

Vector & Dance

Quarterly magazine of the Laban Guild



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Cut meets Choreography
A 'Free Space Vector' approach to Laban's Choreutics

Volume 20

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OUR AGM WAS IN DUBLIN

From the President ...

Welcome to all ... from the north, south, east and west. How wonderful that we meet in DUBLIN, this fair and gracious city! Laban and Lisa would have been thrilled to have been here. Dance plays such a great part in bringing people together and from early days I have always been fascinated by the different types who congregate to do 'Laban Dance'.

In the 1946 Winter Course at Sheffield, led by Laban and Lisa, there were housewives, actors, dancers, teachers, a psychiatrist - rather a rare breed then. As here, there were people of all shapes, sizes and ages. The Guild was formed and I became an early member. There were I think about 100 of us. I went to the Art of Movement Studio in the Autumn of 1946 where there were just 14 of us. We all had the same training but we all used this training differently. From that era came teachers of movement and dance, choreographers, dancers (one going on to join the Ballet Jooss), therapists, kinetographers, directors, actors, personality assessors etc. Throughout his life, Laban left his legacy with so many different people each one remembering his or her 'Laban experience', the one they knew and have interpreted their way.

Often this is difficult to understand. But it is all underpinned by an understanding of Time; Space; Weight and Flow ... plus relationship in Dance, Dance Drama and everything else.

After so many years we are still very short of teachers of movement and it is wonderful that the Guild, led by the indomitable Ann Ward and other stalwarts in England, are making very sure that, via the Community Dance Courses for Teachers, 'Laban Dance' does not disappear.

I thank all the members of Council, especially the Chair Gordon Curl and the Secretary Jan Nicol, for their tact and endeavour in helping to modernise us all for contemporary existence and the future. Let this year in the Guild be a GREAT YEAR FOR DANCING. We can start NOW. God Bless ... Have a wonderful day.

Geraldine Stephenson

See page 6 for the review of the day

EDITORIAL

Didn't we have a wonderful time the day we went to Dublin. And truly this must have been our most devilish AGM for the sheer risk of 'leaving home'. The Irish from both sides of the border turned up in healthy numbers despite their own foot-and-mouth threats and we were looked after in style. Thank you Dublin for the welcome; thank you Helen Lewis for the fascinating Laban Lecture; thank you Jan Nicol and Brenda McKee for the energetic workshop sessions; thank you Irish Ferries for the complete dousing in disinfectant.

In the meanwhile we in the UK will have to persuade all our usual European, American and other visitors that Summer Schools will be OK in the UK this year. Whilst staying at our B & B in Dublin I was saddened to hold a conversation with some American guests who were cancelling their visit to England this summer. I may have got rather over-excited in my desire to persuade them that the Tower of London didn't really have any reason for shutting and that Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Castle were likely to be open too.

On this island just off the coast of Europe, we are **OPEN**.

And as I rest on this island, instead of fretting about whether we will be visited, perhaps I might, this year, indulge in some self-support and stay in this fair (if wet) country for the summer. Weymouth and Lyme Regis, here I come. Enjoy the summer wherever you are.

Lydia Everitt



BACK ISSUES OF MAGAZINE

Many articles published in **Movement & Dance** are as relevant today as when they were written. Details of all articles can be found in the Magazine Index, this is free to all Guild members. It is available to non-members:

☐ £4.50 UK ☐ £5.00 Overseas

Back issues, where available, please state *Volume and Issue*:

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NEXT ISSUE IS AUGUST 2001

As a costumier, running a busy studio making costume for all styles and types of performance, it is a great privilege to be called upon to collaborate with Siobhan Davies in the devising of costume for her company. Sue (Siobhan) and I have known each other for many years through pieces for Second Stride and Rambert but our working relationship has blossomed into a method peculiar to ourselves over the last eight years.

Most costume design starts with a text. The characters are known, the plot is straightforward and the director usually has a clear brief for you to follow. In contemporary dance there is no plot and it is inappropriate to call the dancers characters. Sue makes new work by working directly with the dancers who are heavily involved in the creative process. I find the 'design' as we develop the work through rehearsal rather than starting with a portfolio of finished drawings and I rely on my skills as a cutter experienced with the demands of a dancers body to find imaginative solutions. The making of "Wild Air" which was premiered in April 1999 was a classic instance of this method.

Of course, there needs to be some starting point! Usually an early meeting is called between Sue, David Buckland, the set designer, Peter Mumford the lighting designer and myself. At this point, six months or so before the premiere, only the music is known. Sue prefers to commission new work from the composer, in this case Kevin Volans and we knew that his inspiration was windmills and the movement of air in circular sweeps. David wanted to use steel mesh in the set and also to use filmed images which would revolve. Peter had some new lighting effects that he wanted to incorporate plus a desire to use strong colour, particularly yellow and blue.

I listen to all of these desires and references and see my job as one of connection. I want the dancers to connect visually with all of these ideas. I want them to be comfortable and feel flattered by the garments. Above all, I want the essence of the movements, so carefully crafted by Sue over the coming

months, to be given life. The costumes should move in harmony with the dancers' bodies; should open and close, lift and fall. They should do unexpected, beautiful things and yet be safe. The dancer should be able to perform any turn, be upside down, be partnered in difficult and dangerous ways and yet the costume should always be perfectly disciplined.

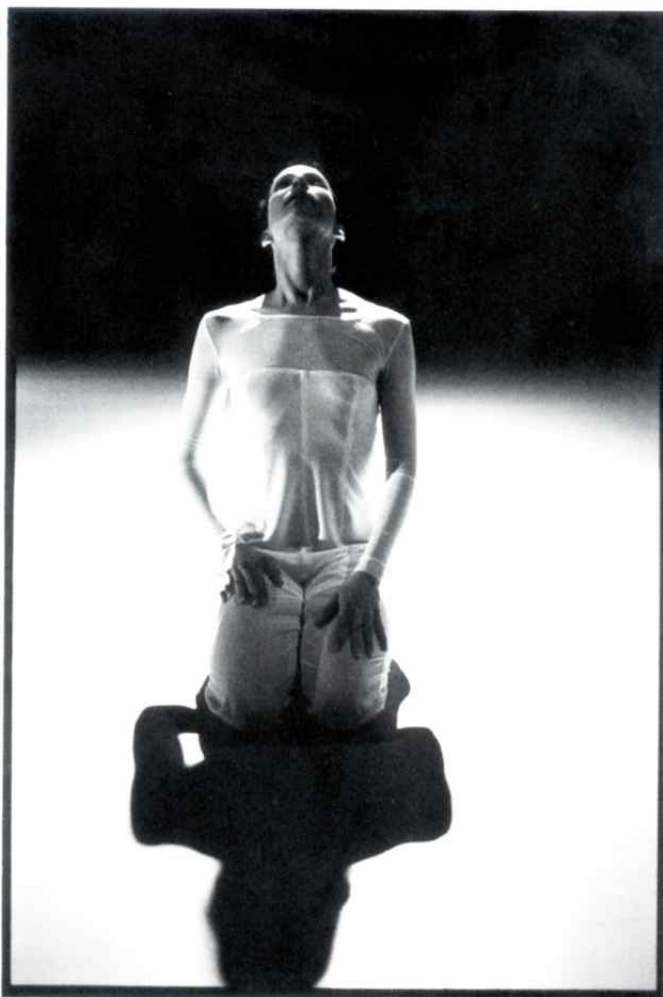
Most costumiers know lots of tricks and it is important to distinguish between a designer

seen, no matter how dark the stage. They would become whatever colour Peter directed at them. But white can be cruel to the dancers as it can enlarge the body outline and most dancers are sensitive about how elegant a line they present. I decided to source fabrics that were transparent as well as opaque and to aim for a layered look. Sue had one other request, that the designs had an element of a Japanese Garden. This was to be reflected possibly in the cut and certainly in the emotional content of the piece. It isn't always appropriate for the costumes to clearly reflect the sex of the dancer; all the boys in trousers and all the girls in skirts, for example.

My researches took me to both the main fabric houses in London and to the Japanese Embassy who kindly directed me to sources of simple Japanese workwear. I found lots of examples of fine linen garments using pleating and which were very simply wrapped and tied. I was inspired by a beautiful fine viscose jersey and a semi-sheer voile and found an extremely see-through white lycra, almost 15 denier, to go with these. By chance, I found a photograph of Alicia Markova in a Ballet Russe production of "Rossignol" in which she is wearing a brief culotte tunic over slender, sheer trousers. Off and running!

The creation of the patterns for the range of trial garments is done both on the stand and on flat pattern paper. Sometimes, if I feel particularly sure of the shape, I will cut directly into the cloth. Whichever method or combination of methods is used, I always cut from scratch and never simply

recycle old patterns from another show. Nor do I use standard block patterns. Many years of cutting garments necessarily gives you confidence as to the shapes which will translate into the three-dimensional garment and it's much quicker to draw the patterns afresh than hunt through old files for that reliable old sleeve pattern. More importantly, each new piece needs fresh creation. The inspiration for the shapes and proportions should arise out of the research done without the safety net of stock blocks. I was blessed with the ability to think in three dimensions, an innate ability to understand the fundamental geometry involved and I thrive on the challenge to create something



*Wild Air - Siobhan Davies Dance Company
Photographer: Richard Dean*

and costumier in this respect. The usual working process is for a designer to produce a concept and a costumier to create its reality. This often involves hidden underwear, discrete elasticsation, all sorts of odd fastenings, to bridge the gap between the desired look and wearability. I prefer to use a more direct approach.

To Kevin's music, David's steel and Peter's colours I added my baseline; that the costumes should be white. From a practical point of view, the dancers would always be

- SASHA KEIR

for contemporary dance

Performance

new and different. An understanding of the dancer's anatomy is also crucial. In movement, the body contracts and expands, revolves and hinges. Many fashion garments look great on the static body but do nothing for the mobile dancer.

All too often, costumes for dance are made during the rehearsal process and are only available to the dancers in the final technical week. This does not allow the designs to be fully incorporated into the choreography and can undermine the dancers confidence to have to perform moves in garments that are unfamiliar and probably uncomfortable. Often the costumes need alteration and correction and are never fully finished. With Sue's company I attend rehearsal up to two months before performance with a core wardrobe of all my garment ideas. For "Wild Air", I produced a core wardrobe of seventeen garments; culotte tunics in jersey, sheer trousers, Japanese work-wear trousers in jersey and tunics in the fine voile, deeply pleated and controlled. The fine lycra provided sheer, skinny sleeves and close-fitting tops.

I encourage the dancers to be brutally honest. These garments are tried on amidst all kinds of rude jokes and insults. At least half of the designs will hit the bin; either because nobody likes them, or because they don't work for the emerging movement. Sue

may feel that they don't marry with her sense of the piece. Whatever, hit the bin they do, and with little regret. It is of crucial importance at this stage that we trust each other and that the process of selection starts

*'I find the 'design' as we
develop the work through
rehearsal'*

to show a direction; a clear path to follow. The most successful garments can and will generate new ideas and shapes.

Over the next few weeks, more and more versions of these core garments are created and the dancers start to gravitate towards their own looks. This, within the confines of the fabrics and core shapes, is largely their choice. Many times a dancer has known better than I what will work for them on stage and I always respect that. Sometimes a minor change to a neckline or a sleeve-length can make a dancer feel more elegant. But usually by the last two weeks of rehearsal, the costumes are finalised and the dancers work in full costume whenever possible. This allows any tricky problems in partnering to be resolved and allows the garments themselves to adapt to the dancers bodies. Some fabrics drop, some stretch on the hot, moist skin of the

performer in a way that may be difficult to predict. These idiosyncrasies of the textile I prefer to know in advance and if a textile proves not to be hard-wearing or capable of being cleaned frequently then there is time to find a substitute. Very occasionally a dancer may be allergic or find that a textile that seems comfortable in the short space of a fitting may rub or chafe on stage.

What is quite astonishing about this method of design is how difficult it is to say afterwards where half the ideas have come from. Sue and the dancers contribute an enormous amount of direction; in exercising their preferences they often inspire me to come up with variations that I hadn't thought of. In this sense, I am not the designer at all really, but a costumier who can endlessly cut her way to a solution. And it doesn't matter who contributed the ideas since the company has always operated as a collaboration. Sue's dancers, seasoned performers such as Deborah Saxon or Paul Old, have an enormously intelligent approach to the stage that would be stupid to ignore and the working process, based on mutual respect, is enormous fun and incredibly rewarding.

Sasha Keir

MIND-BODY FITNESS FOR DUMMIES

My previous experience of the "Dummies" series of books was related to computers and having found them an informative and entertaining way of curing all the frustrations of getting to grips with Microsoft, I was delighted to delve into Mind-Body Fitness and find it equally informative and entertaining. In fact this book offers you several pleasurable ways of dealing with IT stress!

Therese Iknoian has assembled the ultimate beginners guide to exercise in general and mind-body integration in particular. Her writing style is conversational and peppered with "Americanisms", (so if this is likely to irritate you, don't buy the book. It will rapidly undo all the good of your meditative work-out!) The Table of Contents thoroughly dissects the text and allows precise dipping in and out of whatever sections appeal. Or, of course you can start at the beginning and read to the end by which time you will be a Mind-Body Expert. Presumably reflecting current popularity and availability of classes the book concentrates on Pilates, Yoga and the related Chinese

disciplines of Tai Chi and Qigong. Each of these is given a thorough introduction, description and a taster regime to try at home before committing to a class. Exercise descriptions and illustrations are very clear and complete with safety points.

As far as Laban's work is concerned I was bitterly disappointed. Yes it is mentioned albeit relatively briefly and only insofar as describing its role in improving functional movement through repetition of very specific exercises. Two of these are described to provide a flavour of what would be involved and, compared to the delights of Yoga, etc.. I didn't think that Laban as described would be the first port of call for a new Mind-Body Fitness recruit. We are informed that sports people can enrol in a Laban-Bartiniéff Fundamentals class and improve their performance - wonderful for them, I am sure, but what about all the creative, expressive potential of Laban? I felt I was being offered the scales with no vision of the concerto. However, that is the personal view-point of a Laban Lover.

Book review

If you know someone who has absolutely no knowledge of mind-body fitness, but feels that in spite of much puffing, panting and sweating in the gym there is something vaguely dissatisfying about their efforts to keep fit and healthy, this book gives a very thorough introduction and guidance to the major disciplines which incorporate awareness during movement. (but slip in a flyer advertising the Laban Guild too!)

Sue Groder

Mind-Body Fitness for Dummies by Therese Iknoian Published by IDG Books Worldwide Inc. ISBN No 0-7645-5304-6

LABAN GUILD AGM, DUBLIN MARCH 2001

Among the many highlights of the day the Laban lecture given by Helen Lewis stands proud. "Her life is like a film and dancing saved her life" whispered my thirteen year old daughter, wide eyed from the adjoining seat. Helen's life story had the effect of empowering the dance experience in the workshops to follow later in the day.

The Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College in the heart of Dublin City became ours for the day. It was my training ground for the Dublin Laban

people coming together from diverse walks of life to make up the Guild. Laban's principles of movement were being applied in many diverse ways. The motto for the coming year would be Bringing People Together.

Coffee and lunch breaks as always became a time for meeting, greeting, catching up, planning ahead, reminiscing and connecting new faces to familiar names. For those attending their first Laban AGM there were many new faces and valuable networking took place. I personally valued receiving information in the area of Therapeutic Dance.

And then to the fun time. There were

communicated as if we were great friends. By connecting and creating with the common language of movement play we echoed the theme of the day, Laban's talent of drawing people together.

Leaving the bright atmosphere of the upper studio we descended the many steps to catch breath and rehydrate. Once again in the womb like Beckett theatre Brenda McKee guided the group to give birth to the River Liffey high in the Wicklow Mountains. Gently, slowly rising, gathering speed, stretching into tributaries, skipping and weaving it's way down towards Dublin Bay. As tall ships, filled with vessels of varying weights we sailed the river. Sustained moving in as group ship, always an opportunity for discrete, humorous, underbreath chats. A song of the Auvergne cooled the group down giving thanks to each other and to Brenda.

During the closing wine reception Gordon expressed appreciation to everyone connected with ensuring success especially for the efforts of Ann Ward who organised a really worthwhile day. To Helen Lewis for her inspiring lecture, to Jan and Brenda for creating terrific dance experiences.

The quiet oasis of the college left behind, it was time to head into the bustling city to sample Dublin cuisine and nightlife. Travelling home on the Dart rail, tired and content, I asked my young daughter what she thought of the dance workshops. "I felt I had freedom to dance"

Mary O'Donnell



Guild Stage 1 course in '94 and memories of that creative time drifted to me throughout the day. A softly lit theatre setting surrounded the members, officers and Council members as the business of the day commenced. When Gordon Curl rose to address the gathering in this setting it was as if a performance was about to begin. He referred to the necessary stringent measures of disinfecting in place at the airport on arrival and acknowledged the difficulty some rural Irish members had in attending, due to foot and mouth disease. He also expressed disappointment that the youth dance group who were to perform could not join us.

The Guild president, Geraldine Stephenson, in her address, talked of

two dance workshops offered. These happened simultaneously allowing two groups to participate in both workshops. I was looking forward to climbing the many steps to the bright spacious Beckett dance studio overlooking Dublin city rooftops and revisiting my introduction to Laban.

Effort was the theme of Jan's dance workshop. We were warmly greeted and eased gently into the first dance session. It was wonderful to get the whole body back down onto the floor balancing, rolling, pushing away, touching. We explored kinetic tools for duo and ensemble material. Together with my partner, a member from Belfast, we explored "All Manner of Touching". We were drawn together and

REUNION WEEKEND IN CORK

A reunion weekend of Dance and craic was held at the Firkin Crane in November. On finishing the Laban Community Dance Leaders Course, Stage 1, our group decided to keep in touch by organising a weekend workshop every year. We wanted to get the best teachers and to enjoy ourselves while we were at it. There was tremendous interest in this weekend and we were joined by students of dance

from the Firkin Crane, OPED, Pegasini (a Cork based dance company) and a sprinkling of freelance dancers.

Amanda Banks, kindly agreed to stand in for Anna Carlisle, who unfortunately was ill and couldn't come to Cork. Amanda spent five years working with Attic Dance Company, performing and teaching various groups. She also choreographed in collaboration with composer, Nathaniel Reed and has now joined the Barebones Dance company as a free-lance performer and teacher.

The focus of this workshop was on different approaches to choreography. Amanda approached our first session in a 'mental' rather than 'physical' way; this approach is fragmented and abstract, having a very geometrical/mathematical/structural feel. The main idea is that the rules are set up in advance, devised by the head before the body gets involved. From this starting point, material can then be viewed to see if the rules have produced anything interesting.

This method was very new to most of us. It was challenging, frustrating and stimulating to work with such tight restrictions.

The second workshop was a physical, improvisational, organic and open approach. We improvised with 'rest' and 'movement'. This is a beginning that can be taken further and developed in whatever ways are appropriate to the material and ideas generated. The important aspect is to allow things to happen first; move the body before the head gets involved. Then let the ideas produced be expanded from the starting point, by observing the material and manipulating it in ways that are suggested by the material itself, rather than by a predetermined set of rules. As improvisation came easily to most of the group, we relaxed and thoroughly enjoyed this session.

Workshop three gave us a way in to theme based work, using improvisational tools to find movement ideas to express chosen themes. It focused on quality of movement and creating imagery. In this instance,

Amanda gave text as a starting point, allowing the theme to be interpreted differently by different members of the group. Amanda emphasised in this workshop the importance of getting across 'what you are trying to say' while being able to produce interesting movement material. It is this ability to get across what you are trying to express that inspires choreographer and dancer alike and can win or lose an audience.

On Sunday, Amanda treated us to a short performance of her work. This added dimension was an inspiration to those more youthful among us who hope to follow a career in dance. It was a pleasure to work with a teacher who is also a performer. The weekend was inspiring, stimulating and very enjoyable and we are looking forward to the next one.

Ann Kelly

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NEWS FROM THE CCPR

Mr Malcolm Denton, the Chief Executive of the CCPR, will retire in May and his place will be taken by Professor Margaret Talbot OBE who is at present Head of Sport at Leeds Metropolitan University.

The Movement & Dance Division discussed the Government's sports strategy, "A Sporting Future for All". It was noted that the word "recreation" does not appear in it but, as the Maastricht Treaty's definition of sport says "Sport means all forms of physical activity which through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels", it was accepted that recreational activity and the work of the national governing bodies were covered by the Government's plan. The Division expressed the view that quality PE within the curriculum is essential in all schools.

The CCPR website can be found on www.ccpr.org.uk. It is updated every week.

SPRITO (Sport & Recreation Industry Training Organisation) which is involved in employment, training, education and qualification issues affecting sport and recreation has been strongly criticised by the CCPR for doing too little for the voluntary sector and too little to support small national governing bodies. It was felt the quango had used our good will and expertise and given nothing in return. National governing bodies were looking for help in setting up transferable national qualifications. A representative of SPRITO will address the next divisional meeting.

Intense lobbying has resulted in two successes: checking against the Criminal Records Bureau list, required under the Child Protection Act, will be provided free to sports volunteers, and the remaining part of the 1789 Lord's Day Observance Act which dealt with commercial dancing, i.e. paying to dance, was finally deregulated by the House of Lords in time for the New Year's Eve festivities.

Bronwen Mills

LUTSF

The aim of this small charity is to provide financial support to individuals who wish to travel abroad or in the United Kingdom to attend a conference, to pursue a research project or undertake a short course of study in the field of movement or dance.

Application forms are available from 1st September of the year preceding the application deadline which is 25th January.

Forms can either be obtained by sending an A5 SAE (1st class stamp) to the Secretary, or from the website (<http://www.ullmann-trav.fsnet.co.uk>). Please note: Application forms are not available between 25th January and 1st September.

The Secretary, LUTSF, 24 Cuppin Street, Chester, CH1 2BN

MAGPIE DANCE COMPANY & URBAN DANCE PRESENT 'MAGIC GLASS' AND OTHER WORKS

In June Magpie Dance Company and Urban Dance bring a full evening of five contemporary dance works to The Bloomsbury Theatre in an event created and performed by learning disabled and able bodied dancers and choreographers.

Magpie Dance Company.

Magpie is an integrated dance company, ten of whom have a learning disability. Since their inception in 1994 Magpie Dance have amassed an impressive list of collaborators who have not only choreographed on but performed with the company. In 1997 the company received critical acclaim for their part in 9 Windows, South Bank Centre Blitz season.

"Playful in its dynamics, it unashamedly invited the audience to feast their eyes on the imperfect bodies of people who are usually kept indoors, to laugh at their humour and admire their concentration and skill." Josephine Leask

Urban Dance

In addition to creating Magic Glass on Magpie's dancers, Urban is working with schools in Greenwich as part of this collaboration. Their versatility enables them to work in a diverse range of spaces from street theatre to shopping malls and their commitment to educational work is reflected in the broad appeal and accessibility of their performances.

LABAN CENTRE LONDON

Construction work has now started on the new Laban Centre London at Creekside in Deptford, which will open in autumn 2002.

This follows the completion of demolition of the existing buildings on the site, and after archaeological investigations discovered nothing of historical interest.

In addition to the Centre's existing partners - the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England, the Creekside Renewal Programme and both Lewisham and Greenwich Councils - new contributions to the project in 2000 included donations from English Partnerships, the London Development Agency, and a further £500,000 from Lewisham Council.

MA

23 Laban/Bartineff Based Activities

This workshop looks at activities to improve co-ordination. Contact: Anke Teigeler, Veilchenweg 25, 65201 V. Email: Anke.Teigeler@t-online.de

24-25 Teaching Movement Efficiency from

In this workshop, participants will experience and learn from Tutor: Janet Hamburg.

Contact: Laban Bartineff, Im Breiten Wingert 11, 10119 Berlin. Tel: +49 6221 863526 email: t.riehm@t-online.de

26-27 Moving Bartineff Fundamentals Through

This workshop will introduce the basic movement concepts of Bartineff Fundamentals. Tutor: Janet Hamburg

27 Eurolab AGM

Contact: see May 24-25 entry

JUL

2-3 LInC Tutor Training Programme

The first of eight weekends run over two years of the International Summer Courses. Course content: Choreography, Improvisation etc.

Contact: LINC, Ivy Cottage, Clockhouse Lane East, 10044 (0) 1784 433480 email: mail@laban.org

7-10 Theory into Practice

Taking Laban into the 21st Century.

Contact: Motus Humanus, PO Box 11036, Denver, CO 80202 email: vjmheggie@uswest.net

17 Laban In Somerset

Creative Improvisation workshop for the joy of dance. Youthful energetic and the staid but keen. Our tutor: Lydia Everitt. Contact: Lydia Everitt. Tel: 01747 826007 email: lydia@lydiaeveritt.co.uk

JUL

2-15 Telematic Choreographies and Inter

This workshop is based on the premise that all choreographers or dancers working in modern dance use genuine multi-media cross-disciplinary ways of working. Tutors Wayne McGregor and Paul Sermon.

Contact: Choreographische Zentrum NRW, Tanz u

9-14 Dance Voice Summer School

The summer school is called 'An introduction to Fundamentals and Therapeutic Process, Dance and Makaton Signing.

Contact: Dance Voice Therapy Centre, Quaker M

9-21 Language of Dance Course

Contact: Language of Dance Centre, 17 Holland

16-27 International Summer School

Laban Centre, London Summer School Contact: I

21-22 Laban: The use of Effort in the Thera

Contact: Moving Arts, Gottesweg 169, 50939 Col

23-27 Bartineff Fundamentals for Dancer

Contact: Moving Arts, Gottesweg 169, 50939 Col



Wiesbaden, Germany

Coordination and sensorimotor function in children.
Wiesbaden, Germany

Laban/Bartiniéff Perspective

Cologne, Germany

Learn the movement ABCs for athletes.

69221 Dossenheim, Germany.

Enough Space

Cologne, Germany

at sequences followed by the variations of the
contact: see May 24-25 entry

Koln, Germany

Egham, Surrey

for anyone interested in tutoring on Laban
nt - Laban Fundamentals, Dance Training,

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Amherst, Massachusetts

Co. 80211, USA.

Taunton

ing with work that will accommodate both the
for the day will be Ilana Snyder
dia.everitt@btinternet.com

Essen, Germany

ere is little or no common ground between
nce. The goal of the workshop is to stimulate
rking in dance and performance.

d Neue Medien, Postfach, 45318 Essen

Bristol

dance Movement Therapy'. It will cover Laban
provisation and Mask Making, Body Language

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JULY (continued)

28 - August 5

Laban International Course

Eastbourne

Annual Dance Summer School: Dance and Laban Analysis - Dance training and
technique and your choice of special topics according to your personal field of interest.
Previous experience of Laban's work is not essential.

Tutors will include regular favourites plus Ou Taiwo and Megan Reisel. Contact: see
June 2nd-3rd entry

SEPTEMBER

15

Laban's Artistic and Philosophical Foundations

Guildford

The first of a series of research seminars and symposia run by the Laban Guild, in
association with The Labanotation Institute and the Dance Studies Department at Surrey
University. Faculty: Anna Carlisle, Gordon Curl, Dr Carol-Lynne Moore. Chair: Dr Ann
Nugent

Contact: Gordon Curl. Email: info@labanguild.org

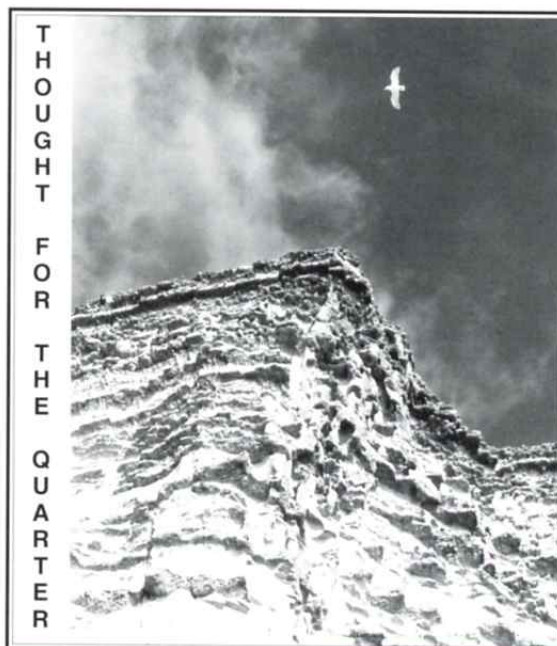
WISP DANCE CLUB

Cher Mather's group WISP exists to offer creative dance and movement experiences to
young people with disabilities and/or learning needs between the ages of 14 and 25 years.
They have the opportunity to enjoy dance creation and quality performance work. You may
remember they performed in the Dome last year.

This year WISP Dance Club is "Linking Together" with other young people in the community
through dance and movement. They will be joined by Dance Alive Community Dance and
the young people from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in a show called "Linking
Together" and they will be performing in July.

Last year's show "Life's Journey" was widely appreciated and WISP received letters of
congratulations from, among others, Sheila McGivering, Vice President of the Laban Guild.

If you want to know more, contact Cher Mather on cmather@csc.com



Jeffrey Scott Longstaff advises research degrees at Laban Centre London (j.longstaff@laban.co.uk). His work into the re-evaluation of Rudolf Laban's choreutics has been published in the journal *Perceptual & Motor Skills*.

In his early German work *Choreographie* (1926), Rudolf Laban presents various experiments in movement 'writing' used during the early development of what would eventually become modern-day Labanotation or Kinetography Laban. Examining the methods in this workbook of symbol systems reveals not only possibilities for movement-writing formats, but also reveals underlying mental conceptions of body movement which form the bases for how movements are viewed, implicit within any symbol system.



Fig 1 'Combined scales from primary-directions with dimensions and volute-links which are traversed twice' (Laban 1926, p. 53).

One collection of symbols is used to write several movement sequences (Fig. 1) (Laban 1926, 20-21, 35, 44-45, 47, 50-53, 72). A translation of these early symbols into equivalent Labanotation direction symbols reveals how they represent orientations of

body motion without reference to particular points or positions, hence they might be considered to be spatial 'vectors' (Longstaff, 1996; 2001). On the one hand, Labanotation direction symbols represent limb motion *implicitly*, as a transition from one limb 'direction' (starting position) to another direction (ending position) (Fig. 2) (Hutchinson 1970, pp. 29, 118-121), and this point-to-point conception of movement is also prevalent in modern-day choreutics. In contrast to this, the early vector symbols represent movement *explicitly* as an orientation of a line-of-motion without any indication of what the limb positions or 'points' might be (Fig. 3). Differences in these two conceptions of 'direction' can be highlighted by referring to a compass. Movement in directions north and south will converge toward a point (as in Labanotation), however motion in west or east directions do not converge but remain parallel (vector-type symbols).

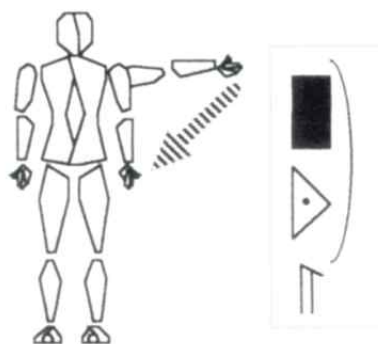


Fig 2 Modern-day Labanotation represents limb motion as a transition from one position to the next.



Fig 3 Vector method represents movement explicitly as an orientation of a line-of-motion without reference to points or positions.

Other vector-type notations are rarely used. 'Direction of progression' is symbolised by modifying Labanotation symbols with a small arrow, thus indicating a motion rather than a position (Hutchinson Guest 1983, p. 261). Laban also briefly returned to motion writing in *Choreutics* (1966 [1939], pp. 125-130) which he describes as 'an old dream in this field of research' but which is left for

the 'future development of kinetography'. Here, a 'free notation' is used to represent 'free space lines' by modifying Labanotation diagonal symbols with a dimension, thus indicating a 'deflection'. This highlights another crucial distinction. On one hand, vector symbols consist primarily of deflecting 'inclinations' (notice there are no symbols for 2-dimensional planar diagonals 'diameters', and also no symbol for 'centre') (Fig. 4). In contrast, Labanotation has no symbols for inclinations but must derive these by constructing symbols together.

In addition to 1D dimensions, 2D diameters (planar diagonals), and 3D diagonals, the 'inclinations' can be considered as a fourth type of directional orientation which appear to be unique to choreutics. However, they are elusive. While a *pure* 3D diagonal contains equal degrees of vertical sagittal, and lateral components, an inclination is considered to be 'deflected' from a diagonal and so is also oriented in 3D, but has irregular degrees of vertical, sagittal, and laterality. Each of 8 diagonal directions is deflected by 3 dimensions, either lateral ('flat'), vertical ('steep') or sagittal ('suspended'), producing 24 inclinations. While inclinations are the core material of the early vector-type symbolic conception, they are more obscure in point-to-point notation methods.

		Dimensions		
		vertical	lateral	sagittal
Diagonals		□ □	< >	∨ ∧
		steep	flat	suspended
right-fore-up	↗	↗	↘	↖
left-back-down	↖	↖	↗	↘
left-fore-up	↖	↖	↘	↗
right-back-down	↘	↘	↖	↗
left-back-up	↖	↖	↗	↘
right-fore-down	↘	↘	↖	↗
right-back-up	↘	↘	↗	↖
left-fore-down	↖	↖	↘	↗

Fig 4 Entire group of vector symbols; dimensions, diagonals, and deflected inclinations.

Rationale for choreutic deflection theory is described in many places (Laban 1966, pp. 88-90, 101; Ullmann 1966, pp. 141-145; 1971, p. 17; Bartenieff & Lewis 1980, pp. 33, 89-91) and develops partly from the fundamental dual concept of stability & mobility. Dimensional orientations are conceived as prototypes of pure stability, diagonals as pure spatial mobility, while

actual body movements occur as deflections or mixtures between these two: Since every movement is a composite of stabilising and mobilising tendencies, and since neither pure stability nor pure mobility exist, it will be the deflected or mixed inclinations which are the more apt to reflect trace-forms of living matter. (Laban 1966, p. 90)

'It might be speculated why this early method of motion writing was abandoned in favour of the positional-method of modern-day Labanotation.'

It might be speculated why this early method of motion writing was abandoned in favour of the positional-method of modern-day Labanotation. One reason may be the conceptual difficulty of inclinational orientations as compared to the simple regularity of pure dimensionals and diagonals. My personal experience has been that, while concepts of inclinations are initially unusual, with practice they actually simplify aspects of 'space harmony' and solve certain 'problems' in choreutic observation and embodiment. For example, human movements often do not pass through the 'points' of the choreutic

scaffolding (cube, icosahedron, etc.) but freely deviate into every conceivable direction and size. Rather than observing (or embodying) 'points in space', free spatial vectors allow orientations of movement to be observed immediately. The 'deflection' is identified by seeing the closest diagonal orientation of the motion (not the position!) together with the largest dimensional component. In embodiment, motion of any centre-of-gravity (of part or of the whole body) is perceived immediately as a deflecting free space line, rather than 'reaching to the points'. That is, instead of performing a series of points or positions (so often typical of choreutic practice), what is performed are the orientations of motions.

Deflecting inclinations also can be used to re-envision traditional dance techniques. This was Laban's (1926, pp. 6-19, 64) method where deflecting content of ballet motions (between the more static ballet poses) are identified as inclinations and used as the core material for a 'new dance' technique which oriented its training method in diagonals rather than dimensions (Bodmer & Huxley 1982). The collection of vector symbols or free space lines, offers a structure through which this method of deflecting inclinations can be encompassed in choreutic practice.

Jeffrey Scott Longstaff

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Long Awaited Book on the life and work of Rudolf Laban by John Hodgson

The celebrations in the Royal Albert Hall of the Guild's 'Kaleidoscopia Viva' (1970)- choreographed by our current President Geraldine Stephenson - made a profit and led the Festival Committee to conclude that the commissioning of a biography of Laban would be the most appropriate use of the newly acquired funds. However, Lisa Ullmann took over this idea and invited John Hodgson (Head of Drama at Bretton Hall) to write the biography. Many people and organisations, including Bretton Hall, the West Riding County Council and members of the Guild gave John their financial and moral support. John travelled to Germany and other European countries, and with the help of Viv Bridson amassed a great deal of valuable archival material. But John did not complete the biography before he died in 1997 and it was left to his friends and Methuen to complete.

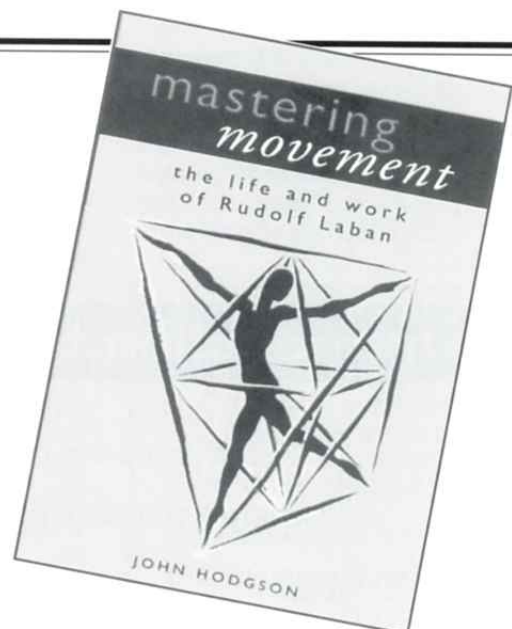
The book will be published by Methuen in May of this year.



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Mastering Movement

The Life and Work of Rudolf Laban
John Hodgson

The defining study of the life and work of one of the greatest influences on dance in the twentieth century

Making research important would mean placing Dance on level with other art forms like pure arts of Painting and Literature. Laban began as a painter, not on a grand scale, but it made it many times better for him to understand what is making a long process so natural about images which had to be maintained. With his good education Laban began relying on analysis more and more and only educating the dancer became his main goal. Many lacking in understanding what dance is find key questions but not the answers. Laban pointed out in his book "A Life for Dance", that "in the usual theatre buildings the subtlety of gesture gets lost as the distance from the stage increases while those sitting in front see details of mime too clearly and at the same time do not have a full view of the whole dance area."

Awakening to a greater need to research into something which comes so naturally to most of us, dance at all levels, appears now to be more prevailing than ever before. Laban considered research important. His book "Mastery of Movement" specifically acknowledges that. Considering the western culture places so much emphasis on, and appreciates virtually only the written word and scientific explanations there is little option left for any one form of human expression not to follow the suit. Is this taking things to extreme? Not necessarily so. How else do we record for posterity the non-verbal communication of movement and dance intended to be seen or heard perhaps once only? Laban noted many key issues involved in research and only time will prove him right.

To find out what is being done at the Laban Centre London at postgraduate levels I went to their Library and, taking the advantage of their kind offer to all Guild members to use their library free of charge, I spend several hours browsing through the last year's dissertations for their taught course for the Master's degree. The titles revealed quite a wide range of individual interests. Fourteen successful candidates' topics ranged from artistic and educational practices and policies in the Greek State School of Dance which is a non-fee paying institution; the school curriculum in India influenced by the pre-1988 UK curricula; rhythmic muscular bonding in collective dance; relationship between performance environments and the dancing body; globality and identity politics transformations of representations of the feminine in early American modern dance; dance and repetition; to the digital dance and the second media age; the fascination of flamenco dance cross culturally; body movement/space/landscape from the air; modification of educational system; and the therapeutic group dance/movement in a medium secure unit with offenders who suffer from major psychotic illnesses. Some dissertations included videos.

"Mastery of Movement is not only of value to the stage artist, but to everyone, since we are all concerned, whether consciously or subconsciously, with perception and expression." ("Mastery of Movement" p80). Could this be the motivating force behind Laban's untiring pursuance of finding ways to analyse, explain and record Movement and Dance?

Dr Gregory Sporton, Head of Research at the Laban Centre, told me that they were very keen to develop a research (Mphil/Phd)

studentship specifically in Laban related study. For this, he felt, there was need for high quality scholars especially among the younger generations, in their twenties and early thirties. Dr Sporton also emphasises the importance of investigating the epistemology of dance. There is always the high hybridity to research in art and no research takes place outside of it in self referential way any more than it is not appropriate. It must make some sort of reference to wider world to which it is connected. Hence the need for practical work and for knowing precisely what there is to assess bearing in mind that the real test for research is when under scrutiny it maintains its integrity. Assessments are case by case. He is inviting the Guild members who have ideas about this work to get in touch with him at the Centre.

In addition to Dr Valerie Preston Dunlop's work on choretics and Dr Ana Sanchez Colberg, who follows in her footsteps, there is also Jeffrey Longstaff whose work concerns analysis of movement, the Laban Centre is looking at new material and the practice based research.

The Laban Centre is understandably undergoing many changes since they will be moving soon to their new premises specially built for them on the Thames south bank. They have many valuable records about Laban. They hope to begin a digital archival system. Many of Laban's original drawings and lessons are kept in piles at present and need organising for easier accessibility. It is Laban's work that the Centre intends to promote much more in the future.

Vera Curling

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MARY WIGMAN - MORE EXTRACTS INCLUDING SOME OF HER DIARY ENTRIES

Performance

Terry Oliver has continued to translate some extracts from "Mary Wigman. The life and work of a great dancer". They refer to the work she did with Laban. The book, written by Hedwig Muller and was published originally by Akademie der Künste.

Having just fled from music-dedicated Helleran, Mary Wigman was now coming face to face with free dance to the rhythm of music. But Laban's music was different from that in Helleran. Laban made the music accompany the movement, not the movement subordinate to the music. For Laban did not think a lot of traditional melodic music used as an accompaniment to dancing, as he later wrote in "The World of the Dancer" ... "Music as is customary today, attracts as a constructive whole, primarily because it is logic-based." And all Laban was concerned about was to reawaken the latent emotional and irrational capabilities in man, in order to allow an existential, cosmic experience of movement. For him dancing was the original art to which all other arts looked and since body rhythm alone counted for Laban, music only came into question when it underpinned this dancing rhythm through accentuated beat rhythms. To this end he had ready a whole arsenal of appropriate instruments: tambourines, castanets, bells, clappers, gongs, drums and when the occasion arose

two simple wooden sticks were used. A recorder was even tolerated as a melodic instrument, as was here and there a penny whistle.

The metric monotony of such instrument noises was supposed in the first instance to bring about the dismantling of rational inhibitions before the movement began and the loosening of the body tensions in order to be able to give oneself wholeheartedly to the rhythm of the music. It was almost a meditative contact with music, a music which - as Mary Wigman described - "...forced nothing on the dancer from all the thousand mood nuances and sensitivities which otherwise come out from hearing music which, if the dancer is musically sensitive, cloaks him in its soft melody or excites him through dissonant chord sequences"

After the strong dominance of music with Dalcroze, Mary Wigman arrived at the other end of the scale - the independence of the dance work of art. The dances she developed at Dalcroze's without music were now revolutionary innovations, not a sign of a lack of funds to pay for musicians. Freedom of movement from music was for Laban, something definitely on the agenda. "But the different kinds of dance, music or words with accompanying body movements, dances with accompanying music rhythms,

representations of concepts (pantomime) etc. all show themselves as a chain of possibilities whose last link, the free dance, the dance without accompaniment, gives the clearest expression to the inner being of the dance work of art."

Shortly after arriving at Mount Verity, Mary Wigman wrote her first essay in her diary about free dance. Looking back at her time in Helleran she concludes: "Up to now dance and music seemed indivisibly linked. All attempts to give life to conventional movement were based on establishing a unity between both these two arts. A unity, which in spite of all musical links, all attempts had never established, and never would establish. Dance and music - they are so alike, so equally valid for one to give itself up to the other without mutually taking what is individual, what is best. Indeed, they obey the same laws and the answer may lie in the fact that for man it is always the process of merging both areas as a fulfilment of the dance which hovers before him. Under the spell of pure music the dancer can no longer remain independent. He takes on too much of the mood of the sound flowing towards him and is thereby weakened, imprisoned in the movement's own expression."

INVITATION TO THE DANCE

invitation to the Dance

Dance for People with dementia and their carers
Heather Hill

University of Stirling, FK9 4LA Scotland
www.stir.ac/dsdc
Tel 01786 467740
Fax 01786 466846

This accessible, practical guide is packed with ideas for introducing dance into care settings, grounded in current theory on dementia. Heather Hill's person centred approach places a clear focus on the contribution and creativity of the older person with dementia. Emphasis is placed on the carer, or workshop leader being alive to what is happening in each moment in a dynamic relationship to the older person.

The book offers the reader differing views of dementia, a look at what dance is, and where it fits in, and the "nuts and bolts" of what to do and more importantly how to do

it, but without ever being prescriptive. Providing enjoyment and opportunities for communication are the main aims.

A strength of the book for me is the section on dancing with people with dementia, poignant stories which place the work in its real life context. It is here that the qualities of the effective carer, workshop leader or therapist shine through.

The book is beautifully illustrated with a central section of photographs, and concludes with suggestions for follow up reading, resources and contacts.

Heather Hill shows how dance can contribute to the well being, and maintenance of personhood in people with dementia, and how all of us can dance when we move with "sensitivity, mindfulness and imagination" (Exiner and Kelynack 1994)

fasmine Pasch

Book review

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HELLO AND GOODBYE FROM ANN WARD

After 35 years in N Ireland, we are moving back to England to be closer to our families and have chosen to settle in Essex, on the coast near Maldon. It's an exciting time, but a stressful time (will I ever find anything again!) and a sad time as well, as I am having to leave behind so many friends in Ireland.

The good news, I hope, is that I expect to be back regularly and to keep in touch with everyone. I am already planning the next Stage 1 Course near Dublin for the Autumn and we hope to run a summer school in Belfast in 2002.

The AGM day in Dublin was a wonderful opportunity to meet friends from both North and South of Ireland and England, but to all my Irish friends to whom I haven't been able to say a personal "Goodbye" - or "Au revoir" - I send my love, thanks and best wishes. I look forward to seeing you again in the not too distant future. And to all my friends in England - Hello! I'm looking forward to being able to meet up more often at workshops and to attend more Guild meetings in person.

Hope to see you soon

Ann

Please note Ann's new address on page 2

Has anyone got a copy of Modern Educational Dance by Rudolf Laban, edited by Lisa Ullmann that I can either buy or borrow? If so please contact:

Sue Grover

Tel: 01582 768001

Email: sue.grover@bodytalk.fsnet.co.uk

Laban Guild President Geraldine Stephenson will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions to the field of movement studies at the Motus Humanus Roundtable on Professional Issues, June 7 - 10, 2001, at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Motus Humanus, a professional organisation for movement specialists based in the western United States, has presented three Lifetime Achievement Awards previously, to Warren Lamb, to Dr. Ann Hutchinson-Guest, and to Irmgard Bartenieff (posthumously).

"The selection of Geraldine Stephenson as this year's recipient is very timely,"

commented Motus President Dr. Carol-Lynne Moore. "Geraldine is celebrating her fiftieth year as an independent choreographer for stage and screen. She has been and continues to be a pioneer in so many areas - solo concert work, festival productions, dance on television. Her career is truly inspirational.

Geraldine Stephenson will be discussing her creative applications of Laban theory in a keynote address opening the Roundtable. The three-day event also includes movement workshops, panel discussions, and other presentations drawing on the talents of movement professionals from the United States, Europe, South America, and the Middle East.

Contact details are in the diary of events on page 9.

Carol-Lynne Moore

MARY WILKINSON MA 1928 - 2001

Members of the Guild are very sad to learn of the recent death of Mary Wilkinson, for she was a long-standing member of the Guild.

Mary started her career in dance education by becoming a student and then a faculty member of the Laban Art of Movement Studio in Addlestone in 1955 where she worked alongside Marion North, Betty Redfern, Valerie Preston and Geraldine Stephenson. It was here where she also met Mollie Davies - her companion over many years. In 1958 Mary joined the staff of Southland's College where she became Head of Department and from there transferred to Roehampton Institute where, as Principal Lecturer she worked with Dr Mollie Davies MBE in the Dance Studies Department. She was a most valued visiting lecturer and examiner in Movement and Dance in the London Institute and extensively throughout the UK.

Few members of the Guild have been more dedicated and involved in its activities - for Mary was not only a member of the Courses and Conferences Committee but also a lead lecturer. Mary co-directed Orchestis, a much admired and innovative dance group which toured the country and colleges. She helped to set up and maintain the archives of Dance and the Child International at the University of Surrey and was also a long-standing member and secretary of The Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund.

Mary will be remembered with great pride and affection.

VIEW FROM AMERICA

There used to be talk of "Non-verbal Communication" by serious researchers and of "Body Language" by the less serious. The former seems to have died a natural death, both in the U.S. and U.K., while the latter has become established.

Americans are more forthright and will tell someone directly "Your body language shows me you are offended" while the British are usually more indirect and are likely to use the term: only when talking about someone rather than talking to them.

The early 1970's was the burgeoning time for both superficial and serious research. In the U.S., to quote two examples, Julius Fast wrote "Body Language" and Henry Calero "How To Read People Like a Book". In the U.K. a remarkable marketing campaign brought Desmond Morris to prominence with his book "Manwatching". On the serious side the U.S. produced authors such as Schefflin, Birdwhistell, Kendon.

The work of the serious authors is highly regarded by Dr. Martha Davies, who is well known in the Laban field in the U.S. and provides "Movement Signatures" which are contributing to police work in detecting criminals. Martha was editor of the now defunct "Journal of Non-Verbal Behavior". Interestingly, she has recently stated that serious research into non-verbal behaviour has ended and that if it is to be revived the work of Schefflin, Birdwhistell and Kendon will have to be done all over again.

Perhaps it is a good thing that we do not pursue non-verbal studies any more. After all, it is a negative approach. But, surely, there is a need to conduct serious studies in this field.

I have been intrigued recently to hear in the U.S. the term "embodied communication" used in conversation. So that's what we are doing when we dance we are embodying communication with the outside world!

The term arises from the growing interest in the corporate aspect of consciousness and is perhaps best summed up by the title of a book by Lakoff and Johnson, "Philosophy in the Flesh". I think Laban would have approved of the trend of this study.

The book does refer to movement but not, it seems to me, with much understanding of how movement can be observed, recorded and analysed. Laban was often referred to as the philosopher of Dance and Movement. Perhaps this is a good time to pick this up and revive our own philosophising.

Warren Lamb

Council Members for 2001 - 2002

Geraldine Stephenson	President	Gordon Curl	Chair
Jan Nicol	Secretary	Pam Anderton	Treasurer
Lydia Everitt	Editor	Jill Bunce	
Janet Harrison	Minutes	Sheila McGivering	Courses Officer
Ann Ward	Membership		

We need a new editor

Are you the person we are looking for?

Lydia, Christine and Wendy are moving on to other things at the end of the year and wish to hear from anyone who would like to take part in creating this magazine each quarter.

You might like to be the editor or a member of the editorial team, supporting the work of the editor.

Give any one of us a ring, or e-mail:

Lydia Everitt 01747 826007 Email: lydia.everitt.btinternet.com

Christine Meads 01823 421206 Email: jcmeads@virgin.net

Wendy Hermelin 01460 76829 Email: wjhermelin@hotmail.com

RESEARCH SEMINARS/SYMPOSIA

Following the Guild's 'Think-Tank' in June last year there has been a repeated demand for more research opportunities in which members could participate. As a result of this demand the Guild is initiating a series of research seminars and symposia to which both members and non-members will be invited. The first in the series will begin as indicated below:

'Laban's Artistic and Philosophical Foundations'

Research Symposium

Saturday 15 September 2001

Arranged by the Laban Guild in association with The Labanotation Institute and the Dance Studies Department University of Surrey.

Venue: The Performing Arts Centre University of Surrey 10.0am - 4.30pm

Faculty: Anna Carlisle, Dr Carol-Lynne Moore, Gordon Curl, Dr Ann Nugent (in the Chair)

Further details and application forms will appear in the Summer issue of this Magazine

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Guild 2001

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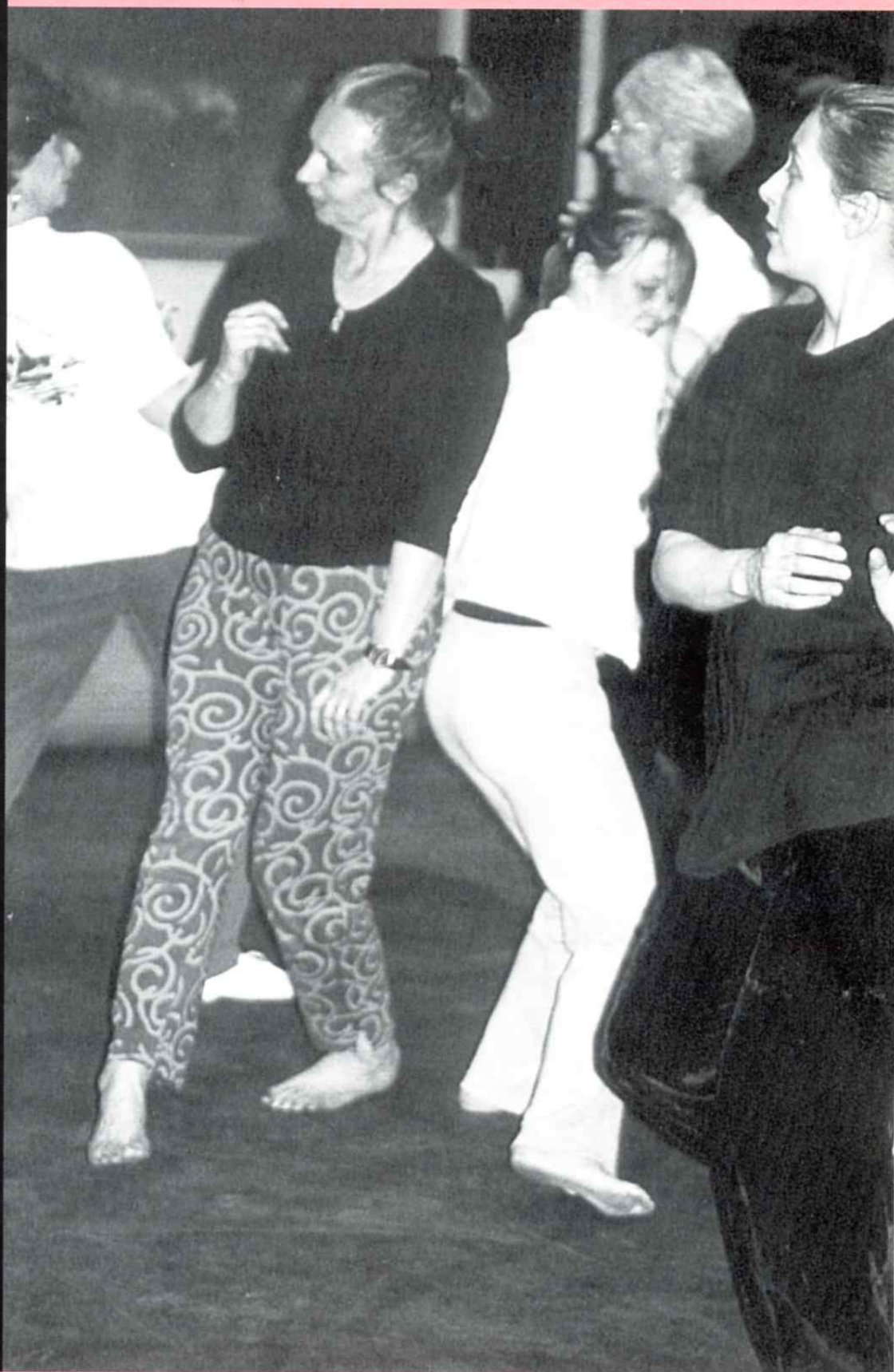
Signature _____ Date _____

Please return your membership form to: Ann Ward, Membership Secretary, 30 Ringsend Rd, Limavady, Derry, N. Ireland BT49 0QJ



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