

# Laban Guild...

## RUMINIATIONS on SHAKESPEARE and LABAN

My first Shakespearian part was as a schoolgirl playing Lancelot Gobbo's son in 'The Merchant of Venice'. I had to sit for long periods and I think invented 101 things to do with the toe of my felt shoe. I was commended for good character acting: I don't know whether it was the shape or the quality or maybe the relationship with boot which gained me this honourable mention! Next was 'Midsummer Night's Dream'. I had returned from the Art of Movement Studio and was bursting with movement and dance. I remember having a lot of fun in the 'maypole scene' - you remember the one where the two girls verbally abuse each other and comment upon each other's heights and chase each other around the stage. I could now think in terms of floor patterns and body shape. I was also allowed to choreograph the finale dance of Bottom and Co.

*The Witch in 'Macbeth' offered me tremendous scope for bringing together quality, shape and form.*

I took up this play again many years later for the Drama Option at L.in.C. The play lends itself to division into three sections - the Court and courtiers, the Supernatural and the Artisans. In this piece we presented three separate scenes. The first was made up of small groups who each had a conversation from the Court scene in which Aegeus puts before Theseus, the Duke, his wish to force his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius, not Lysander, the man she loves. If she will not obey she should be killed, as stated in an ancient law. The words provided the accompaniment to the movements created by the members of the small group. As many of the participants were from different countries, the music of the voices and accents were wonderful to listen to. In the second scene the group divided into two - one to represent Titania and the other Oberon. To original music, specially composed by Chris Artley, the group interpreted the familiar words spoken beautifully by members of the group:

"Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania".....  
"What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence,  
I have forsworn his bed and company.".....

Thorny hedgehogs be not seen  
Newts and blindworms, do no wrong,  
Come not near our Fairy Queen"

The dramatic piece ended with a set of different comic interpretations of the drama Pyramus and Thisbe as

enacted by Bottom, Flute, Quince, Starveling and Snug.

I got good reports from drama teachers who went off and used this as a stimulus to introduce the play to their pupils. I think that many children would become fascinated by Shakespeare plays if they could dance their essence.

In the act of creating this piece I worked intuitively but drew upon my experience of Laban's language of movement. Choosing the short quotations for the Court scene meant feeling for the extracts which focused on feeling states and images:

"Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you."

I found I had been aware of movement quality - the contrast between the Oberon and Titania groups, the

*Continued on page 10*



*Third Witch - Macbeth*

for movement and dance

Reg. Charity No. 266435

Volume 16  
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Summer 1997

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## EDITORIAL

My personal sigh of relief, my realisation that life goes on despite what the media would have us believe, came when I worked out that this edition of the magazine would arrive after the General Election. Whichever way it goes let us hope there will be something in the result for small charities like us.

This edition has a lot to interest you I believe. It is a joy to have a regular columnist in Su Johnston. She offers more sparky thoughts on page 8, and we have had some response to her first piece. Jill Bunce's article on her work with Parkinson's Disease patients concludes. And did you realise Laban's work had spread to Chinese Cultural Activities? Well, remember you read about it here first.

Many people have kindly commended the quality of the articles included. Obviously some are more interesting or better written or more academic than others, but the effort put in to the articles comes from the membership - YOU. And I am thrilled that you commend your fellows' work. If you are approached by us for a contribution it is because we really believe the members would be interested in what you have to say. So please don't be shy.

The new look magazine (and come to that the new look stationery), has received mixed views. Most people we asked in a little telephone poll we did, felt the impact was weak. Many liked the more modern layout and the clarity of the design, but disliked the lack of punch. So we have, I hope, added 'punch' by stressing the colour a little more and compacting the side line. There were also comments about the loss of the logo, which, whilst many people did not understand it, was like an old familiar friend.

*Lydia Everitt*

### COPY DATES

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Copy dates are:

1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October.  
Typescript please, on one side of the paper, ready for the scanner if possible.

NEXT ISSUE IS AUGUST 1997

# PEN PICTURE OF GORDON CURL

- our newly elected Council Chairman -



When I was informed by the Guild Secretary that (*in absentia*) I had been elected Chairman of the Guild Council at its recent Annual General Meeting, I wrote immediately to Lorraine De Oliveria saying how genuinely humbled I was at such

a great honour, particularly when I saw the long list of distinguished people who had held this high office during the past 50 years - from Lisa Ullmann onward! To write a 'pen picture' of myself for the benefit of Guild Members has, however, made me diffident - so much so that I appealed for someone else to be kind enough to write about me instead. However, it was a *first hand* account that was really wanted by members rather than an impersonal C.V., so I shall with some misgivings, then, try to sketch a little of my professional background.

After service in the Royal Navy I went on to teacher-training at Culham College Oxon, with music, art and drama as my combined subjects. My interest in movement as central to all these arts led me on to Carnegie College where I found myself leading the demonstration team in Scandinavian and Scottish dancing; it was here that my love of dance, as a social and performing art, began to find expression.

During a few years teaching in Oxfordshire, I was attracted to the Laban Summer Holiday Courses where I came under the spell of Rudolf Laban, Lisa Ullmann and Sylvia Bodmer. I shall never forget those 'martial' sessions with Laban himself when, with the few men present, we were disciplined into a compact cohort of fearsome 'armed warriors'; nor shall I forget those breathtaking choral dance sessions when literally hundreds of delegates dance their way up and down those sweeping staircases at Ashridge to the intoxicating accompaniment of symphonic music - under the inspired direction of Sylvia Bodmer! My future in dance education was undoubtedly nurtured here; I became a proud member of the Laban Guild.

In 1954 I joined Bretton Hall College of Music Art and Drama where, in that idyllic setting, I was greatly privileged to work with Margaret Dunn OBE and other distinguished colleagues in the West Riding, including Diana Jordan OBE and Peter Stone - all under the stimulating influence of Sir Alec Clegg the Director of Education. It was a time when we were all avidly exploring the many possibilities of movement and dance, based on Laban's principles. Diana Jordan (that doyenne of dance education) was kind enough to write to me after one dance session 'I was really excited ... it was quite an historic occasion ... the first time we have seen men working together in Dance .... your contribution will be tremendously important to the work we are trying to do...'. I was humbled at this and knew that my inspiration had come from my experiences with Laban on the many Summer Schools I had attended.

In 1961, I was appointed Principal Lecturer and Head of Integrated Arts at Chelsea College of P.E. where again I was privileged to work with a most talented team including Lorna Wilson and Varina Verdin. It was during this time also that I was able to further my research into Laban's work and was able to spend a period on the Continent visiting some of Laban's original pupils and associates, Kurt Jooss, Hans Zullig, Pina Bausch and Albrecht Knust, based as they were in Essen.

Although Jooss, as Director of the Folkwangschule and Ballet, was an extremely busy man, he found time to talk to me. I learnt that he and his company were about to perform his ballet *The Green Table* for the BBC Television on a flying visit to London. With all those dance-lovers back home in mind I made a desperate bid to persuade Jooss to bring his company to Eastbourne. To my elation he agreed! I sped back to England to book an event which drew over 2000 students and staff from all over the British Isles. Jooss gave a memorable lecture-demonstration in the afternoon and one of my tasks was to make, and hang, a life-size icosahedron from the theatre's proscenium arch to which he could refer during his talk. *The Green Table* was performed to an ecstatic capacity crowd in the evening. I was inspired to yet further higher degree research into Laban's work; but was given a salutary reminder by Lisa Ullmann when in her 1965 Presidential Address to the Guild, she made it clear that 'serious study of this kind requires a philosophic foundation'. I explored Laban's 'philosophic foundations' and in so doing discovered that they had their roots in ancient Greek Cosmology - none the worse for that I concluded - provided *appropriate transpositions* were made to meet today's stringent aesthetic, educational and artistic criteria (at least as far as dance was concerned).

The seventies drew me to Nonington College to initiate degree studies for students of physical education and dance and to teach aesthetics of dance. Once again I was blessed with distinguished colleagues including Ellinor Hinks, Sally Archbutt, Hettie Loman and Barry McBride. At this time I was elected Chairman of the NATFHE Dance Section beginning a 20 year period of national and international conferences organised for the benefit of serving teachers and students of dance. They included: invitations to Martha Graham to give a capacity audience lecture-demonstration and a performance of *Clytemnestra*; a widely stimulating week with Alwin Nikolais; a multi-genre dance week and a Contemporary Dance week-end with Bob Cohan, national dance critics and aestheticians - including Professors Louis Arnaud Reid and Paul Hirst. We were determined to combine dance performance with critical and aesthetic appreciation.

During these last few years I have worked locally as Artistic Director of a Youth Opera Group touring schools to provide combined arts opportunities for children; this has led to large scale productions in the Canterbury Festival and the Cathedral. In addition to this I am External Examiner for an exciting BPhil Honours Degree at the College of the Royal Academy of Dancing and I also examining MA work in dance for De Montfort University. My academic inclinations have been kept alive by doing some teaching of aesthetics to serving teachers of music, art, drama and dance on an MA Course in Expressive Arts at Christ Church College Canterbury.

When I was elected Chairman of the Council I was reminded of the Guild's foremost constitutional objective, namely: 'the promotion and *advancement* of the study of human movement particularly recognising the contribution made by the Late Rudolf Laban' (my italics). There is little doubt that the last thing Laban the initiator and catalyst would have wished would be that his ideas should stand still. If I can, therefore, in my newly elected capacity, help to advance Laban's ideas (not least his philosophical ones) I shall feel I will have earned the honour members have bestowed upon me.

*Gordon Curl*



# THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHER AS JUGGLER!

Hazel Francomb



Teaching is inevitably a skill of juggling priorities. As a teacher of sixth form college dance (and theatre studies) students I feel a three way pull - I need to serve the student as "Artist" as "Examination Candidate" and as human being! I would like to feel these three ways of looking at my students are mutually supportive. The examination process should help to focus the choreographer's work, the challenges of difficult tasks (and choreographing and teaching fellow pupils is hard) should nourish the individual's development and help nurture valuable self esteem. The student's creative life should enhance their examination achievements and again provide opportunities for personal growth. In practice there can sometimes be a clash between the three facets of the student. The sheer pressure of the examination process can restrict or even invalidate some students' creative work. Personal needs and problems may similarly take time and energy away from the creative tasks. It is a major part of a teacher's job to help students negotiate these aspects of their lives.

*A young teacher will investigate the fundamentals of "why" as well as "how" of teaching.*

I have recently found a fundamental difficulty in this task which I have been working to resolve - the journey may strike a chord with other teachers in my position. Though there is no neat solution I must sheepishly say that, for me, the fundamental lack in my work was that I had forgotten the pleasure and rich resource to be found in playful activities - very obvious but sometimes routine can prevent us from realising the obvious. Recent work with my students being taught by Mark Murphy and the V-Tol dance group emphasised a particular kind of work - they used lots of exercises developed from children's games - great for aerobic training, keep the group alert and helping them explore spontaneous expression as part of the creative process. Incidentally it is sad how quickly young adults can lose the ability to spontaneously play. In my practical work teaching a Theatre Studies A level set text (Keatley's *My Mother Said I Never Should*) I was exploring the concept of the inner child with guided improvisation. We were looking at our younger selves and the child we still have in us - elements of our personalities that are still playful, open and perhaps mischievous - this was not only great fun but seemed important. A very different set of tasks achieved some of the same effects when I worked for a weekend with Phillipe Gaulier (a famous physical theatre teacher). His emphasis on the sheer gleeful pleasure in performing and his strategies for kindling this, again emphasised the value of play in creative work.

I realise that this process *must* be made available to my dance students, not only is it life affirming and fun, it is the heart of the creative process, student's examination tasks will only succeed if they tap into this. An example of putting this into practice will illustrate the value and shows links with another difficulty in my particular area of teaching. Because very few students have G.C.S.E. Dance in my area I have sometimes to overcome prejudices about dance. Many who choose the Performing Arts A level probably feel they will simply tolerate the dance aspect of the course. Others have lots of training and are resistant to a new approach so I have a very few introductory lessons to encourage them to take the subject further in a specialised module.

Sitting at home marking a set of Performing Arts A level student examination essays about their recent choreography task, I am amazed at the quality of the work. The course requires students to create and intellectualise about that process up to examination standard within a term of starting the course. Previous work on other aspects of the course had sometimes seemed like worthy attempts to grapple with unwieldy material. This work shows an almost embarrassing level of confidence in their, still limited, understanding of the context of contemporary dance and a pride and enthusiasm in their own achievements. Yes their practical performance (not in itself marked at this stage) had been full of intelligence, energy and enthusiasm, but I had not expected them to be able to communicate about it so well. What had happened? Dance teaching to A level students is quite a curious activity - dance examinations are allocated the same amount of time as any other subject - they simply have no time to train their bodies and learn how to create and perform. Of course the trick is to fold these activities together and I find Laban's analyses of movement essential in this process - students can creatively explore and play with particular aspects of the nature of movement whilst warming up and training their bodies. I analyse the heart of the choreography they are studying and present it swiftly in a series of exploratory tasks. Often the class are dancing, interacting, making aesthetic decisions and engaging in the topic from the very start of each lesson. For many dance educators this is too obvious, but that is the experience that students who have only had technique classes find most challenging.

A young teacher will investigate the fundamentals of "why" as well as "how" of teaching. I have been very enthusiastic and indeed personally fulfilled as a teacher for over fifteen years but in the last few years I

seemed to be approaching a teaching equivalent of a mid-life crisis! I felt less enthusiastic with my work and began to ask myself some searching questions - *how does dance really benefit the people I work with?* Some of my students go on to work more in the field but for all students it is part of a range of courses and must develop and enrich them as people as well as simply helping them towards further education and employment. *Do I really do this?* Finally *Am I staying open, do I in fact also have a creative life?* If I don't then I am a very poor role model for my students.

I have already begun to address this last question, my main way of keeping up my practice (not simply supporting others or improving my teaching skills) has been the L.In.C. Summer School - simply this time enables me to grapple with my dance expression - play with dance and choreography - enjoy moving. It is all too easy for a teacher to lose this capacity in day to day teaching - technique classes don't really help.

Even when studying set works or particular choreographic styles this ability to find the heart of the movement, explore the nature of the work, re-form and play with it is essential. It is this use of Laban's analysis which makes it possible for students to fairly quickly create good quality choreography and performance which suits their own bodies and which they can relate and compare with the professional example. This helps to create the positive enthusiasm for their own creative work, improves their self esteem and informs their written as well as practical examinations.

*Hazel Francomb*



*Creative dance work with Hills Rd.,  
Sixth Form College students.  
Tony Cuthbertson*



## CHINESE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

### The Application of Laban's Principles

My first experience of Laban's Movement and Dance principles was not from a contemporary dance class, but through the performance of an ancient Confucian ritual dance. It was 1967, when I departed Vietnam for Taiwan. I met Prof. Liu Feng-Shuen at the National Taiwan Normal University. She was a senior dance teacher, who, herself, was inspired by the German New Dance and the movements of American Modern Dance. She was exploring with great enthusiasm her idea of how Chinese modern dance should be. Liu believed that the classical thinking of Confucius has shone a light and strong influence forwards on Chinese society, their life-style and culture. It could affect their concept of movement and their sense of space, time, and aesthetics. Therefore she set about studying Confucian ritual dance as her starting point for her idea of Chinese modernism. She had studied and was using Labanotation as a tool to help in her research. In addition to support her writing, she needed to reconstruct the ancient ritual dance in actual performance.

I was one of the students to be selected by her and participated in the reconstruction work. At that time, I had no knowledge of Laban and his notation, but through the process of reconstruction, Prof. Liu emphasized to us time and again the valuable function of Labanotation and the importance of Time/Space relationship in dance. Because of this introduction to Laban's principles of Movement and Dance, it made me feel that Confucian dance does have a modern meaning.

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I met Dr. Marion North and Bonnie Bird in Taipei during 1986. With their encouragement, I came to London and became a student at the Laban Centre. It was exciting to go abroad to study directly

with the Laban Centre based teachers. But after this excitement, I felt panic and depression, because Laban's theory involved not just practice, but was also covering the cultural, social and educational evolution in Europe through the centuries.

Later, doing an M.A. in Choreological Studies, I had further opportunity to practice and perceive the Laban basis of dance, enhanced by the challenge and stimulation of Valerie Preston-Dunlop's tutorial style. Armed with these advanced studies, I began to apply these new Choreological skills with my own cultural background.

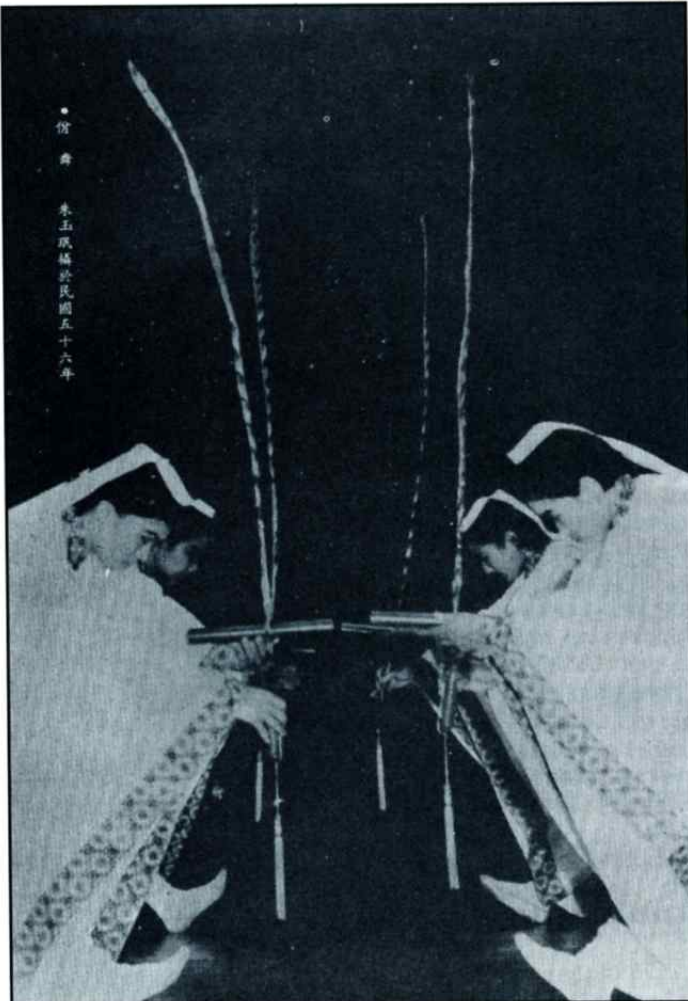
Firstly I was able to analyse some of the hidden factors of the movement in classical

T'ai Chi Ch'uan. I found that the flowing nature of T'ai Chi movement is similar to the flowing nature of the Chinese brush writing.

The Chinese use a very soft brush to write and draw, a brush is an unstable instrument which is difficult to control. In drawing a horizontal line the Chinese use the alternation of pressing and releasing to produce the ink flow. They raise the wrist to ease off the pressure of the brush as they let it flow into movement. Before the end of the flow the wrist presses again, causing the brush stroke to deviate again and finish with a slight twist. Because of these fine points in calligraphic execution the line takes on its traditional character, which is to start with an angle, flow into the direction of the line that may not be straight, but deviates a little as it has less tension applied to it. This slight curve is progressed until the increase of pressure near the end, followed by the final end twist.

Observing the performance of T'ai Chi, in the beginning the performer brings his body weight slightly upward as a preparation, then lowers it by relaxing to the pull of gravity adding a measure of sideways shift over an "Empty step" which eventually takes the weight as the whole person turns to the opposite side, keeping the weight low. The movement then flows on as necessary to overcome any move by an imagined happening. Before the termination of the movement flow the performer moves his weight towards the ground again and initiates an opposite deviation in Reversed Form of the first movement sequence and weight transference. This sequence of down, pressing, sideways deviating, weight transference, relaxing, turning, flowing creates an effort similar to that of the "brush" writing. It was the Angular point to deviate, diminishing the tension of the straight path. The Chinese refer to this as concept of Linear variation "The interaction of Square and Round".

The "Interaction of Square and Round" is regarded as one of the major principles in T'ai Chi Ch'uan. It is behind every movement. It is also developed in the spiritual form of T'ai Chi's philosophy of Yin and Yang. The circulating Form of T'ai Chi is full of Effort dynamic variation, so it is difficult to use any verbal description to adequately explain it. For example the movement of pressing in T'ai Chi is not one simple movement. It is a combination of several Effort ranks within one action. At the beginning of this action, the performer puts his left hand slightly touching his right hand, but the weight in the right hand is heavier than the weight in his left hand, therefore the heavier hand is actively and gradually leading the lighter hand through the progression of the movement, from the



**The reconstruction of Confucian Ritual Dance by Prof. Liu, Feng-Shuen 1967 Taipei.**



# CHINESE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

## The Application of Laban's Principles



quality of two hands squeezing into two hands pressing. The mutation of effort in "Pressing" movement is that:

Upper body



Lower body

With the accumulation of my Laban based analytical skills and confidence, I went further to examine the performance content of the Japanese Butoh Company Sankai Juko's "Unetsu - The Egg Stands Out As Curiosity!". I found that although Butoh is focused on emphasizing the inner phenomena of the performer's mind and body, the choreographic choice of the performance environment is most carefully selected and full of clear intention. For example, the waterfall, sand dune and the machine controlled big egg in Sankai Juko's performance are full of symbolic meaning, reminding me of the Japanese temple and zen style gardening design. Because the Butoh movements are so slow, it allows the Effort elements to be generated by tension from one state to the other, including Shadow movement, creating interest in the alteration of movement intensity. Perhaps the original Butoh thinking is contrary to Western industrial and materialistic culture, however the Butoh performer has adopted the western technical devices with great sophistication. This combination of Oriental

spiritual depth with Western advanced technological devices created stunning theatrical stage imagery. Laban related knowledge helped me to penetrate the mystery of this East-West fusion.

*The Butoh movements are so slow, it allows the Effort elements to be generated by tension from one state to the other, including Shadow movement.*

Happy with this segment of my study, I moved on to continue my voice-Movement experimental work by extending the choreological concept of body parts and movement relationship. I explored the movement of the inner body parts such as the lungs, the mouth cavity, the lips and the tongue. I tried to emphasize the dynamic impact of the inner self: The expansion of the lungs, the breathing vibration of the body, the actions of the lips and tongue. All of these could be heard by the audience and form part of the dynamics of performance and performer expression. Once again Laban Studies had assisted in enabling new expressive styles to be developed.

After the completion of my M.A. degree in dance studies, I began to explore the possibility of using choreological skills in Chinese teaching, so that I can enrich

education practice from my performance experiences.

Quite different from the traditional Chinese reading and writing teaching methods, I encourage these English speaking Chinese students to use both their voice and body. They explore movement with different body parts, use their mouth, tongue, lips and teeth to make sound and move in rhythm. They are playing, listening and watching each other. I lead them step by step to approach Chinese language speaking. From movement experience, I ask them to compare and discuss the characters of Chinese writing. So that they "feel" the meaning of the ideograms and understand the spatial qualities of them. The response to my teaching is excellent, the classroom is full of excitement, concentration, and surprise. From the happiness and fulfilment of these young students, I "see" myself as well!

If I have to say something about Rudolph Laban, the man. I would suggest that he is a man of the universe. He gave his knowledge and wisdom to mankind to use where people wish, so that it could be adopted and grow with different cultures and situations from generation to generation. ■

*Hsiao-Hwa Li*

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# DANCING AROUND

## A LABAN CONVERSION

"A Dance Workshop at the Rambert Ballet School? You must be.... Look, I haven't danced for years, not since I fell off stage playing a guinea pig in Alice in Wonderland..... It's for anyone with an interest in the theatre?.... Oh, yes, well does being the voice of Noddy entitle me?... and anyway, I'm over forty, well nearly fifty actually... Oh God it's not keep fit with Eileen Fowler is it? Oh, Laban! Yes I remember, we did some sort of Laban dance at school - isn't it a bit, well, old fashioned, you know, middle aged women being nymphs...?"

Not my exact words, I admit, but my ignorance was palpable.

I went to the Feast of Laban workshop in Chiswick, a celebration of fifty years of the Guild. And it was wonderful. WONDERFUL! My preconceived ideas were ignorant and wrong. I had a fabulous day; hard work, but such fun! We didn't just dance, we sang, we clowned, we mimed, above all, we released some inhibitions. I was able to express myself in a way that I haven't felt able since I was at Drama School. At the end of the day we even dared show some of the day's work to visiting VIPs, including the legendary Joan Littlewood and the great period dance choreographer, Geraldine Stephenson (who had in fact taught me at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, thirty years ago!)

After this extraordinarily powerful day, I immediately enrolled myself for the next Laban event. This happened to be in Swindon, and turned out to be an even more enlightening day. Not that the geographical setting had anything to do with it, on the contrary, one look at that ridiculous maelstrom of roundabouts and my car practically shied and headed back home. We persevered, however, and once again I found myself in the presence of two exceptionally gifted teachers, Anna Carlisle and Jan Nichol, who led us through a rigorous day of self expression through the incredible medium of dance. This time I began to understand a little of the origins of Laban Dance, the motivation and meaning behind it, and this resonated with me in a most profound way.

So much so, that by the time a third workshop appeared on the horizon, I was raring to go. This time the venue was the Holborn Arts Centre in London, and the day run by the remarkable Anna Sanchez Colberg. Here was a woman with so much energy and dynamism, and such an amazing talent for teaching, that you felt honoured to be in her presence. In the vast studio on the top floor, I learnt about Dynamics of the Body: "We must not think of them as steps", Anna told us, in her delicious accent, "the body naturally wants to move." And we follow that movement. Up, down, side, side, front, back. Diagonal. A star. A three dimensional star, a tetrahedron. No wonder I was feeling a link with something powerful, this symbol is probably the most important shape in the history of man, a fundamental pattern that links our physical self to our higher self.

Soon after, I had the privilege of going to see Matthew Bourne's moving, funny, evocative and provocative "Swan Lake". I don't think there has been a show where power and strength mingled with such gentleness and beauty. And where did Bourne get his inspiration? Why, the Laban School of course. In fact this stunning production seemed to be based entirely on the space harmony and choreutic theme of Rudolf Laban.

So, thank you for re-introducing me to a dance form not so much "old-fashioned" as the dance form of the Millennium, the dance form of a new age, certainly the dance form of the future.

*Sue Brittain*

## NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR PHYSICAL RECREATION

### Liverpool John Moores University

A project has been set up whereby teachers from the organisations in the Movement & Dance division of the CCPR meet students on the Community Dance Degree course to inform them of their contributions to local communities.

### Health Dance 97

This is the first national conference on dance and health. It is being held at Huddersfield University on 14-15th July. Rebecca Clear, the National Promotions Officer for Movement and Dance, will be giving a paper and distributing information about our work.

### Blitz 97

This popular festival will be at the Royal Festival Hall for a week in August. It will be a day targeted at the older person. Jeannie Shiers will be leading a workshop for 50 - 70 year olds, and her dance group will be performing. It will be a very entertaining day with the opportunity to try many different types of dance in the workshops. Come and join in or watch as you prefer. Entrance is free.

### Danstyle 97, Blackpool

Trying to organise our contribution to an event in Blackpool poses some difficulties. However, we are pleased to be going north for a change and hope members in the area will be able to help. The exhibition is advertised as being the biggest even in the north and promises workshops, lectures, demonstrations, exhibits, showcases, fashion shows and makeup seminars from all over the world. It will be held at the Norbrek Castle Hotel and Conference Centre on 30-31st August, which is the weekend the famous Blackpool lights are switched on.

I personally hope to meet northern members who think London is too far away. If you can offer any help, ring me on 01737 842834.

*Bronwen Mills* Continued on page 7

# MEMBERS

**THE GOOD NEWS!** As more and more people is steadily spreading, both geographically and magazine.

We are planning to start a new Stage 1 Community and names are already coming in. Anyone interested...

There is also the possibility of running a Stage 2 starting in the Autumn. Anyone with Stage 1 or a this course and should also write to me for details.

This is the time of year when those running sur their minds at rest! If you intend to go to one of your application form in as soon as possible. D

Another chance to get moving and get involved this, write to The Dance Week Office, 15 Rossly

The AGM was a great success - it was only a pit report and a list of your new Council is included David, and to Janet, Pam and Christine for all th our new Chairman, Gordon, to Jasmine, Liz and

**THE BAD NEWS!** Yes, as we've been warni '98 and will be going up to £20.00 or £10.00 for th as we've held them down as long as possible, c

**THE GOOD NEWS!** We are determined to ma The magazine is getting bigger and better, our o and workshops and we are planning to increa already offer a reduction in your PPL licence. Fu the next issue of the magazine, but if anyone n

**THERE ARE STILL SOME SUBSCRIPTIONS O OF THE MAGAZINE SENT WITHOUT PAYMEI**

*Ann Ward*

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## From the

In the Annual Report distributed to members in th had not at that time been audited. If you would contact the Treasurer, Barrie Hudson, 10 Kield

Your New Council is:

Chairman ..... Gordon Curl  
Vice Chair ..... Su Johnston  
Secretary ..... Lorraine de Oliveira

Bronwen Mills (CCPR), Heidi Wilson (courses), (Annual Conference), Maddy Tongue (Annual



# SHIP NEWS

et involved in Dance, the influence of the Guild  
into new areas of interest, as is evident in the

y Dance Teachers Course in Cork in the Autumn,  
sted should contact me for further details.

course in the Central/Southern part of England,  
strong Laban background is eligible to apply for  
s.

mer courses start biting their nails - please set  
e courses advertised in the magazine, do send  
ails can be found in the Diary.

National Dance Week. If you haven't heard of  
n Road, Billericay, Essex CM12 9JN for details.

that more members were not able to attend. A  
l in the magazine. Many thanks especially to  
eir hard work while on Council, and welcome to  
Maddy.

g you, subscriptions will have to rise in January  
se claiming a reduction. This seems a big jump  
awing on reserves which are not inexhaustible.

e your membership worth every penny of this.  
mmittees are working to bring you more courses  
e the range of services we can offer. We can  
details and application forms will be included in  
eds to renew before then, please let me know.

TSTANDING. THIS WILL BE THE LAST ISSUE  
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## Treasurer

January magazine, the report from the Treasurer  
ke a copy of the report now it has been, please  
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Treasurer ..... Barrie Hudson  
Editor ..... Lydia Everitt  
Membership Sec ..... Ann Ward

I Hibbs (exhibition), Jasmine Pasch, Liz Norman  
nference).

# REVIEWS



## THE 50th ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATION

Rudolf Laban and the Development of  
1. Dance Movement Therapy.  
11 The Observation of Human Movement.

It is a delight to browse through this publication, brought out specially for the 50th anniversary of the Laban Guild. I say browse because it has so many nooks and crannies it is possible to pick it up, read a piece of interest and put it down again. The work for it comes from Walli Meier who pulled together the Movement Therapy section and Su Johnston who pulled together the Observation section and collated the whole book. And what a huge job this has been.

Each section sets out with an Introduction and ends with a useful Bibliography. The fascinating pictures look both at the past and the future of Laban's work in these areas. Each section describes the work done by those leading the field in their day and so gives the reader a feeling of following-on. By starting at the beginning you can read how one person was the guide for the next. Equally, by dipping in and out, you can read who was the student of who and so on. Bearing in mind that Laban's work was bound to split and multiply as his students went their several ways it is a fascinating

journey to see how it did.

Walli and Su have written about those who blazed the trails, or they have edited contributions from them. In the Therapy field these include the likes of Betty Meredith Jones and Audrey Wethered as the early guides, to Chia Swee Hong and Jasmine Pasch whose recent work you may have read about in this magazine. The field of Observation includes Warren Lamb, Jean Newlove and others still very active today. The only disappointment of this publication is the fact that other areas of Laban's work - education, community etc. - are not included. But as these are not the areas of Walli and Su's expertise it would not be fair to have expected the coverage.

Maggie Semple succinctly expresses in her foreword the *raison d'être* for the book. With it "we gain a deeper understanding of his (Laban's) vision, appreciate the variety of interpretations of his theories, and are challenged to reflect on how we too have developed his work".

For your copy of the booklet contact Su Johnston on 01737 843108. At £10 per copy + postage, it's a snip at the price.

*Lydia Everitt*

*Continued from page 6*

## THE LABAN GUILD ANNUAL CONFERENCE Saturday 15 March 1997, at the Laban Centre, London.

Framing. 4D. Life forms. Interactive Dance. It made some of us wince; it made some of us video-makers. It took us to the boundaries of what we thought of as dance. I think Laban would have approved.

The day began, normally enough, with coffee and biscuits. I was sitting on my own - Jean Newlove, my 70-something year old teacher couldn't make it this year. Another 70-something year old teacher joined me - Ann Hutchinson Guest. At the next table were a young woman and a boy, Janet Lunn and son. Three generations of us, or is it four? Off to explore video dance in studio 10 with Susan Kozel.

A great warm up, we were all floating (not in the Effort sense). Then the video cameras came out and the lights came on. We framed, filmed, watched. Video artists for an hour, we looked at dance in a whole new way. We shot hips, shoulders, mouths, hands, hair, belly buttons. We threw shadows and light onto the familiar, making it new and fresh.

Latecomers joined us for carrot and coconut

cake before heading off to the lecture theatre with Sarah Rubidge. She introduced us to digital dance and choreography on the Internet. We watched twirling figures which appear on the screen at the click of a mouse and computer generated "life forms" dancing with humans. We heard about 4D and interactive dance, about a magic floor with sensors.

Dissenting voices were heard from the audience "Where is the soul of dance in all this? What about the simplicity, the purity of the dancer on the stage? It's lost." Sarah Rubidge was dismayed. No, dance is not lost. It's enriched, transformed, given new dimensions. Technology has so much to give dance. We shouldn't ignore it, we should embrace it. Once the tape player was a new technological invention. Some people feared it might destroy live music. Of course it didn't. Now we have new inventions and young people can relate to them. It's a great way to introduce dance to a generation raised on computers. And it's thrilling, the possibilities are endless. She danced as she spoke.

The AGM to finish. Facts and figures. New appointments. Farewell to David Henshaw. Flowers and thank yous. The last words went to Walli Meier. "Don't ever underestimate the Laban Guild."

*Jenny Frankel*





Su Johnston's View

## "WE ARE MADE OF STARDUST"

Chemically, this is nothing but the truth. The same carbon which is a product of decaying stars, and can be seen in mysterious bands of the light spectrum, is the stuff of which you and I are composed. So is every animal and plant. So is the soil, coal, oil.

And what, pray, has this to do with Rudolf Laban? I believe it has to do with the deep power of intuition. There are some universal truths which, once brought to our awareness, are the nursery seed-bed of many different if related plant-species in the garden of ideas. Laban's movement analysis, based on the dimensions in space, is one such seed-bed - as if you needed me to tell you that! But it is the nature of intuition to be right, *before* there is any way to prove truth of the matter.

Looking at the BBC "Horizon" programme on the discovery of a new carbon molecule, and the excitement of those developing the consequent new materials and superconductors and fuels - I was struck by the crystal forms mentioned. Laban too had worked with the Greek philosophers' concepts of 'perfect' symmetrical shapes as being the "cages" which held the four elements: the pyramid (Fire), the octahedron (Air), the cube (Earth), and the icosahedron (Water). The last three forms we know through the Dimensional Scale, the Effort Cube, and the Spatial Scales; cages or grids (as Valerie Preston-Dunlop names them in "Point of Departure").

The story of discovering the new carbon is a story of pilgrims, all on their way to a visionary goal, and yet not until they become aware of what fellow-pilgrims' individual sphere of knowledge is, do they all reach that goal. The mathematicians, physicists, chemists, biologists and architects, needed to communicate and relate their particular knowledge together, to succeed. Only the dancers were omitted from this pilgrimage!

We could have told them that an icosahedron with its points cut off makes a form exactly like a Soccer ball (hexagons connected around pentagons to form a sphere). We could have told them that within this form, the form of the new carbon, you can trace spiral pathways, both left-handed and right-handed. We could have named the spherical form, not "Buckmaster-Fullerine" - we would have named it "Labanite"!

It is weird to look at the Soccer-ball model of the new carbon, and realise that the pentagons are placed within the hexagons exactly where the corners of the Planes would be in the Laban system. Only twelve pentagons are needed among the hexagons so that it becomes a globe. The very substance of our life and environment on this planet, in a minute spherical form which enabled it to survive in space the emissions from stars mightier than our own sun, is also at the heart of the conception of a genius, Laban. Is this strange, or is it inevitable?

Whenever we look at how the smallest particles of our world behave, we can see a reflection of social behaviour, how we behave to each other: like is attracted to like; groups gather to attack; two combine and produce another entity; behaviour changes depending on the observer.

Anyway, I challenge you to find more of truth, *through movement*, from this new model, cage or grid. Make your dance (as the Nobel Prize winner said of the form he discovered) "so beautiful, it just had to be right"; and call it "We are made of Stardust".

Su Johnston

# SPACE DANCE

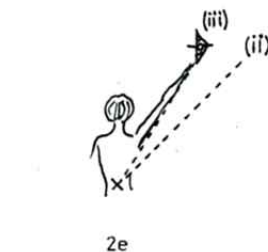
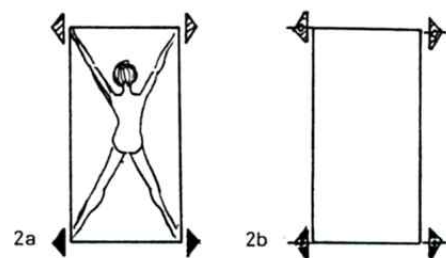
## TWELVE CHOREUTIC DANCE STUDIES

It is good to see the publication of **Space Dance**, the Twelve Choreutic Dance Studies by Lisa Ullmann; we need more of such publications to make important material available. Much work went into the preparation of this book, particularly in providing remarks after each study, commenting on the content and interpretation; these are very helpful.

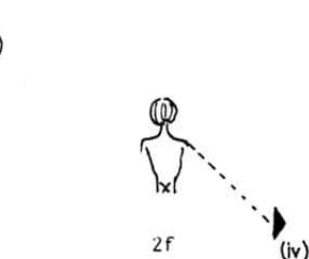
This is not a review of the book itself, I did spot errors but I will leave comments on those to others; what is important to me is Claude Perrotet's inclusion of an explanation about the indications for the icosahedral directions. The point commonly called 1 in the A Scale is usually represented by Space Harmony teachers as a sideward high sign, Ex. 1a. In fact the true direction is 1b, a 1/3 displacement upward (to arrive at that corner of the 'door plane'). The direction indicated by 1c, the right forward middle (horizontal) diagonal on the 'table plane', should really be written as 1d, the point being 1/3 more toward the side. The same is true of the sagittal points which are closer to the horizontal than the standard direction symbols indicate 1e being more correctly written as 1f.



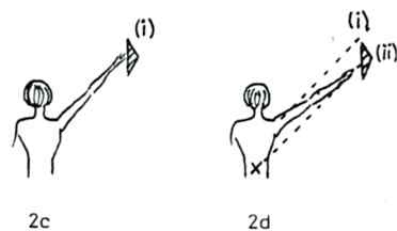
Ex. 2a shows how the standard direction symbols are used for the four points on the 'door plane' by those teaching Laban's Space Harmony. Ex. 2b shows the 'door plane' with its corners correctly written in Labanotation with the appropriate intermediate direction symbols. In his spatial investigation Laban took direction from the centre



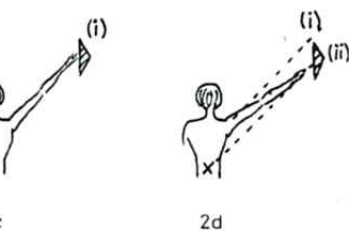
2c



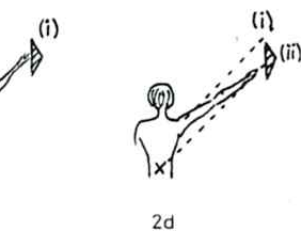
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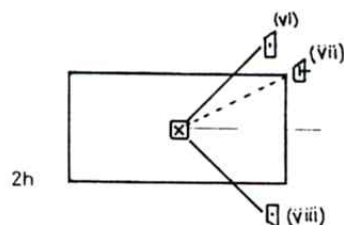
2e



2f



2g



2h



2i

of the body, designated as the waist. This analysis does not work satisfactorily for the icosahedral directions. In Ex. 2c, (i) shows the standard Labanotation side high line, the direction being in relation to the shoulder joint, from where this direction is normally judged. If the arm moves to a point on the parallel side high line emanating from the waist, (ii) in 2d, **the ending point is lower** than the standard side high direction. If the direction from the waist is shown as 1/3 closer to place high, (iii) in 2e, we still do not get the correct directional point for the 'ICO (icosehedron) point 1' (the end point for swing 1); the arm extremity ends just about at its normal side high point. This point is not high enough to represent that corner of the 'door plane'. However, for the side low direction, (iv) in 2f, the point that is side low from the, (v) in 2g, waist **does** produce approximately the no. 3 ICO point when the arm lowers to that point, 2g.

It will be found that for each pair of points for the sagittal and lateral planes, one 'waistline' point works out to be approximately correct and one does not. For the horizontal 'table' plane it does not work out at all. In 2h, (vi) shows the true right front diagonal direction emanating from the centre. For the ICO point it should be as in (vii), 1/3 toward side middle. For the right arm moving to this point it should be described as in 2i, 1/3 higher than the low diagonal and 1/3 more to the side.

It would seem that the concept of directions emanating from the waist, the midpoint in the body is, in this context, an *idea*, an *awareness* which is a central part of Laban's Space Harmony; it is not a mathematical reality. But, although Laban based the Space Harmony forms on the



# SPACE DANCE

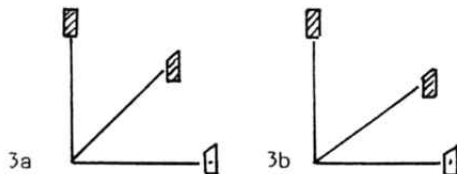
## TWELVE CHOREUTIC DANCE STUDIES



mathematical forms, in actual movement within the icosahedron the moving body, torso and limbs, rises, lowers, twists, flexes, and stretches. The ICO points are an outside reference which uses a Standard Stance system of directional reference. The points in space remain static (either in the imagination or when working within a large ICO model), thus these points are not physically related, no Body Key is involved. The ICO is established in space with a fixed orientation.

This does not diminish the worth of Laban's spatial theories in their application to movement; they have vastly enriched our dance experience. They are a special study which can be immensely rewarding and revealing. My concern here is the fact that I meet people who have studied Space Harmony and have also been introduced to the standard direction symbols but have not studied Labanotation itself. They have taken on board the understanding that the cube, the icosahedron, etc. are the spatial models on which Labanotation is based. This is not true. Directions in Labanotation are based on anatomical facts. All movements of the parts of the human body are circular by nature. Directions are judged from the joint in which the movement takes place - for the arm it is the shoulder, for the leg it is the hip, for the lower leg the knee and so on. The planes around the body are circular, not oblong, as Laban has established. By using the same direction symbols for the Space Harmony icosahedron as are used in Labanotation but giving them a subtle difference in directional interpretation, and - most important - by not explaining the difference, teachers are confusing students who are exposed to both Labanotation and Space Harmony. What do the signs mean? Why is there a difference?

At one of our International Council of Kinetography Laban (ICKL) conferences, one of our colleagues brought along a wire sphere within which the various directional points were linked with coloured wool, producing a cube within the sphere. This model was put forward as illustrating the spatial model we use in Kinetography/Labanotation. This was not the model because in Labanotation/Kinetography the distance between the diagonal middle and diagonal high points are the same as the distance between diagonal high and place high, each 45° apart, Ex. 3a. In the model presented to use the diagonal high point was placed closer to diagonal middle, as illustrated in Ex. 3b.



Directional analysis in Labanotation is exactly the same as in the Eshkol-Wachmann system which is world-renowned for its mathematical accuracy. There is, however, an important difference between how the two systems are taught and the nature of the signs used to record the facts. E-W stresses the mathematical basis, the division of the planes into degrees, 22 1/2, 45, 90, etc. The directional points are indicated by numbers on two coordinates. In Labanotation the teaching approach uses more everyday language, 'side low, side horizontal (middle), forward high (slanting upward)' and so on. The Labanotation symbols are also visually pictorial, thus there is no need for mathematical analysis.

I hope that Claude Perrottet's book and his explanations about these matters, although they only go part of the way, will help people understand the special nature of Laban's spatial theories and the special usage of the standard direction signs commonly used in teaching it. ■

*Ann Hutchinson Guest*

## THE SKY DANCERS

This poem or piece of creative writing would never have been written if I had not been first and foremost a dancer. I see everything through a dancer's awareness. I also live my life very close to nature. Having said that, when I put pen to paper to catch this dreaming, I was lying on a tiny patch of grass in the middle of Glasgow.

But I have been watching the sky since I was a child, day and night, summer and winter. It has always filled my dream space with its colourful characters and mysterious

stories. I also spent most of the last year living wild on the west coast of Scotland and Ireland. I was constantly wrapped in a myriad of sky and cloud robes. They taught me their dances and my life burst with creative living.

Poetry is a magical use of language and Dance goes beyond words. What a powerful combination they make. Those people who worked with me on the last years' Laban Guild Summer School will remember that the poetry and the wild living filled our Dances together. I felt so deeply fulfilled. And this is what I saw.

*The Sky Dancers are out.  
They fill the sky with magic.  
Solos, duets, trios  
The chorus and the whole company.  
First come the lions  
They bound across the sky  
They the bearded giants file by.  
A great fish arches  
Towards the vast horizon  
And the seven veils part  
To let the stilt men through.  
Then come the empty people  
All skulls and bones  
They call to the void  
Where the flying fish  
Disappear amongst the sky islands.  
Next the scarlet warriors  
Who see the sun let down  
Into the glowing embers of the dusk.  
And the wild geese  
Pass over the moon.  
Dawn brings the fire dancers  
To raise the sleepers  
From their trance dances  
Their misty veils rise  
To the morning light.*

But more of this in my forthcoming book 'Dances of the Soul'.  
Easter 1997

*Hilary Matthews*

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## RUMINIATIONS on SHAKESPEARE and LABAN

*Continued from page 1*

serious scene 1 and the comic scene 3. Working with Shakespeare means there is music in the words and the way they are put together which guides the movers spatially into high and deep areas, to be on the spot or travelling around. The body is used realistically in scene 1, fantastically in the creation of fairies, and stylistically in the comic scene 3. There is excitement in the fusion of the body movement with appropriate accompaniment and use of the voice.

*Each speech can stimulate movement motifs which could be developed into solo dance pieces - for another occasion.*

As an actress, understanding the language of movement has been invaluable. In studying Mistress Quickly I must transform my body into hers, find her walk, her gestures, her mannerisms which come from what the words inspire. In playing on the stage I am in social, emotional and spatial relationships with others which means being aware and responsive so that each performance is a live and unique experience. The Witch in 'Macbeth' offered me tremendous scope for bringing together quality, shape and form - each witch is different and yet they are together - they are in a dance form of filling the stage and other times fusing together. If one rushes and leaps onto the rostrum, another can crawl slothlike across the space, the third can twirl and turn or perhaps predominantly move in a backward direction. Body shapes can create animals, whirlwinds, blasted trees and voices can shrill and scream and chill the spine. Each speech can stimulate movement motifs which could be developed into solo dance pieces - for another occasion.

Another Shakespearian challenge for me was Chorus in Henry V. Here the stage was mine and the task was to allow the imagery of the speeches to work in the minds of the audience helped along by the movement I devised but not to distract or draw them only into watching me:

The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll,  
And the third hour of drowsy morning name.  
Proud of their numbers and secure in soul,  
The confident and over-lusty French

Do the low-rated English play at dice,  
And chide the cripple tardy-gaited night  
Who like a foul and ugly witch doth limp  
So tediously away."

The thrill is the exploration of all the different ways in which these words can be said, accompanied by a dramatic motif, a gesture, a facial expression, a change of posture. Where and how can these be shown? Suddenly I know what to do and how to say it but each night new possibilities will present themselves and the performance lives and grows.

Mitch Mitchelson and I also worked on 'The Tempest' at L.in.C. with the aid of a huge piece of blue material and a magical two sided cloak. Once again there was a natural balance between the serious and the comic, the force of nature as shown by the enactment of the tempest and the power of magic symbolized by creation of the ship of peace and love at the end. The tempest scene had been fashioned in a Laban Studies session where the working actions on board ship provided an exploration of incomplete effort actions and the skill of motif development allowed us to depict the storm and wrecking. The form of this scene was a great contrast to the final scene, where the many coloured cloak became a sail and the gentle pathway between forward high and backward deep allowed Mitch's favourite lines to be declaimed:

O wonder!  
..... How beauteous mankind is! O brave  
new world  
That has such people in't.

We had earthy and grotesque Caliban and flying, mystical Ariel who had always wanted to play this part. A rascally chorus of vagabonds transformed to fit differing situations - by vocal interaction creating the enchanted isle, using imagination to devise a lewd Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban drinking scene and challenging themselves to find appropriate ways of moving to create a magic, phantom banquet. We were fortunate to have Chris Tero, our live musician, with his vast array of sound and group members with voices like angels who improvised the songs in the plays:

"Full fathom five thy father lies  
Of his bones are coral made.....

We were fortunate in that we were working with a group of women and men who had been studying Laban's Fundamentals for nearly a week and thereby could draw upon a wide vocabulary of movement.

Once again, the dance-drama was a fusion of words, movement and music, telling our magical story - in no more than 5 - well perhaps 6 minutes! ■

*Susi Thornton*

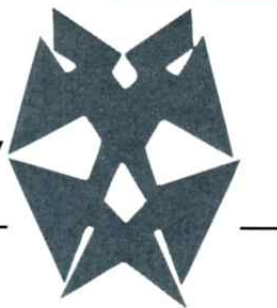
### THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER



*We carry with us the wonders we seek without us.....  
Sir Thomas Browne*



# PARKINSON'S DISEASE MOVEMENT THERAPY - WORK AND LABAN'S MOVEMENT ANALYSIS -



*In January's magazine we were able to read the first part of Jill's article on her work with Parkinson's Disease patients. This concludes her piece. Ed.*

## **The Shape of the Body and how it is observed and the Relationship to the Environment**

In Parkinson's Disease patients, parts of the body may be operating differently so that one part may open out and another close up. This can be seen when the torso closes and the legs are not crossed. A tremor may occur in one part of the body. The author has observed that there is an absence of leg crossing and a decrease in postural change.

It is important for the therapist to notice the use of reach space, because it shows the patient's relationship to the environment and how far they extend themselves.

The relationship between the individual and the environment is seen in the way the body shape adapts to accommodate objects. The body adapts and changes shape. To do this, the body has to be anatomically fit. The full use of the muscles results in the fullest mastery of movement. Parkinson's Disease patients do not have full range of muscle-use and so their mastery of movement in the use of objects is affected. This can affect confidence. The torso is rigid and does not adjust to the environment. This can lead to a lack of adjustment and adaptation to the environment which causes apathy and lack of motivation. Kestenberg has found that there are times when a particular way of coping with oneself is related to the way a person deals with the environment. (Kestenberg, 1967)

### **Orientation in Space**

The function of the joints is important - contraction, extension and rotation. It is important to note how the patient uses the body, in particular

- a) upper and lower part
- b) right or left side
- c) relationship to the floor and gravity
- d) symmetrical or asymmetrical body use
- e) how the limb is used

The movement of the whole body and its parts are analysed not only from its structure but also how structures and spatial awareness interrelate.

Proper initiation and sequencing is essential to the Parkinson's Disease patient. There

is a need for a self-conscious clarity involving the entire body. Even in severe patients, if sensitively handled, repeated work on initiation and sequencing can bring some change in movement phrasing. This is not an emphasis on repeated exercises but the relationship between body parts and articulation.

It is important to keep the movements clear in space, so that the focus and attention are also engaged. Clarity in the movement created directness of purpose in the mover. The patients can rely on the structural and spatial interrelationships to support them.

## *The use of the planes forms an important structure for the therapist, especially in work with posture and balance.*

The structural relationships are analysed in terms of Laban's concepts of space, weight and time. These concepts have proved useful in providing a treatment assessment and plan for Parkinson's Disease patients in therapy work over several years.

In observing some patients the therapist needs to attend to the patient's orientation. Parkinson's Disease patients can often bump into objects because they are unable to be directionally orientated. It is important to know in which direction the patient is going when moving. It is useful to know in what direction the patient moves relative to place. Patients also suffer from balance difficulties, which are often due to lack of sense of direction in the kinesphere.

The line which coincides with the pull of gravity and the midline is called the vertical direction or axis following direction of up-down. There are two other axes which divide the vertical axis so that there is the horizontal axis going from side to side, and the sagittal axis going backwards and forwards. These definitions clarify the observations made and the structures by which the movement interventions are made.

The skeleton and muscles reflect the use of 'planes' in the body. The three planes; the vertical plane (door plane), the horizontal plane (table plane) and the sagittal plane (wheel plane) can be seen to coincide with the anatomical analysis of the body. The use of the planes forms an important structure for the therapist, especially in work with posture and balance. The axes and planes help the patients and carers form a picture of the body which they can use to assist balance and walking.

The awareness of the body can assist the understanding of change in the body. Images and metaphors can assist in the process. The realisation that the body has the ability to adapt despite a disease enables the possibility of changing patterns of behaviour. (Todd, 1937) This possibility gives the patient and carer some active means of control over the disease.

Psychological and mental balance is related to the body and how it is experienced by the individual. Dance Movement therapy works on the principle of integrating the images and perceptions of body and mind. This active imaginative perception of the body is a creative process involving patient, carer and therapist. The use of metaphor and imagery in describing movement helps to create a new awareness of feelings. The creation of a new body image comes from an integration of sensation from outside to the internal world of feelings and experience.

Todd, in her 'Thinking body' (1937), states that bodily attitudes affect thinking and feeling. "Imagination itself, or the inner image, is a form of physical expression and the motor response is the reflection of it."

Winnicott traced the relationship between the inner and outer experience to the "integrating tendencies". (1953) The inner and outer worlds can come together and relate to one another in dance and movement. Dance Movement Therapy provides the means of integrating outer and inner experience through movement.

The benefits of Dance Movement Therapy are increased body and emotional awareness for patient and carer. As a result of an improved body image, there is a sense of physical and emotional wellbeing. (McKibben & Westbrook, 1989)

*Continued on page 12*

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## PARKINSON'S DISEASE MOVEMENT THERAPY WORK AND LABAN'S MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

*Continued from page 11*

Dance Movement Therapy uses the patient's and carer's movements and postures as a way of feeling what the movements might symbolise. This is done by using the therapist's body as a means of reflecting these movements. Mirroring is important for it reflects back to the individual what they are bringing to the session. In the therapeutic process Marion Chace's ideas (Chaiklin, 1975) are used where each person, including the therapist, takes a turn in moving and taking the lead; the rest of the group follows or mirrors.

Each person in the group has experience of everybody else's movements. The stored experience enables the therapist to feel and experience the interactions of the group. It also facilitates communication as there is a continuous non-verbal direct communication between the group and the leader. There will develop a strong and dynamic relationship between the leader and the therapist and the group. (Chaiklin, 1975) The author considers that the patient is able to express the relationship to the body through metaphor which can reflect mental and physical states. In Parkinson's Disease the patient's malfunctioning body affects the emotional states of the patient and carer. The therapist provides understanding through the body in the movement process and develops insight into the verbal process through metaphor.

"Allow the sensations their own time and expression - yawning, willing, resting - waiting for a space between the thoughts, an unlocking of the parts of the body - a gap into which something new can emerge." (Crickmay and Tufnell, 1990)

The importance of the body as metaphor is in the possibility of transformation and change. A change in the body and increased mobility is the hope expressed in the therapeutic process. It has been observed that movements will change according to the level of emotional integration. The use of 'Efforts' and Body Shape will reflect this.

A more extended use of movement can elicit a metaphor from the group. e.g., "life is like a river which flows; it starts as a little trickle and then joins with other springs going this

way and that" (Patient J. Young Onset, April 1995). At the same time, she moves her hands from one direction to another. The use of imagery is explored by the therapist and further questions develop the image.

The imagery can often reveal themes such as separation, fear about illness, impotence and loss of libido, losing control and confidence. In movement the theme may be expressed in repeated movements; a need for controlled movements or a need to express power of a lack of it.

### *The use of metaphor and imagery in describing movement helps to create a new awareness of feelings.*

The group offers hope when Parkinson's Disease patients and carers appear to grow in confidence and extend their movement patterns and functional activities. Family movement patterns can be experienced and reintegrated so that more functional ways of adapting to the disease are made. Members of the groups, carers or patients, can develop communication and socialisation which enable them to have more satisfying relationships, despite such a debilitating disease. Depressive patterns can also be assisted because feelings are expressed. The group can release emotions which remain buried.

The feelings of the therapist are important as they assist the therapist in understanding and observing unconscious process in the group. These feelings are experienced in Dance Movement Therapy in particular as the therapist shares in the movement and mirrors the patients' experience. The metaphors which emerge from the verbal process or in associations made in the movement process access unconscious feelings and assist the therapist in observing the group process.

To conclude, the benefits focus on the increase in bodily awareness which can give confidence and a greater mastery and range of movement. This promotes a change in body image which is poor in Parkinson's Disease because of the physical symptoms described and the embarrassing situations which can arise from physical disability.

Communication difficulties which can lead to relationship difficulties can be addressed. As a result emotional problems which hinder physical ability can be addressed through the creative medium of dance and movement.

Non-verbal communication can be observed and analysed to improve a sense of physical and emotional wellbeing for patient and carer. Emotional stress can be alleviated which in turn can lead to an improvement in movement skills. Increased body awareness can lead to new ways in coping with the disease improving confidence and satisfactory relationships.

Moving together in a group situation encourages self awareness in body and feelings and support is gained from others in the group. By becoming a member of a group, patient or carer is given confidence to re-build a positive body image. The working through of dysfunctional patterns of behaviour can aid coping mechanisms and promote confidence.

In finding the ability to move with others the Parkinson's Disease patient is able to integrate body, mind and feelings. In a safe environment carers and patients can relieve feelings and re-establish positive ways of interacting. In the verbal process, the memory is aided as movement experience is relived and remembered. The group becomes a secure and safe place for feelings of fear and anxiety. Feelings of loss can be assimilated as past losses and separations can lead to an integrated sense of self for both patient and carer. (Mahler, 1975)

Patients and carers are able to extend new movement patterns and strategies and can re-live past experience which because of the disease they have not experienced for a long time. Dance Movement Therapy becomes a facilitator and integrator of past and present experience; inner and outer experience.

The role of Laban's analysis is vital, providing patient, carer and therapist with a structure for understanding and developing this therapeutic process. ■

*Jill Bunce*