time and the Library is available for their reference. We should, of course, like to know when people are coming in order to make sure books will be available'.

Courses

Recreational Dance - May, 1974

Sheila Dobie and Alan Bond, Notre Dame College of Education.

Recreational Dance — May, 1974, Joyce Spurgeon, Madeley College

'Swanwick Course' - October or November, 1974

Crystal Palace — October or November, 1974

Since it was felt that the published draft account was badly and incorrectly printed, we now give a true copy of the summary accounts for 1973.

THE LABAN ART OF MOVEMENT GUILD GUILD GENERAL ACCOUNT FOR 1973

GUILD GENERAL ACCOUNT FOR 1973 PAYMENTS	J	372 Administration:	aries and surer es g, duplicating,	1478.75 etc 94.45 931.44 Expenses of Committees:	52.79 Courses & Conferences sub-committee 48.38	1,	298.35 examinations 59.70 359.75 707.23 Publications 678.21	Advertising and Publicity 260,39 A.G.M. and Conference 274.47	(1972) 1 Study,	Mastery of Movement, Southlands 207.46	Residential Study, Crystal Palace 416.06 Dance in Education,	<u></u>	1696.35 (1974) 25.00 808.29	66.57 Junior Days of Dance: 37.90 16.90 Hereford 37.90 General expenses 22.09	1	2.00 bodies 4.00 20.50 Library and Insurance 20.50 Balances carried forward	60.00 Petty Cash Imprest 500.00 Deposit account 5	*-304.52 Current account 50.04 550.04	4802,52	VIVA FESTIVAL ACCOUNT FOR 1973	Balances carried forward at 31st December, 1973: Deposit account (Bank) 1028.46 Deposit account (Building Society) 2000.00	£3028.46	* Debit current account balance for the year 1972.	K. M. KERSHAW,	Hon. I reasurer.
GUILD GENERAL A	1972	£ Balances brought forward	500.00 304.52	60.00 Petty Cash Imprest 60.00 1562-19 Subscriptions 1924.17	Donations: Personal 76 Junior Days of Dance 32.53	10.00	Publications:	Sales 104.33 Advertising 84.50	243.15 A.G.M. and Conference 206.89 Courses: Advanced Study.	nent,	Southlands 200.55 Residential Study, 500.55	uace ucation,	Worcester 188.02 2113.99 ——— 1139.52		19.88 Bank Interest 35.50				4802.52	KALEIDOSCOPIA VIVA FE	1 at 1st January, 1973: () ding Society)	ı	There are contingent liabilities on General Account and K.V. Festival Account for In-	totalling £810.66 for the years 1965-72 have been received; the Treasurer has lodged notices	or appeal.

Report of the Auditors to the Members of the Laban Art of Movement Guild.

We certify that we have audited the Treasurer's records of the Laban Art of Movement Guild for the year ended 31st that date.

We have also examined the records of the Kaleidoscopia Viva Festival Account for the year ended 31st December, 1973 and they also exhibit a true and fair view of the transactions on that account for the year ended on that date.

37A Walton Road,
East Molesey,
Surrey.

THE LABAN ART OF MOVEMENT GUILD

Application for Membership

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LIST OF AFFILIATED GROUPS

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