

Laban Guild...

FIRE

Anne Ward

It was Mid-summer Night and I was sitting on a rocky hillock on the far northwestern coast of Ireland, overlooking a shadowy patchwork of sand and sea, headlands and islands. Although it was scarcely midnight, the sky was still lit by an apple green glow and the only sounds were those of the sea on the beach below. As I watched, tiny pin pricks of light appeared

'It is awesome, frightening, comforting, nurturing, essential'

on the highest points; some way out on the islands, others near enough to be recognised as the bonfires continuing a tradition dating back thousands of years. As I sat in this magical place at this magical time, I too felt part of this timeless mystery.

No wonder that Fire has always been both feared and revered and regarded as one of the four elements, along with Earth, Water and Air but what is it? We stand on the earth, breathe the air, are mainly composed of water, but fire? It's not a 'thing' at all, but a transient phenomenon resulting from a chemical reaction.

Fire may be caused by the heat of the sun or the violence of the electric storm, the carefully controlled process or the carelessly dropped match. It can nurture or destroy.

Did primitive man feel like a god himself when he first managed to tame such forces, or did he feel humble in the face of such privilege. One thing would always have been certain - fire can never be completely tamed and always retains the power to be an enemy as well as a friend. No wonder that it plays such an important part in the mysteries and rituals of practically every religion and culture.

The ability to control fire gave early man warmth, light, security and food - as it still does. It keeps us alive in the face of cold. It defeats the darkness and drives back the shadows around our hearts as well as those of the night. It

protects us against our enemies, whether animal or human and it still cooks much of our food, in spite of the invention of the microwave oven. Our modern methods may be cleaner, quicker and make our frenetic lives possible, but popping a slice of bread in the toaster can't provide the lifelong memories of coming home from school in the cold and then toasting both myself and the bread for tea, on a toasting fork, while watching the pictures in the glowing coals of the fire, or the fun of roasting chestnuts on the front of the grate on winter nights.

But to try to tame fire completely denies its other essential powers of purification and regeneration. Yes, fire can destroy - but this is an essential part of its nature, we can't change it into something else.

When the National Parks in the States were first established, it was thought that they would prosper much better if the apparently devastating forest fires could be controlled or even prevented. Conservationists then couldn't understand why many parts of the forests, particularly the giant redwoods, didn't seem to flourish at all - in fact there was no growth of new trees. It is only relatively recently that it has been discovered that fire is essential for the release and generation of the seeds, and also for the beneficial clearing of the forest floor.

However terrifying the force of raging fires, these powers

continued on page 2 ..



Sunrise, County Antrim

movement and dance quarterly magazine

Volume 18

No 2

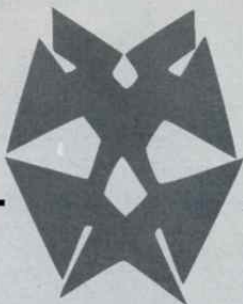
Summer
1999

Reg. Charity No. 266435

INSIDE

Laban Guild Annual Conference
Silent Dances
Dancing with the Wind
Two of Laban's International Shoots

page 03
page 06
page 10
page 14



EDITORIAL

First I must apologise to Alan Salter whose name we printed as Alan Slater in his article on Observation, Notation and Analysis. I'm sorry, Alan. Incorrectly spelling someone's name is the easiest but most unforgivable error.

After many, many years of being part of the Guild Council in one guise or another, Su Johnston has stepped off the Council platform. Thank you Su, we really appreciate all your years of work. But, Su hasn't stopped the work completely. For those of you wondering who's going to continue to wave the 'local groups' flag and the 'funding' flag, Su will continue her interest in both of those schemes. Su will also continue to give us her thoughts of the moment on page 12 of the magazine. Lorraine de Oliveira, our Council Secretary has also moved on. Thank you too, Lorraine.

And whilst on the subject of moving on, a career move has meant we no longer have the support of Nat West Insurance Services. For several years they had freely given us photocopying services and a route for distributing the magazine and we must thank the company for all that support that saved us money, time and aggravation.

Back to the magazine itself- it is lovely in this edition to read so many pieces about the work that the Guild is doing. We appreciate everything that is going on around us, but to be able to offer five reports about Guild events is delightful (see pages 3,4,5 and 9).

Lydia Everitt

COPY DATES

Material should be sent to:

LYDIA EVERITT,
3 LAYTON LANE,
SHAFTESBURY,
DORSET SP7 8EY

TELEPHONE: 01747 854634

EMAIL: Lydia.Everitt@btinternet.com

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 1999

LETTERS

I read with interest the recent articles by Geraldine Stephenson. She was my dance teacher at the Guildhall School of Music in 1964. I later worked in her company as part of that ball scene in *Vanity Fair* and several other TV productions. She helped me enormously in my early dance career while I was studying at Sigurd Leeder School. My first and lasting contact with Laban dance was with Helen Lewis in 1956 but that is another story! I would like you to pass on my gratitude to Geraldine and even though I don't expect her to remember me (known as Erna Kennedy) reassure her I am still earning my living as a dance teacher and choreographer here in the NE. I work a lot in health care and many aspects of the therapeutic use of dance. I have a learning disabled company called Shadow Dance who are based at our local theatre Alnwick Playhouse, they perform regionally and last year in France.

Do please pass on my fond regards and gratitude to Geraldine for her role model over the years.

Erna Virginia Scott

LABAN FOR DANCERS AND ACTORS

In 1992, I joined the Laban Guild and participated in the first Stage I community dance leader's course held in Belfast. This course was not only self-satisfying but enhanced my teaching of creative dance in school so much that I needed no encouragement to sign up for Stage II a few years later. As part of that course I chose to study Laban in theatre and came across, for the first time, Jean Newlove's book, 'Laban for Actors and Dancers'.

This highly practical and user-friendly book not only provided a practical introduction to Laban's system of movement for the actor, but also further development for dancers as well. As a teacher of dance and drama I was very excited by the idea of developing my work in this area, so that when I was asked by the Ulster Theatre Company if I would provide movement workshops for their young actors as part of a theatre training course I

jumped at the chance.

It was then that I contacted Jean Newlove for advice and learned that she ran summer school courses. And so, in July 1998, I packed my bags and with funding from the Arts Council set off on yet another journey of discovery.

On the 18 July I found myself in Bedales, a famous school set in its own grounds, deep in the beautiful countryside of Hampshire, perfect surroundings for a residential Laban course for Actors and Dancers. The course is run by Jean Newlove, who was Laban's personal assistant. The group consisted of people from different creative backgrounds all looking for and finding out about Laban's principles of movement and how they could be applied to the work they were doing. For me this was particularly stimulating because it brought together the two disciplines of acting and dancing and provided a whole new dimension to my understanding of Laban's work.

The days were very full with such diversity of workshops on: effort and spatial harmony, dimensional and diagonal scales to name but a few. The movement sessions were challenging and enjoyable and when linked to acting and voice work added a whole new dimension to my use of Laban's movement on stage. There was also the opportunity to work with John Dalby, who not only accompanied our work on the piano but also enhanced Jean's work through voice production, both challenging and fun

The whole course added a richness and new dimension to the knowledge I already had of Laban's movement analysis. This course was very relevant both to my work as a dancer and work with actors on theatre training courses.

It was a great honour to work under someone who had worked so closely with the great man himself. An interesting, challenging, and inspiring course, which I would highly recommend to anyone interested in dance, acting or both. Summer course runs from 31 July - 7 August 1999.

Anne-Marie Poyner

.. continued from page 1

were recognised in the 'primitive' past and symbolised in many rituals. For instance in the Celtic lands, cattle were driven between fires to ensure health and fertility and young couples jumped over the fire for similar reasons. Fire purified and the annual Yule log burned at the end of the year was a symbol of all the sins and disappointments to be shed, so that a fresh start could be made.

The sun appeared to be the most supreme fire, ultimate source of light and heat, so many rituals of fire accompanied the major festivals of the year, and still do. We have bonfires at - or near - Halloween and, particularly in Northern latitudes, fires still celebrate the longest or shortest days.

Fires can be warning beacons or celebrations. Fire can sustain the spark of life or extinguish it. It can raze cities and devastate forests, but also cleanse and purify. Its powers of regeneration are recognised in the myth of the Phoenix rising from the ashes, of fertility in the Sun dances of the Native Americans. It is awesome, frightening, comforting, nurturing, essential.

And it inspires our dreams. Pity those who haven't looked for castles in fire, watched the sparks fly upwards to the stars, lit a candle for a friend, or sat on a cliff top in Donegal on Mid-Summer Night and felt part of an eternal mystery.

Ann Ward

LABAN GUILD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

20 March 1999 - University of Bath



TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It is with great pleasure and sadness that I address you this afternoon. Pleasure because we are celebrating the Guild's achievements but sadness, as this is my last Presidential address.

On April 3 1992 I received a very kind letter from Sheila McGivering. She congratulated me on being elected as President and reminded me that I was following in the steps of Rudolf Laban, Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia

'The Guild has many ideas, a respected history and hundreds of talented members. This combination creates an amazing asset'

Bodmer, Margaret Dunn and Warren Lamb. However, I noted a difference - all of these people had worked with Laban and I had not. Sheila encouraged me to use this difference to help the Guild move into a new phase.

It is inevitable that over time many more of us will be re-interpreting Laban's work and this is why I think the Guild's work is so important. It provides the climate and a range of opportunities for ideas to flourish and for people to be creative.

I believe that ideas come from people's creativity and that nations are built on the ideas of its people. Creativity disguises itself in many forms and there are a number of ways of expressing creativity. For me the most powerful way is through dance. It is through dance that I can explore my hopes, dreams and fears. It is through Laban's work that I am challenged to think afresh and develop a physical and spiritual wealth that continues to keep me happy and content.

If however, nations are built on their ideas then our education systems have much work to do. Too often in education we divide and segment knowledge and expect those who we are teaching to join it all up in their spare time! We need to produce learners who can analyse and synthesise their knowledge, skills and understanding so that society has people in it who are comfortable using a range of different symbol systems such as kinesthetic, verbal, mathematical, visual and auditory. I think the Guild is playing its part here.

The Guild has many ideas, a respected history and hundreds of talented members. This combination creates an amazing asset. The asset has a gifted Chairman, Gordon Curl and a highly able Council. I would like to thank them all for their hard work, support and friendship over the last six years and to

congratulate Maddy and Liz for organising such a successful conference. Geraldine Stephenson will acquire this asset and I know that she will turn it into gold for the new millennium.

Maggie Semple
Presidential Address

THE DAY OF DANCE

We arrived at Bath looking forward to meeting friends, seeing familiar faces and dancing together. We were not disappointed. We were greeted by Gordon Curl and introduced to Caroline Mummery who led the first session, 'Strength in Surrender'. We worked on the floor and explored different ways of lifting body parts away from it. We were then led through a short Flamenco sequence and then into partner work and onto working with another pair to develop a short movement piece showing a range of dynamics. We then had a chance to share our group work with others, which was greatly enjoyed. We then had a relaxing coffee, completely unaware of the frantic activity behind the scenes. The calmness of the organisers belied the fact that Fergus Early (Artistic Director of Green Candle) who was due to lead the next session of dance had mistakenly booked the wrong date and was not present.

In true dance fashion the Day had to go on and at a moment's notice Heidi Wilson from Powys Dance led the session. With clarity and good humour she led us through the Table, Door and Wheel planes and set us the task of developing these into short dance pieces and what fun we had. Remembering back to student days and studying these planes it was lovely now to enjoy and play around with them after twenty years. Again there was a sharing of each group's interpretation of the task and a delight to see so many different lyrical and creative dances.

We had our packed lunch in the grounds sitting by the lakeside watching the ducks. We recalled our experiences of dancing outside on similar rolling lawns. This was when I discovered that my friend Sue, who I had travelled to Bath with, had studied for two years at the studio in Addlestone, Surrey.

The programme for the day was changing by the minute. We moved from the main hall to the Arts Lecture Theatre to see an impromptu presentation by Maggie Semple charting the progress of the Millennium Dome and were fascinated and entertained by her personal anecdotes about the project.

Fergus arrived and talked us through his most recent and acclaimed large-scale dance theatre piece 'On the road to Baghdad'. He spoke about bringing together

professional and non-professional performers from different ethnic communities and their performances at Sadlers Wells Theatre.

During the Laban Guild AGM Maggie was presented with a brooch which formally belonged to Margaret Dunn a former President of the Guild. The new President Geraldine Stephenson was welcomed by everyone.

The day ended with a lovely variety of dance performances. Firstly the Powys group who had earlier received their Community Dance Leaders Certificates, performed a piece on some space work that they had studied during their course. This was followed by four Bath University students, who are enjoying recreative dance classes,

'Completely unaware of the frantic activity behind the scenes'

performing two pieces from their recent dance show with enthusiasm and energy. Lastly DNT Dance Company performed two dance pieces choreographed by Wendy Hermelin. It was an enjoyable, relaxing, refreshing day of dance.

Margaret Grundy

THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER



Derry Youth Dance "Senior Class" receives The Laban Guild Foundation Certificate in Community Dance.

Derry Youth Dance was formed in 1990 and since then we have gone from strength to strength. The youth dance consists of junior class, intermediate class and senior class. I



Derry Youth Dance "Senior Class"

meet the dancers weekly for 1½ hour sessions per class and present a dance performance at the end of 24 weeks.

When I read Ann Ward's article in the Laban Guild Magazine, summer '98 regarding the Foundation Pilot Course, I thought that's for us. So when Youth Dance class resumed in September I offered the course to my "senior class" who were delighted, and we started from there.

We had lots of fun rising, sinking, opening and closing, advancing and retreating. Using Laban Fundamentals of body actions and shapes, space, effort and relationships and incorporating the theme of "Space Aliens" we produced an incredible piece of choreography which was both fun and very effective to watch. Our second piece of dance was much more sedate and tranquil, set on a dance exercise and again, incorporating effort. In both pieces of dance the students worked in pairs and groups and included creating their own motifs. They produced amazing work. Well done girls!!

Both Foundation Certificate pieces were presented as part of "An evening of Contemporary Dance" held in the Rialto Entertainment Centre, Derry. The 1½ hour performance was attended by parents and friends of our youth dance members, also

by City Council members.

We were delighted to have Ann Ward come and spend a full evening with the complete cast, where she presented the "senior class" with their certificates, and gave a very informative talk to all our youth dance members. Thank you Ann.

As it happens most of my "Senior class" are moving on to 3rd level education this September and the certificates were a great boost and recognition to them for all their dance work with me over the past 9 years.

I hope to repeat the process with September's senior class. I would like to say thank you to the Guild for introducing the Foundation Certificate. Perhaps the Guild could introduce junior and intermediate level Certificates -

Food for thought!!!

Carmel Garvey
Youth Dance Tutor

COMMUNITY DANCE LEADERS' COURSE - STAGE 1

At the time Janet Harrison was teaching in a large open-access sixth form college in Hampshire with an expanding adult education service. Her main training was in drama, theatre and English and although she had some previous experience in dance she wanted to be in a position to offer GCSE Dance and to devise and teach non-examined courses to people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities. This course seemed to offer a sound grounding in movement theory yet allowed participants the scope to develop their own creative and choreographic skills.

From November 1996 to September 1998 Powys Dance Centre ran the Laban Community Dance Leaders' Course. The course assumes no previous knowledge or experience although an interest in and commitment to dance and its place within the community is apparent in every participant. The earlier sessions focus on Laban Fundamentals providing a very clear

theoretical framework within which individuals can experiment creatively. I found this of particular value with the increasingly "quality-conscious" and accountable ethos of college. The emphasis of this course is on teaching styles and approaches. Each student learns to identify their preferred style of delivery whilst developing new teaching strategies designed to meet the wide-ranging challenges of any community situation. The mid-course teaching assignment provides an opportunity to realise theory in practice. This was a nerve-racking experience which, on reflection, might have been assessed more effectively (not everyone's experience was positive or constructive) yet without doubt it provided an enormously valuable yardstick against which progress might be measured. The experience of watching individuals creating and participating in original work was highly stimulating and surprisingly un-competitive. By this stage in the course your colleagues are firm friends providing tremendous support and encouragement.

The remainder of the course is devoted to composition and analysis with a wide range of dance styles being explored. Course tutors, in particular Pam Harling-Challis, encouraged debate and were not afraid to be challenged and it was very reassuring to see that later sessions introduced a slightly wider perspective on the field of dance which helped me to put Laban's achievements more sharply into perspective. It was very comforting to find that promoters of Laban

*'Later sessions
introduced a slightly
wider perspective on the
field of dance which
helped me to put Laban's
achievements more
sharply into perspective'*

principles and theories do not dismiss or ignore the theories proposed by others. This enabled me to draw links and comparisons between this course and the main dance workshops run by NRCD and NEAB which I have attended. Incidentally, these courses have served, also, to reinforce the worth and value of Laban's work.

Our Community Dance Summer School in August, specially designed by Powys Dance, offered a variety of activities ranging from African Dance to dance for boys, and a

wonderful array of tutors including Ana Sanchez-Colberg, Douglas Comely and Jasmine Pasch. It was refreshing to work with both group members and newcomers in activities not directly connected with the course. In many ways the week helped to relax us all at a time when we were preparing for the challenges of the final assessment weekend in September which, happily, developed into a celebration of all we had shared together over two long years.

A key feature of this course was the wide-ranging knowledge and experience of its participants which enriched all practical and discussion work. It was wonderful to escape teacher-dominated training groups which tend to become extremely competitive and quite narrow in their approach! To my knowledge I was the only teacher of secondary/tertiary sector on the course and I feel that my experiences and opinions were highly valued by others. The feeling was reciprocal: in discussing client groups and their needs everyone gained an enormously wide perspective on the work covered and recognised the flexibility of application of Laban's theories within education, physiotherapy, special needs and alternative medicine to name but a few. Not everyone attended in relation to their profession or job.

Several participants were there primarily to develop personal strategies and skills of communication and expression, and increasingly this became my most valued achievement too. In professional terms last June marked the successful completion of my first cohort of GCSE Dance students. This course is designed to be completed over two years: at the outset I have two and a half terms to deliver which, due to illness,

'The Laban approach to movement and dance is so accessible and adaptable'

was reduced to two terms. I could not have honoured this commitment had it not been for the support and guidance given by tutors on this course. The Laban approach to movement and dance is so accessible and adaptable I now feel equipped to offer a dance experience to a wide range of people and feel confident that I can satisfy individual needs within almost any group. Since completing the course both the Guild and Powys Dance have continued to offer much valued support and guidance.

There have been the inevitable teething problems related to assessment modes and criteria when preparing course modules for Open College Network accreditation, but the debate over methods of appraisal has been ongoing and has gained clarification through work in progress thus earning the course much deserved national recognition. This flexible mode of accreditation allows for any units awarded to be 'banked' and offered at a later date in part credit towards a higher qualification.

Had Powys Dance Centre not offered this course I do not think that I would have achieved my current levels of confidence and attainment both in personal and professional terms and I am most grateful to the organisers. In particular Heidi Wilson and Lousie Ingham, for making such a success of the venture and for making it available to 'outsiders'. I wish them every success when embarking on Stage 2 in September 1999 and I hope my current employer will prove sufficiently supportive of the arts to permit me to attend!

Janet Harrison

BE A PART OF THE FUTURE OF DANCE

Are you thinking of a future in professional **dance**? Do you want to train in **performance, choreography, dance movement therapy, community dance, costume and lighting for dance, dance teaching**, undertake **research** or become a member of **Transitions Dance Company**?

Join our international dance community for a range of courses at undergraduate or postgraduate levels, including **BA (Hons) Dance Theatre, Diploma Dance Theatre, Graduate Diploma Performance, Graduate Diploma Visual Design for Dance, MA Dance Studies, MA or Postgraduate Diploma Dance Movement Therapy, Professional Diploma Community Dance Studies, MA or Postgraduate Diploma Dance Management and Development, MA Scenography, MPhil and PhD Research Degrees.**

Laban graduates are world leaders in all fields, for example: **Matthew Bourne** (choreographer/director of *Adventures in Motion Pictures*); **Lea Anderson** (choreographer/director of *Cholmondeleys* and *Featherstonehaughs*); **Jamie Watton** (choreographer/performer, *Edwards & Watton*); **Sophie Constanti** (dance critic) and **Jane Mooney** (director of *Suffolk Dance Agency*). Laban graduates have founded and performed in many established dance companies including AMP, CandoCo, Divas, Momix, SCAP and V-Tol.

For a prospectus and/or details of our **International Summer School** and **Easter School** contact:

LABAN CENTRE LONDON Laurie Grove New Cross London SE14 6NH UK

Tel: +44 (0)181 692 4070 Fax: +44 (0)181 694 8749 email: info@laban.co.uk web: www.laban.co.uk

Supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England. Laban Centre for Movement and Dance Limited is committed to equality of opportunity. Registered Charity 801973. Degrees validated by City University, London. BA (Hons) Dance Theatre and Diploma Dance Theatre courses are accredited by the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET). Supported by a Dance and Drama Grant from the lottery division of the Arts Council of Wales.



Photo: Chris Nash



SUPPORTED BY
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY
THROUGH
THE ARTS COUNCIL
OF ENGLAND



Life is like a symphony
The efforts of a human being
Resurging
From the unforgotten depth of nothingness
Into presence...

Rudolf von Laban
From: *Mirror of Movement*

In this article, I am reporting on my beginning research into Laban-based dance with disabled people, and on the avenues which I explore in order to work towards my vision of community dance - a vision which is fed by the glorious poetry of human movement.

Currently, I am working with Social Services/Day Services groups in deprived areas in South Wales. The people attending have severe mental health difficulties, diagnosed as schizophrenia, severe depression or psychosis, and many are physically impaired. In these classes, I have been able to explore the rich material which I was taught at the Powys Dance Laban Leader Stage 1 course.

*'The dancers can unfold
and claim their space
outside the physical, but
the traces of their
movement create the
aesthetically pleasing
and satisfying feeling of
presence that they evoke'*

Interacting with a group, I had to learn many things about the different participants, about dancing, and about my own values. Group members had to work with the devastating effects of some medication on movement, resulting in stiffness and spasticity, and I had to face the problems of focusing on relationships and space with people who have come to distrust their extension in the world, who find no place for themselves. By forcing me to re-read and apply my beginner's understanding of Laban's ideas, the groups continue to teach me much as we explore together the creative use of movement.

From the beginning, we worked with 'inner movement' - through relaxation we went on dream dances in our minds, under the sea and above the clouds, in gleaming ballrooms and wooded glades. After these dream journeys, we would capture some of the encounters - with weaving fish, butterflies, light or clouds - through physical

dance. Very soon, my first group was proficient in relaxation, and many participants reported how they used the visualisation techniques in order to enhance their life 'outside' - to detangle the voices in their heads, and focus on themselves. But I also noticed how our group moved freer, swung wider and dared to step farther after our dream dances: the invisible dances of the mind had loosened limbs, increased bloodflow and lubricated joints - a physical warm-up - as well, enabled us to experience fresh movement patterns.

As we continued on our journey together, I felt the need to validate our experiences externally, to share our dance. But so much of it was invisible: although we were by now creating exciting shapes with our bodies, and explored different energies in physical space, the core of our work continued to be internal. To work towards a performance did not seem appropriate to the participants, and I queried the possibilities of creating an aesthetically satisfying stage choreography with the kind of material we were developing.

At this time, I gratefully received a Lisa Ullmann Travel Fund Scholarship to explore film dance work by and with disabled people at the holdings of the ScreenDance festival archive in Vienna. Much of the work I saw there was fascinating, but the material which ultimately inspired my next step came not from the films about disabled people, but from the cinematographic experiments of dancers who explored the far reaches of their profession through visual means. Their experiments were concerned with representing movement metaphorically, deploying animation and colour, close-up and distortion.

Instead of creating a film about our work, I now wanted to re-create the sensual, seductive experience of these invisible dances for community audiences. Luckily, I found collaborators who had the necessary technical skills for such an undertaking - Margaret Sharrow, a community dance leader and video maker from Mid-Wales, and Jenny Cameron, a young dancer at ease with still and video cameras and video projections. Together, we are working towards a video installation: a little cubicle with comfy cushions, monitors and sound to be mounted in libraries or other community centres. In the intimacy of this room, spectators can enjoy the beauty of

the filmed faces of the group as they are in relaxation, dancing deep within, washed in beautiful colours and shining like jewels in the night.



Petra (on the right) working with her group

Film material of still bodies, nice visuals and music are all very well, but, you might ask, is it movement work?

Bodies and faces are in deep concentration, the breath and involuntary muscles provide the only external movement. The low voice on the soundtrack calls the relaxation instructions and acts as a guide to the potential movement unfolding elsewhere: sailing, rolling, spinning, quick passes or languid floating, duets and circle dances. But even if we cannot see the physical extensions of these movements, something communicates itself in the beauty of these faces and their concentrated restfulness. This 'something' I want to explore further.

Susan Kozel writes about Laban's effort work:

'Effort is not essence, it is the dynamic which translates that impossible idea of a pure essence into our physical lives. For Laban, inner essences take on a dynamic character. He reminds us that nothing about us can be static, since we are moving beings. He writes that effort is a flow from the weightless, timeless, spaceless centre of our beings to the matter which we shape and move around. (page 47).'

The dancers are not really still: they continually translate their presence into the physical world in the movements of breathing and living. Movement does not necessarily emanate from the physical - the inner being and the outer being are like a Möbius band, feeding each other. Maybe I can think about the overwhelming beauty of these dancers as the inner loop of the farthest ring of the band - at the point when the inner begins the journey to the outside. The dancers can unfold and claim their space outside the physical, but the traces of their movement create the aesthetically

pleasing and satisfying feeling of presence that they evoke.

Valerie Preston-Dunlop writes how Laban saw movement as the means to ground the individual in the land of adventure and the land of silence: the body does not only have a social presence, but also a presence in a different space continuum of endless possibility. In choreutics, investigations of the dimensionality of the body, *'The archetypal performance was more than an exercise, it was an engagement with fundamental spatial truths of the two lands of our planet life. (page 1).'*

When the dancers are fully immersed in their inner space, accessing the dimensions of their body internally, yet linking themselves into the infinity of spatial forms and rhythms, they might draw on this powerful connection, dancing the silent world into materiality.

Through technological means - the video camera - the dancers of our group are able to present without distraction that aspect of the physical which can become luke-warm in the stage situation: the fully present engagement with movement. While on their dream dance, they are not distracted by their shape, their location, the audience, their imagination of how the body might look from outside, their social experience of exclusion as 'mad' people. Similar to the professional dancer, trained in the techniques of body control and focused on the dancing experience, but on a completely different trajectory, they approach 'presence': the flow from the unshaped to the shaped, through time and space. Their bodies are as engaged as their

'Laban's work helps me to facilitate the self-experience of others who have been excluded in profound ways from the mainstream'

minds, the boundaries of the physical and the mental become fluid. Although we cannot see the minimal movement, the evidence of their physical dancing can be found in the warmed-up after-effects of the dream dances.

Hopefully, the re-creation of that invisible yet present movement in the imagination

and physicality of the spectator can fulfil the dream of communality which was so important to Laban. By concentrating on the dancers' images on the video monitors, spectators might be able to trace, through the knowledge of physical movement that we share as living beings, the present but invisible movement range of the dancers in our own limbs. We might be able to cross the 'gulf' that separates 'disabled' people and non-disabled members of the community, by concentrating on the essential presence, not the social difference. In this way, the camera and technology is not a hindrance in the way of bodies communicating with each other, but can provide a different entry point for experience. It can bring us close up to the material traces of our bodies' life: the breath, the small, nearly invisible signs of living. This intense encounter, the exercise



Silent Dances

of the location of the body in space and time, can activate the potential of the 'unforgotten depth of nothingness'. In practice, the dancers are able to engage more fully on the physical plane, freer to claim their space in the fabric of social reality - to engage in dance relationships. Hopefully, the same elation of physicality is achieved in the witness of the 'inner dance'. The spectator might be able to join this experience of the 'symphony' of living.

Laban insists that you need to move yourself in order to experience the transformation that movement can provide - to read the pages of a book will not do. But within his own system, he describes movement in such a way that the inner experience of freedom in the land of silence can be as valid as the movement of the outer limbs. By exploring this living, active relationship between the outer and inner movement in practice, in the community, I am searching for the moments of beauty and joy that can be found in our bodies and in the faces of those around us.

It is the inclusiveness of Laban's system that I find so resonant for my community work: it makes to difference if people are disabled or not. The spirit of the movement, its clarity and presence, guides the experience of creativity and beauty. The dancer's experience is validated not by external criteria but by the subjective activation of the connecting realm between the world of adventure and the world of silence. When these two lands are brought into harmony through the living body, the witness experiences 'art' - not separate from the community, but emerging from and owned by ourselves. I hope that the video installation will be one step on our group's journey towards bringing together the inner and the outer experience of moving - and that the validation of my dancers' experience in public can strengthen their feelings of self-worth and creative ability.

As a very curious and mobility-impaired person interested in expressive dance and who loves different experiences, I was once told by one Eurhythmy practitioner that he was not sure what to do with me, because 'we work from a centre which is only fully alive if one is upright'. Laban's philosophical vision of the power of movement can give me so much more nourishment, as his work, Lisa Ullmann's, and so many others' writings since, allow new facets

and readings to emerge and dance. Laban's work helps me to facilitate the self-experience of others who have been excluded in profound ways from the mainstream. I will continue to read, learn and move and be grateful for the guidance that I receive.

I hope that this short meditation on this practical work might stimulate further dialogue on the aesthetics of community dance, and I am looking forward to interesting conversations and new insights!

Secondary Sources:

Valerie Preston-Dunlop (1996) Laban, Space and Choreutics. Laban Guild Movement and Dance Quarterly, Summer, Vol. 15, No. 2.

Susan Kozel (1994) Essence, Effort and Experience. Dance Now, Spring, Vol. 3, No. 1.

A different, expanded version of this article will be given at the Community Dance Conference, Surrey, April 1999.

Petra Kupperts



DANCING AROUND

LABAN GUILD AT YOUR HEALTH SHOW

Jenni Frankel will be leading a Laban workshop at Your Health Show at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London - Saturday 19th June at 12 noon. The show runs from 18th to 20th June - admission £10.

YOUTH DANCE COLLOQUIUM, BELFAST 1999

A joint initiative by the Arts Councils of Ireland and N Ireland brought a group of dance practitioners together at the end of March. We came from all over the country to discuss how we could best join together to foster youth dance.

We were given lots of food for thought by Sarah Rubidge, the benefit of the experience of Marie McClusky from Swindon Dance Agency, film of the work of Anna Carlisle's company First Editions and information by several practitioners from Ireland.

This gave us plenty of scope for discussion the following day and an action plan, which will begin by building up an information network to link all those working with young people and dance.

As usual at these events, one of the most useful things was meeting other people: dancers, Arts Council representatives, Council Arts Officers and administrators.

We ended the weekend with a workshop for youth dance tutors and students, taken by Anna Carlisle. This made us resolve to always have a practical element in our meetings and sent us away full of high hopes and resolutions.

Watch this space!

Ann Ward

THE BRITISH RED CROSS DANCEPOWER

The Power of Humanity

Dance is considered to be a universal act of celebration and humanity. It embraces language, race, creed, colour and culture. That is why dance will form a major part of The Power of Humanity, a two-year campaign launched by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in May 1999. Over 170 countries will use dance to express hope and humanity for the new millennium.

In the UK, this theme has been translated into DancePower. DancePower will take place between 8 May 1999 and 8 May 2000. It will comprise a series of fundraising

events, closely or loosely based on the theme of dance, run by dance organisations and individuals across the UK.

We hope that all dance organisations will help to arrange an event or activity, however large or small, to support DancePower and raise money for the British Red Cross. You may wish to share any funds between The British Red Cross and your own organisation.

DancePower is about dancers, especially those who are in community dance groups, taking the theme of Humanity and organising an event, a celebration or a dance to draw attention to the Red Cross and raise funds for its caring and emergency work. Those who dance can raise money in the form of sponsorship, through donations, or selling tickets.

To join DancePower phone 0171 235 5454 ext. 5059 at the British Red Cross, or write to Zoe Punshon, British Red Cross, 9 Grosvenor Crescent, London. SW1X 7EJ

YOUTH DANCE PLATFORM 1999

Saturday 6 February

An overwhelming 500 young people applied for Laban Centre London's National Youth Dance Platform, a one-day extravaganza of teaching and performance.

Community Youth Dance Groups from across Great Britain were invited to apply for the project. The fortunate youths who managed to secure one of the 130 places available benefited from the varying dance techniques taught by Laban Centre London's highly skilled faculty and the opportunity to collaborate with other young dancers from across the nation. A busy day culminated in an evening of performances by the participants at the Bonnie Bird Theatre, producing a lively and diverse programme abundant with talent and enthusiasm.

The Youth Dance Platform is organised annually by Alysoun Tomkins. For further information contact her on 0181 692 4070.

Groups that took part in Youth Dance Platform were:

Dudley Community Dance Consortium
Essance Youth Dance Company
Gipton Crew
Grimsby and Cleethorpes Youth Dance Theatre
Motivate Young Adults Dance Theatre
Northamptonshire County Youth Dance Co
Nubrico
Parabolic Arc, Grantham Youth Dance Co
Taunton Youth Dance Company
The ZONE Youth Project
Toxic Soxs

MEMBERS

Did you get to the AGM? We know it's not accurate but we had a wonderful day. If it comes to a place good to meet all the people who are usually only at the AGM. Please note - we still need a SECRETARY - so

It was particularly good to meet all our friends. Community Dance Teachers Certificates and the day. Congratulations to everyone concerned. V Cork and have the pleasure of welcoming twenty Belfast.

Heidi is planning a Stage 2 Course in Powys for a ring on 01597 824370 - and Carmel has just closed her Youth Dance group in Derry. Congratulations on an offer to study dance at Bretton Hall.

So the courses are going from strength to strength attendance. Everyone says they want them, but attend them! We would be sorry to drop this so to have to rethink it. If you have any comments,

I'm very pleased that more and more people are that it is important to make sure that you are recorded music. Applying for your licence through fee. You may even be exempt - but check to make

IF YOU THINK YOU MAY NEED A PPL LICENCE IN SEPTEMBER, PLEASE APPLY FOR A FORM TO GET BEFORE 12 JUNE 1999

Do remember that we can offer a tracing service successes in the past. If anyone remembers Lillian Studio, she would love to hear from you. If you are in Switzerland. Similarly, JOAN LEEDHAM-GREECE friends and I can put you in touch.

Please note that subscriptions are now overdue from me shortly and payment would be appreciated. NEW MEMBERS. I can send leaflets and posters to events.

Ann Ward

Subscriptions: UK ordinary and at
Overseas (including airmail)
UK Student, retired and under 25
Overseas (including airmail)

Please make cheques payable to
Ann Ward, 30 Ringsend Road, Limavady, Co. Londonderry
Telephone: 028 2634 1111

COUNCIL MEMBERS 1999 - 2000

Chairman: Gordon Curl, Vice Chair: Maddy Tomkins
Secretary: Ann Ward, Treasurer: Barrie Hudson,
Janet Harrison, Elizabeth Norman, Jasmine Pascoe
CCPR Rep: Bronwen Mills.



possible to everyone, hence moving it around - near you next year, do make the effort. It's so on the receiving end of requests and receipts. you think you could help, please let me know.

from Powys who were receiving their Stage 1 then gave us a performance at the end of the e are also nearing the end of our course in new members to our new Stage 1 Course in

the Autumn - if you are interested do give her completed the Foundation Course with seven of to these youngsters, especially Lisa who has

n, but we have been disappointed in workshop nobody seems to have the time to actually vice to our members, but are obviously going do drop me a line.

realising that PPL is not going to go away and not breaking the law when you teach using the Laban Guild can save up to 20% on your e sure.

ENCE, EITHER NOW OR STARTING IN ME, ANN WARD, AT THE ADDRESS BELOW,

to try to find lost friends. We have had several NI HEATON from the days at the Manchester u contact me, I can pass on her address in I would be so pleased to be contacted by old

If you still owe for 1999, you will be hearing ted. Please don't forget that we always need ers to anyone organising or attending dance

ated members	£20.00 p.a.
£25.00 p.a.	
aged	£10.00 p.a.
£15.00 p.a.	

The Laban Guild and send to:
Derry, BT49 0QJ. Northern Ireland (U.K.)
5047 62120

ue, Acting Secretary: Gill Hibbs, Membership Editor: Lydia Everitt. Members: Vera Curling, n. Training Committee Rep: Sheila McGivering.

DABBING, DAUBING & DANCING!

On Saturday January 23rd, my 13 year old son Ned and I trekked up to north London for a day of dance with Caroline Mummery. In her introduction, Caroline explained that the workshop that day was based on a choreographic collaboration she had undertaken in Suffolk last year with a painter. This had resulted in a piece of work where the dancers had wielded brushes and effectively 'painted the dance' for the audience. My first reaction, when Caroline outlined the timings of the day (with dancing in the morning and some large scale painting on huge strips of paper, with buckets of paint and lots of 15cm wide brushes) was to rue my choice of clothing for the day; white trousers, a new white T-shirt and my favourite Guild sweatshirt!

We started with some movement memory activities which involved throwing two balls around a circle and saying either your name or your favourite colour. As we all failed to remember the correct order of throwing, our favourite colours and sometimes even our names(!) we could see Caroline's planning for the day crumbling before her very eyes and she admitted that a group of 8 year olds had managed this easily the day before! There followed a great improvisational warm up where we 'painted' our names and colours on each other's bodies and explored the different possibilities of using a brush and applying colour; dynamic variations of dabbing and stippling, gliding and smoothing, flicking and splattering, wringing and daubing etc.

The first part of the morning was taken up learning four movement sequences from Caroline related to the primary colours. The blue sequence was sinewy and spatial; calm, rounded and very satisfying to perform. The yellow sequence was rhythmic and sudden; tricky footwork with little jumps and turns which Caroline patiently and slowly put together until we could all accomplish it. The green sequence looked complex to start with as it involved lots of swings, turns and rolls with curls and stretches on the floor and changes of direction which made it hard to follow Caroline! However, it was all about freeing and binding the flow of swings and had that satisfying, 'organic', movement logic which makes a real dancing experience out of a simple set of phrases. The red sequence was strong, vibrant and energetic; the kind of piece which is tough to get the hang of but looks great when performed correctly.

After a quick drink stop we chose a favourite sequence, took a real 15cm wallpaper pasting brush each, and made Caroline's sequence our own by accentuating the flow as if we were painting the surfaces of the room as we danced it. Then we joined a partner and created a duet where we could symbolically paint each other as well! Eventually we joined with another pair and found a way to combine

the two duets into a small group dance thick and gooey with dynamic richness. Watching them just before lunch was utterly appetising!

After lunch came the messy play! It was like being back at playschool with the chance to make physical representation on paper of the shapes, textures and images which the 4 primary colours conjured up for each of us. We preceded this with a brainstorming session of words connected to each colour but it was amazing to see how other people "saw" these colours, sometimes quite differently from ourselves. It illustrated how we assume that certain words or concepts mean the same to everyone and it was quite a learning experience to recognise, that what I mean when I say something is received differently by different people.

When 6 huge sheets of paper were covered, we laid them at one end of the studio and proceeded to create our own sequences based on any of the images we saw thereon. Then we went back to our partners from the morning and linked the solos to make a duet and then found our 4's to make another group dance. All through this process Caroline kept close tabs on us and repeatedly set extensions to the task in the form of other choreographic forms, adaptations, dynamic requirements etc which were sometimes really hard to accommodate into the emerging dances. I know our group felt challenged having to fulfil some of these new ideas but it was worth it because the end result was much more richly creative and expressive than if we had taken the easier way out.

It is this quality of Caroline's leadership which makes her so special and popular as a community dance leader. She could easily have accepted far less from the group and we would have had a lovely day and been pleased with our efforts but she was confident enough in herself and us to be prepared to demand more, to challenge and push us to produce the highest quality we could in the time. I am appreciative of this for myself and perhaps more especially for Ned as I feel it is important for young people to have dance experiences which develop their mind and bodies holistically and demonstrate to them that dance can be stimulating as well as fun.

Ned and I still remember parts of each of the "colour sequences" and remember that day with pleasure. We are certainly looking forward to the AGM day with Caroline next month and we thank her and Lydia and her team for organising that, and the other days of dance for us in the Guild. I urge anyone who hasn't attended one of these days not to miss the next one; they are truly nourishing experiences and provide a wealth of ideas as well as personal development opportunities.

Janet (& Ned) Lunn



DANCING WITH THE WIND

Hilary Matthews

If I had not chosen to live on a hillside overlooking the Moray Firth, I would never have come to understand the full voice of the wind nor its endless dances.

The hillside faces directly north to the lands of the midnight sun. The Moray Firth stretches from west to east like a great big grin. It brings in the moderating currents of

*'I let myself go into the
wildness and chaos. I
shout and wave my arms.
I lean against the great
power of it all'*

the Gulf Stream without which we would be locked into Arctic cold.

My hillside is the gathering ground for winds from all around the Planet. Here they meet in a sharing of strength and wildness as well as gentle lethargy flavoured with all the aromatics of the earth.

It is deep winter and the winds are surging and pulsing and sweeping anything vulnerable aside. For days now, they have been shouting and screaming and showing the world how busy they are. They are power hungry and the few trees endlessly give way and bow to their presence. Any that resist snap in the hurling gusts. The winds, armed with fists full of stinging snow and vicious hail, have driven all life underground where it dreamily listens for Spring.

If we could actually see the wind, we would see millions of swirls and swirls within swirls, increasing, decreasing, pulsing with rich intense colours that fade into shreds of pastels. Anything that stands in the path of the wind splits and divides its force into endless eddies that stream onwards to be torn again and again; shredded and combed by stick and stone, hedge and tree, fence and barn, old plough, grass, the hair on our heads, the scarves around our necks.

I live in a caravan which shudders and shakes in the endless gusts until its ancient rivets beg for mercy. Crouched by its side is the old croft house. It lies low to the ground, splitting the westerlies in half. The old crofters knew the ways of the winds. They built their crofts of field stone, clay and sand with a lime mortar. One hundred years later and the walls are still resisting the winds and providing protection.

To survive here, you have to make friends with the winds, or they will drive you away. I have a windmill which endlessly dialogues with the winds. It exchanges this dialogue for a never ending supply of power. The windmill whispers, chatters, hums, gasps and shouts. On very rare days when all is still, it sleeps with one ear open listening for the slightest stirrings to sing and whirr its day away.

Today, all is lost in snow -spin. Only occasionally does the wind drop its booty and a snatch of landscape captures an ordered world of ice cold beauty. The sheep have buried themselves in the old hay bales like so many snow drifts distinguishable only by their need to chew. Their lambs wisely unborn, the sheep patiently wait out the storm.

Even though I am three miles from the coast, I can see the wind piling up the waves to smash themselves senseless against the skerries. The froth and spume are carried for miles inland. The fishing boats, even with all their high tech, lie within the harbour walls. The fish are let off the hook until the storm abates. Today, the windhover will go hungry.

I have no need to blow on the embers of my fire this morning. I drop a sliver of wood into the ashes and within minutes, there is an explosion and the wood is engulfed in flames. No straining of the heart and lungs whilst the eyes stream with wood smoke. The wind does it all effortlessly.

It reminds me of a fire I once experienced in the Rockies, somewhere, somehow, in a careless moment, the wind sought out the smouldering embers and away it went. A tumultuous, devastating fire, racing over the mountains towards our wooden homes, consuming everything in its path. Within yards of us, the fire seemed to dramatically halt, then take off in another direction.

Too much wind and we can become unhinged and chaotic like the force around us. In Ayurvedic medicine, a wind or air person is known as Vata. A Vata person has a nervous disposition. They are thin with dry skin and unable to eat too many different

foods because they cause yes, excess wind! But I remember a windless day last summer. The hay had been cut and a shower had dampened it and it needed turning. As the hay was tossed into the air, clouds of midges arose eating the skin from around the eyes and backs of the hands. I sang, shouted, pleaded with the wind to come and blow the midges away.

The Dance is always seeking to find the balance. The sun warms the earth and sea. The plants grow and ripen. The wind carries the seeds and smells of warm earth, honeysuckle, roses and sweet hay, around the planet. We are driven to chaos in order to experience the depths of calm and peace. We are driven to stagnation in order to redirect our life energies on more meaningful paths.

When we are alive and open, we can experience the fragile air current of the butterfly's wing. We can watch the buzzard ride the thermals. We can see the breeze shake the dew on an early morning cobweb. We can race along the beach with the wind driven waves crashing alongside us. We can see the hairbell quivering in the late summer



Hilary Matthews

light. We can experience the fear of a storm torn world and the peace of a soft spring day against the skin.

One day I went out onto my hillside and I addressed the wind. "Please teach me how to dance," I said. The wind caught me in its many arms and we swayed and spun, balanced and leant against each other. We flew and dived, crouched and rolled. We caressed and cuddled, shuddered, stretched and fell away. We hovered and soared. The wind left me in the presence of a great tree and we showed each other our dances.



No matter what the weather, or how I feel, the sheep have to be fed through the winter months. I leave my caravan and enter the storm. The snow drifts are thigh high and my breath is snatched away before it is fully formed. My eyes are blinded with flying snow and I curse the relentless fury of it all.

The barn holds well against the storm and I ladle out the molassed cereal and shredded sugar beat. The sweetness enters

*'We are driven to chaos
in order to experience
the depths of calm and
peace. We are driven to
stagnation in order to
redirect our life energies
on more meaningful
paths'*

my nostrils and somehow softens the grip of the storm on my embattled psyche. I put the mix in the trough and the sheep lose themselves in instant pleasure. I carry

armloads of hay full of last summer's memories. The sheep bury their heads in its warm sustenance. I spread straw still full of heads of wheat which enchant the sheep. I strengthen the wind break and bring fresh water. Not even the great blizzard can interfere with the contented munching, eyes half closed in deep pleasure.

I retrace my footsteps through the drifts and re-enter the white madness. Now, instead of cursing, I let myself go into the wildness and chaos. I shout and wave my arms. I lean against the great power of it all. I watch the darkening clouds of the wave upon wave of white fury. I embrace it all. Reluctant to leave, I enter the old caravan exhilarated, warmed and strengthened to face the night.

In the early hours, the storm moved away. This morning the snow is carved into waves and curls, swirls and eddies. I am alive and



Spring new born lambs

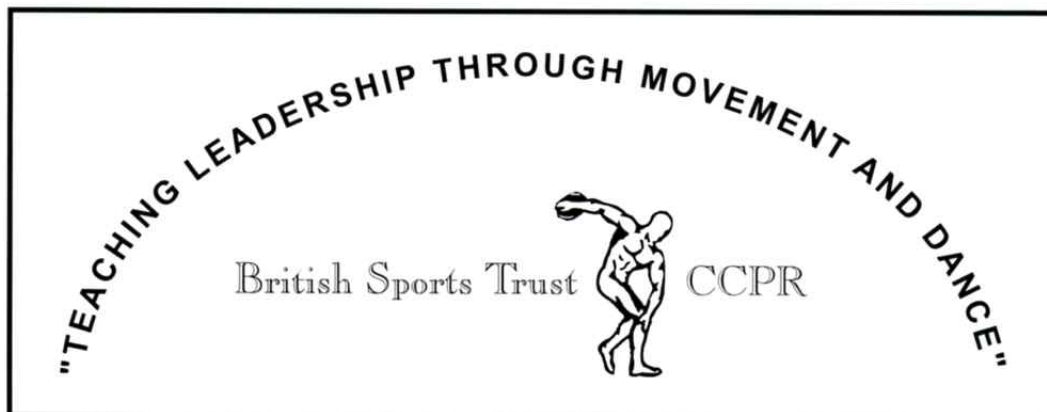
overwhelmed with the awesome beauty of it all. I leave the caravan and finding a wind scoured space, I remember the dance that the winds taught me and I sing with the humming of the windmill.

Hilary Matthews

Want to spread the word about dance in the community?

Want to give people a stepping stone into the movement and dance world?

We have a solution...

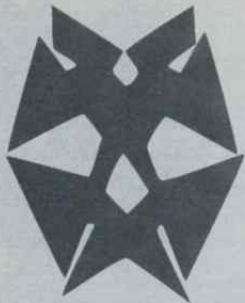


Using your dance knowledge and interest you can tutor the highly successful Sports Leader Awards



*This is not about sport. It's about teaching good leadership,
and giving people a kick start to further their interest in dance*

*For further information on Tutor's workshops contact:
Jannet Griffin, CCPR/British Sports Trust, Francis House,
Francis Street, London SW1P 1DE Tel: 0171 828 3163*



Su Johnston's View

COMPLEXITY AND SIMPLICITY

Do we, as human beings, progress? Does anything "get better"? What is the attraction of the Good Old Days? My mother-in-law would always remark about the last, "You can keep them!", and launch into a detailed description of lighting the coal-range before you could have a morning cup of tea, through laundry by hand to the constant meal-getting for a large grown family still living at home. Perhaps it seems a simpler life.

But there is a view that there is no such thing in nature as progress, looked at as some kind of improvement. The genes simply go on being genes by causing themselves to be reproduced. As I see it, there is no improvement possible here except through the forces of evolution, causing living things to react to the changing environment, in continuing achievement of this eternal goal. However, the history of life-development, from cell to human being, convinces us by observation that evolution does evoke an increase in complexity. For example, in human beings cells join with others to make a liver, a heart, a brain, lungs. Each is a system, and the system of systems makes up the complexity that is a human being.

There is a theory also that where complexities abound, they edge towards a chaotic state, because the systems are not unified into a whole - this is a theory suggested by social anthropologists, but concepts like these tend to have applications in more areas than one - as do systems. (What is an inner ear construction in a human, is also found as part of the construction of a fish's gills). The theory is that in this state of chaos, "creativity" happens, and a new state of being is found. I would take liberties with this idea to suggest that when any things become very complex, the search is on for a new (creative) solution which takes in and includes all the new systems which have come together.

I say this because it is a feature of human mental and physical expression of information gathering that it needs to be sorted into groups for ease of understanding and for new insights into the novel relationships which then can emerge as some sort of revelation. We collect and sort so that we can understand, and perhaps see an overall rule emerge. Children learn language like this. It's not so far from sorting out the buttons in Granny's button-jar into colours, or shapes, or two- or four-holers, to bringing together the different talents of a team of people, and seeing what new creative solution they produce collectively. It's just more complex.

Finally, what about simplicity? There is the sort of simplifying which comes out of taking in all available new material, is inclusive, rejecting nothing, and results in this new state of being. Inclusiveness is a social, mental and spiritual life rule, for me, and one that mentally I have to constantly remind myself of. Inclusiveness means there is the possibility of new solutions to new challenges. In any species, of plant or animal, the greater the variety, including what look like "mistakes" the greater the chance of survival in a changing and unpredictable world.

The trouble with fundamentalist solutions, which are so cruelly obvious in today's world, seems to me to be that in the natural human search for simplicity, fundamentalists go backwards rather than forwards. It is notoriously easier to obey set rules which were fine in a former environment, than to work out a new set of behaviours according to the present. But such is the human drive to seek out the comprehensible, the simple answer. The greater challenge, the new solution, is there to be thought about.

Su Johnston

THE ORDERING PRINCIPLE

I came across the first edition (July 1965) of The Art of Movement Studio Student's Magazine in a secondhand bookshop last summer. After an Introduction from Lisa and an Editorial from Jane Colby, I read the following contribution from the Lecturer of English, Jean R Brooks. I enjoyed it because she writes how eloquent her students are in poetry and prose and how much movement they express in writing. Read it and see what I mean. So that I don't embarrass any of the students she refers to, I have wriggled their names out of the text. Ed.

Yes, but isn't it a bit deadly trying to teach English to all those beefy physical-education types?" asked my old schoolfriend from the lofty pinnacle of her position as senior English mistress in a girl's grammar school.

Deadly? Beefy physical-education types? I should like to introduce my friend to the vital statistics of my Art of Movement students, which include those statistics not so easily measured. "Can beauty, aspiration, feeling, be gauged in terms of inches or degrees?" asked Joan Russell in her book *Modern Dance in Education*. These unmeasurable qualities, which make up that old fashioned attribute called 'soul', are those which a teacher of English tries to encourage. My work with Art of Movement students has been made easier by their training in a creative form which suggests "that there exists in the flow of man's movement some ordering principle which can not be explained in the usual rationalistic manner". (Rudolf Laban, *Modern Educational Dance*.)

The ordering principle growing out of movement experience, which creates significant art out of the chaotic material of life, is evident not only in their creative work, but also in the more formal English work required in response to examination conditions or a set task. An English paper question along the theme of *Gulliver's Travels*, went "Write an account of the remarkable island of Labania, whose inhabitants communicate only through dancing, as seen through the eyes of Lemuel Gulliver". Swift would have rejoiced in the reverence for life that exchanges the noisy clogging mechanisation of Progress for the submission to the primal paradise cosmic rhythm, where "even the numerous grains of sand, because of the dance of their quantity, danced before my eyes". Who but a Movement student would have conveyed the sense-experience of being swept along in the dance of the elements, by the dynamic visual image of 'flickering' grass? Not here, not here in this twittering world, is Swift's Laputan kingdom of sterility, where "I could not discover one Ear of Corn or blade of grass". This writer's grass pulsates with the rhythms of life that order the whole work. Reverence for life and hatred of all that

impedes its vital flow, orders the shape of so much of the Studio work in English. A student's 'Bury St. Edmunds' grew out of our work on Hardy's Wessex novels, and my suggestion that home environment should be used to create a significant picture of the elemental forces at work in modern life. His gasometer-shaped women, thriving on the soul-killing smells that provide bread and circuses for Bury, bear a sinister resemblance to the rhomboid-and-parallelagram distortions of Laputan humanity - and they are "solid and immobile except for their frequent visits to the numerous public houses of this area". Another student's cranes are motionless too, as they stand sentinel over the static industrial deformity that has replaced the harmonious shaping flow of life. "Where once grew cabbages and cauliflowers is now a scarring heap of multicylinders. Where horses should be grazing are concrete pillars; foul and formidable ... Gone is the colour, the contour, the curve. "They are an objective correlative of the paralysing guilt that overtakes us when our fear of exposure drives us to reject the deeper poetic rhythms of life which embrace its ecstasy and its agony, to retreat behind our isolating wire-netting into a peripheral world of non-communication, like the church-goers of another student, who "tiptoe around the cow-clap to pray and take note if any of the others have bought a new hat".

The fate of 'living and partly living' which might have overtaken them without a strong sense of the fundamental life values encouraged by movement, informs their work with understanding and compassion.

*What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation*

What might have been does not remain an abstraction for long in the hands of Movement students. When I suggested that their study of 'Four Quartets' should be accompanied by a piece of imaginative work that explored 'the passage which we did not take', the very varied individual responses clothed Eliot's philosophical speculations in the language of flesh and blood and movement. One apocalyptic vision of a future patterned by the centripetal force driving human life relentlessly inland on the surge of encroaching waters, is matched by the retreat into self-imprisonment of a second recreation of Eliot's introvert from 'The Wasteland'. The clipped, repetitive desperation of the language translates into words her vision of the movement experience of making futile unbroken circles round a lifeless centre of cars and coffee mornings. Both stress the "great sense of desolation everywhere" when the ebb and flow of life is restricted.

Creative life in the Pinter-inspired dramatic sketches has come to a full stop. In these, I

continued on page 13 ..

Diary of Events



MAY 1999

9TH **BRITISH RED CROSS DANCE POWER ROYAL GALA** **LONDON PALLADIUM**
Contact for Tickets and information : British Red Cross Tel: 0171 235 5454 ext. 5059

13TH - 14TH **EUROLAB WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE** **STEYERBERG, GERMANY**
Laban/Bartenieff Movement and Symbol Workshop with Ann Hutchinson Guest
Contact: Marcus Riehm, Im Breiten Wingert 11, 69221 Dossenheim, Germany Tel: 06221-863526

24TH **TRANSITIONS DANCE COMPANY 2000** **LABAN CENTRE LONDON**
Auditions for contemporary dancers. Transitions offers recent graduates of full-time accredited training courses a one year vocational programme in preparation for work in a professional dance company. Finals will take place in early June.
Contact: Karenne Griffin + 44 (0) 181 692 4070 ext: 110

JUNE

5TH **MAKING DECISIONS**
One day courses on Saturdays.
Course Tutors: Lydia Everitt - MEd Training and Development Su Johnston - Action Profile Trainer
Contact:- Mrs Su Johnston, 2 Brockham Warren, Box Hill Road, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 7JX.
Tel: 01737 843108 Fax: 01737 844102 E.mail Bill-FJohnston@compuserve.com
Making Decisions Course also available on September 11th and November 13th 1999.

18TH - 20TH JUNE **YOUR HEALTH SHOW** **ISLINGTON**
19th Jenny Frankel will run a workshop at 12.00 noon Venue: Business Design Centre, Islington.

JULY

24TH - 1ST AUGUST **LABAN INTERNATIONAL COURSES** **EASTBOURNE**
Annual Summer School of Dance :
Dance and Laban analysis - Dance training and technique and your choice of Special Topics applicable or personal fields of interest.
Previous experience of Laban's work is not essential.
Contact: L.I.N.C. Ivy Cottage, Clockhouse Lane East, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8PF England. Tel: 01784 433480

11TH -16TH **23RD SUMMER WEEK IN MOVEMENT AND FREE DANCE** **ZURICH**
Laban Course: Dance and Movement Technique - Body Training Variety of Choice Subjects - Dance Choir.
6 tutors from 3 countries - guest tutor from Britain: Wendy Hermelin.
Contact: Claude Perrottet, dipl. Bewegungspädagoge Gotthardstrasse 49, CH-8002 Zurich, Switzerland Tel: 01/202 91 33

19TH - 30TH **INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL** **LABAN CENTRE LONDON**
Contact: Peter Curtis, Short Course Administrator, Laban Centre London Laurie Grove, London SE14 6NH
Tel: 0181 692 4070 Fax: 0181 694 8749 email: info@laban.co.uk

26TH - 30TH **SUMMER COURSE** **UNIVERSITY OF SURREY**
Contact: NRCD, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH.

DECEMBER

27TH - 31ST **16TH WINTER HOLIDAY COURSE IN MOVEMENT EXPRESSIVE DANCE** **ZURICH**
Laban Course: Dance and Movement Technique - Body Training Choice Subjects - Dance Choir.
5 tutors from 3 countries - guest tutor from Britain: Anna Carlisle. Contact: Claude Perrottet, dipl. Bewegungspädagoge, Gotthardstrasse 49, CH-8002 Zurich, Switzerland Tel: 01 / 202 91 33

.. continued from page 12

see crowds of people walking round in a ring
- not the ring of the fertility dance round the
vital flame,
 keeping time,
 Keeping the rhythm of their dancing,
 As in their living in the living seasons
but a ring of sterile disjointed, over-used
words, divorced from their spatial and

temporal groupings because they are
divorced from the language of significant
movement. All that is left is a cast-off shell
that cannot reflect the sound of the sea
because we have severed our emotions
from the imminent rhythm that moves the
tides and the winds; the primal force of life
that
 with mighty wings outspread

*Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant.*

Jean R Brooks

Lecturer in English
Laban Art of Movement Studio July 1965

TWO OF LABAN'S INTERNATIONAL SHOOTS

Rosemary Austin and Andrea Villamere represent many of the young members of the Guild who will be continuing to spread Laban's messages in the next century. *THE SHOOTS*. Ed.

THE INFLUENCE OF LABAN'S WORK IN MY TEACHING

The introduction to Laban's work was my greatest gain as I entered my training as a teacher in the late 70's. Incredibly long ago(!) but its influence has not diminished. College lecturer during my training, Norma Jenner, completed her Laban studies in London and became an important influence for myself and many other students entering the teaching profession.

Supportive materials published at this time through the Education Department and

Valerie Preston - Dunlop "A Handbook for Modern Educational Dance". This book still remains for me a vital one in my work with students.

Laban's basic movement themes and their combinations and variations provide a wonderful framework for the development in creative dance empowering students in their work as dancers, creators and choreographers. This framework has equally supported my programmes in educational gymnastic and dance drama.

Recently I have been influenced richly by others working in the area of Laban studies. Especially so in my visits to the Laban International Summer School at Eastbourne. This has become a wonderful opportunity to work with

other teachers and gain from their expertise; dancing, creating and exploring movements, with others and sharing ideas. Working as a student has helped in my reflection as teacher and inspired me in my planning for my students.

It was during a workshop with Jan Nicol in 1997 at the Laban International Summer School, that I had the chance to work with Laban's Kinetography. After learning some basic movement symbols we had the task of creating dances using some selected symbols. The idea grew from here and - back into my classes. The children enjoyed learning the symbols and demonstrating how they could action the symbols for themselves. The shy, reluctant or self-conscious became challenged and keen to join in with all in their responses to the symbols. The students have also been keen

to extend their knowledge of the symbols to enable their movements and dances to be recorded in their new found language. The students see the symbols in a way like a code and enjoy presenting these to others to "unlock". Like reading each

other's stories we can now dance each others movement "stories"

The students enjoy the dynamics of working together and creating dance. The impact of

the Laban International Summer Courses would not be complete without the mention of working with Sam Thornton in the creation



A little trio

each year of the Movement Choir. What an impact this has made this year in my classes working with this concept. There are choirs for singers and there are choirs for dancers! It seems so natural that such a thing should be and what an amazing experience to be a part of or to watch. Students have enjoyed dancing a three ring and a three ring in canon.

Laban's movement analysis (as detailed in table form by Joan Russell in "Creative Dance in the Primary School") provides an excellent tool for reflection and observation. It provides the basis upon what to look for when students move and hence supporting the students in their movement development. Sharing this with teachers at a Junior Primary dance conference it was nice to know they also valued this overview to help their students in dance!

Working in a community creative dance programme recently it was delightful to learn that one student, aged 4, and soon to leave Australia for Canada, was so keen to continue her Laban studies they have the Laban Guild's phone number ready to make contact for possible classes in Canada! Our next generation falling under the magic inspiration of Rudolf Laban.

Rosemary Austin
Adelaide, South Australia

MY JOURNEY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

We bring to every new experience something of ourselves and we are constantly being influenced and shaped by



Detectives

through the Australian Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation (A.C.H.P.E.R.) provided invaluable support materials for our work in schools. The programmes we designed originated in many cases from the inspiration of these materials. One reference however that we saw as our most important was that by



what is happening around us. Perhaps my interpretation of Laban's theories are not the same as what you have experienced but the essence, I hope, is the same. At the age of twenty five my journey into the 21st century marks the end of my travels as a student and the beginning of my professional career as an elementary schoolteacher. It is an exciting time, full of promise and challenges. And it was in preparation for my career that I was first exposed to Laban's theories.

I was first introduced to Laban in my first year of Physical Education at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Consequently, for me Laban's theories are interwoven into three areas of physical education (games, dance and educational gymnastics). In my first year, I learned about Laban and his ideas in a history of movement course. I was inspired by his

first year physical education movement labs under the supervision of my professors.

I was also lucky enough to have had the opportunity to attend the summer course in Eastbourne where I felt like I had stepped back in time to Mt. Verita. One of my

'We bring to every new experience something of ourselves and we are constantly being influenced and shaped by what is happening around us'

favourite memories is of dancing on the lawn bathed in moonlight. I also had the chance to use Laban's tetrahedron to explore space and it was really exciting to use something that I had read about in textbooks! The dance course was so much fun; I met wonderful people and I walked away with a new and more in-depth perspective on dance and Laban.

Due to my background in physical education, I primarily use Laban's theories in the gymnasium. Each time I teach any type of dance (folk, historical or creative), educational gymnastics or games I break up each skill into body awareness, space awareness, relationship and effort. My goal is to make each of my students more aware of their bodies as they enjoy different types of physical activity.

I am currently completing my Masters of Arts in Education and Child Study at the Institute of Child Study, University of Toronto. It is a two year pre-service program, and last year a colleague and myself had the opportunity of teaching the physical My Journey into the 21st Century education portion of our program to our classmates. We explored methods of teaching physical education and introduced our classmates to Laban's theories.

Most recently, I was in a grade four class and I was responsible for their physical education curriculum. I tried to not only to get them to think about their bodies during physical education classes but in the regular classroom as well by integrating the physical education curriculum with the classroom curriculum.

However, I find that Laban's theories are not just limited to the gymnasium. I use his concepts of space whenever I need to make myself appear bigger in front of students- I just think "door plane". I have a better

understanding of my body and the way it does, and does not, move which I use sometimes when I am moving through a crowd of people, dancing at a nightclub or just dancing in my family room.

The 21st century will be a continuation of my growth in the field of education and will no doubt bring new challenges and experiences. Physical activity will always play an important role in my life and consequently the lessons I have learned about Laban's theories will be integrated into my professional and personal life. I look to the millennium as the entrance of a journey full of adventures and achievements.

Andrea Villamere
Canada

FOR MEMORY'S SAKE

by Alan Salter

Come, the day's as fair, the wind's as kind

As any time or chance that passes.

So gaily go without despair that takes from mind

Its hope, the happy glance that passes.

Meet, part, and in an easy space affection find.

For memory's sake, recall the dance that passes.

ADVERTISING SPACE

with art work ready to print

£13.00 for an eighth of a page

£25.00 for a quarter page

£40.00 for a half page

£60.00 for a full page spread

or

Classified Ads - 50 at 10p per word

The copy dates are: 24th Dec., 24th March, 24th June and 24th Sept

Payment to the Laban Guild

Send to: Christine Meads, Lobwood,
Blagdon Hill,
Taunton,
Somerset TA3 7SN



Andrea doing the "Traka"

Mount Verita, Ascona retreat; I imagined what it was like dancing at night, and giggled about dancing naked! In my movement classes my professors encouraged me to explore the practical aspects of Laban's concepts of effort, space and body awareness. I had never had any formal training in dance and I must admit I was unaccustomed to examining the way my body moves. Eventually I got over my uneasiness and began to move. Some of my fondest memories are of the hours we spent practising our dance and educational gymnastic routines at the end of each term. After graduation I even went on to teach the

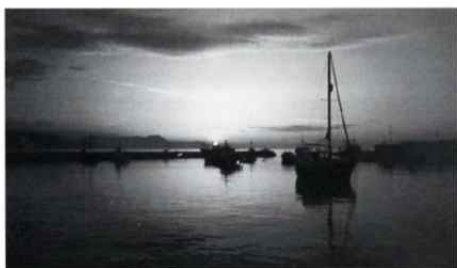


SIGHT

LYME REGIS 17.03.99



05.45



06.10



07.10



07.40



08.10



09.10



10.10



11.10



12.10



13.10



14.40



15.40



16.40



17.40



18.40