



Movement and Dance

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letters

From: Dr Marion North OBE to members of the Guild:

Thank you so much for inviting me to be your Guest of Honour at your AGM and Day of Celebration at LABAN on 27th March. I was delighted to be able to attend and escort delegates around the new building, which, as you can imagine, has been a major preoccupation of mine for the last few years.

It was a splendid day of celebration and I do congratulate the Guild on its initiatives. I do hope we can keep in touch in the years to come.

Marion North

From: Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest to the Guild's President:

Thank you for inviting me to be a guest at the Laban Guild's Celebration Day last Saturday. What a varied and interesting day it was - not least the revealing talk on Sylvia Bodmer her son gave! I learned so much more about her to add to my own personal memories of her sparkling enthusiasm and creative abilities.

It was a pleasure to be given a tour of the building by Marion, and to witness the joy with which she pointed out every aspect of the design and decoration - the culmination of her dream and years of hard work. I went to Janet Lunn's 'bridge-building' session: the freedom to improvise and interlock with total strangers, the sense of trust, is undoubtedly a rewarding gift from the Laban work. I also chose to be an observer of Alison Jones' presentation of William Forsythe's *Choreutic Operations*. It was fascinating to see the movement results of pulling out or condensing imaginary lines in space and between body parts.

The Transitions Dance Company performed with skill and assurance, assisted by interesting changes in lighting and the Gala Buffet Supper provided a chance to share ideas and information with new and old friends. So I do thank you for a rewarding day. It was good to see the Guild so 'alive and kicking' and the enthusiastic involvement of the younger generation.

With warmest wishes.

Ann Hutchinson Guest

From: Dr Geraldine Stephenson to the Editor:

It was generous of the Editorial Team to include in the Spring Edition of the *Movement and Dance Magazine* considerable coverage of my Award of Honorary Doctor of Arts of *De Montfort University* on October 23rd 2004.

The day was an extraordinary experience for me - one I shall never forget. It was full of pageantry, colour, joy and formality. It was like one of my own pageants, but instead of directing it from outside, I was in it as the centre piece - never quite knowing what was coming next as we had no rehearsal! I was asked to give a six minute speech, which I did; but seeing so many young men and women in the audience (plus older dignitaries on the platform with me) it just had to be extended with a bit of movement. And what better than a Red Indian War Dance? (I had learned this many years before for a BBC production of 'The Last of the Mohicans'). They all did it amazingly well and had a wonderful time stamping and shouting. One of my friends pointed out to me that I had added seven minutes to my schedule. No-one seemed to mind!

Seriously, however, I owe so much to my early tutors: Joan Goodrich at *Bedford Physical Training College*, and of course to Laban, Lisa Ullmann and Sylvia Bodmer at the *Manchester Art of Movement Studio*. I learnt so much from what they taught and how they taught it - each teacher so very different. My Doctorate Degree stems from their work and still goes out to many people - often Guild Members whom I have taught and choreographed through many years.

I am indebted to those who played a part in my nomination - not least Dr Margaret Whitehead and the Centenary Committee of *Bedford Physical Education Old Students' Association*.

(Bedford is now an integral part of *De Montfort University*).

Geraldine Stephenson

editorial



Following Marion North's original and generous invitation, Anthony Bowne - the new Director of LABAN - gave the delegates at this year's Guild's Celebrations and AGM, the warmest of welcomes in the magnificent new buildings at Creekside. The combination of Sir Walter Bodmer's inspired *Laban Lecture* and subsequent vitalising Workshops, made it a day to remember! Our thanks are due to all those involved in the day's organisation and execution. We are greatly indebted, in particular, to Pam Anderton for having captured some poignant moments of the day's busy programme for our Magazine cover and pages.

In this edition we have continued to probe the minds of our 'experts' with a most penetrating response from Anna Carlisle; we have also prevailed upon the legendary Sam Thornton to share with us a 'Stimulus for Dance' with (none other than) his renowned *Carmina Burana*.

Perhaps our most challenging contribution is that of Jim Schofield's 'Dance in the Park' and his case for 'alternative and more intuitive' polyhedral figures than those originally proposed by Laban for his orientation in space; we shall welcome lively responses from our readers.

Ann Hutchinson Guest, in her foregoing letter, refers to the 'freedom to improvise and interlock with total strangers (and) the sense of trust' in our dance experience, which, she says, stems from Laban's work. We shall take up this theme in our next issue when we consider the values of Community Dance - not least for its aesthetic and artistic dimensions.

In the meantime we must express our greatest regret at the death of one of the Guild's most valued Patrons - Ellinor Hinks - whose obituary appears on page 20 of this issue; her contribution to movement and dance will long be revered! We also deeply regret the death of another of the Guild's distinguished members and former College Principal: Audrey Bamba OBE - who has also made a major contribution to physical education and dance. An obituary to Audrey will appear in our next issue.

Gordon Curl

president's address - agm 2004

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Recently I came upon the Secretary's Report of the founding of the Laban Guild in 1945. It gave such interesting information about this that I decided to begin my address by reading it to you:

SECRETARY'S REPORT

One evening in July 1945 a small group of Manchester Teachers gathered together to meet Miss Ullmann. They had trained under her for four years and in her opinion were ready to try to teach Modern Dance in the Manchester Schools. Together with Miss Ullmann they felt that some safeguard was necessary to their teaching qualification in this work, and so from this group a small Committee was chosen to try to draft some form of Constitution and indeed to find a name for a society which they hoped could and would be formed.

The first name chosen was 'The Art of Movement Guild' and the types of members designated as: 'Associate', 'Student', 'Graduate' and 'Master'.

Members of Committee and First Members of Committee were chosen together with a Board of Examiners. This Draft Constitution was sent to Members of Committee for their information and comments.

From their comments came two chief points:
1. That the Guild should bear Mr Laban's name.
2. That the Board of Examiners should disappear.

Mr Laban gave his consent to the use of his name in the title of the Guild. The Board of Examiners disappeared and a second draft Constitution under the expert guidance of Mr Lawrence was prepared. This was discussed in great detail at the first Council Meeting in Sheffield in January 1946 and was passed point by point. Finally, the momentous decision was made that a Guild should be formed. This great news was announced by Miss Ullmann in the Common Room at the Sheffield Christmas School on January 3rd 1946.

Since then the Council has held a further Meeting at Chichester in August 1946 and after further discussion the final Constitution was put into the hands of the printer and sent out to members.

Gladys E M Stevens Hon. Secretary

Since then, throughout the years, the Laban Guild has done much growing and shrinking - shrinking and growing - always trying to adapt to the movement climate of the time. In this period we have a very energetic Courses Committee who have been busily gathering all sorts of ideas for people to learn more of Laban's work at the same time thoroughly enjoying themselves. **Do please read page 7 of the Annual Report.** It includes *Beginner Classes*, *Master Classes*, a 30 Hour *Foundation Course*, Schemes for the interest of under 15s etc. These take place in different places. It is up to Guild Members to support these activities. The Guild will only thrive if Guild Members take advantage of what is offered to them. Again I say: **read page 7 of the Annual Report!**

It is sad that during this last year the Guild has lost three 'Titans' of Laban teaching:

AUDREY BAMBRA OBE, Principal for many years of Chelsea College of Physical Education in Eastbourne. She had the courage to introduce Laban's work to her students when it was not well known in the educational world. Amongst her staff she appointed Jackie Langridge and Lorna Wilson to teach Laban work and many of their students came on to the 'Two Plus One' Courses at the Art of Movement Studio and went on to teach children in schools. Audrey also brought a great deal of Laban knowledge to the Central Council of Physical Recreation.

ELLINOR HINKS, Principal of Nonington College, also believing in Laban's ideas, appointed Sally Archbutt and Hettie Loman to teach and choreograph creative dance. When she retired Ellinor helped Lisa Ullmann sort the vast Laban Archives and deposit them in the Research Department of Surrey University. It was a massive task. Then when Lisa Ullmann died, Ellinor, together with Athalie Knowles founded the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund - which gives out many movement and dance awards each year - and is still going strong.

ENID PLATT, energetic, loyal and with immense enthusiasm, was one of the very early teachers to take up Laban work in Manchester. She taught children and students for countless years, supporting Sylvia Bodmer with the Manchester Dance Circle and continuing to keep it flourishing after Sylvia died. Enid will long be remembered.

All these energetic people supported Lisa and Laban at the very beginning of their work in this country. They were the ones who convinced the Education Committees that Laban's work was of great importance. Now we continue to advance into the future. The new Courses will be available in a variety of areas - but still not enough! We need the help and interest of more Guild Members to create more classes and to take part in them.

I cannot finish this address without mentioning the tremendous work of Gordon Curl and Pam Anderton who have done so much to create such excellent editions of the Guild Magazines during the illness of Stephen Parry. It is amazing what they have achieved. But the Guild must not take their work for granted. They desperately need help - so Guild Members get writing and send them a surprise article (however short). Astonish them! And in the meantime have a WONDERFUL DAY - it is 58 years since the Guild was founded!

Geraldine Stephenson

celebrations at creekside!



RANDOM COMMENTS BY DELEGATES:

- how reassuring to be welcomed so fulsomely to LABAN Creekside by its new Director Anthony Bowne -
- and splendid to have Marion North as our Guest of Honour and as our escort around the magnificent award winning buildings -
- a very positive day with insights into Sylvia Bodmer's life and history of the Guild -
- lovely to reminisce with Sir Walter and then be challenged by Alison -
- inspired teaching by Janet Lunn, Alison Jones, Michael Platt and Uma Mather -
- exciting and well-prepared Workshops -
- a professional and well executed performance by Transitions -
- a well balanced day!

MORE CELEBRATIONS - THIS TIME IN SUFFOLK!

Suffolk Youth theatre under its Director Michael Platt celebrated their 10th anniversary with another stunning production in the Wolsey Theatre Ipswich from May 5 - May 8th - this time of Bertolt Brecht's 'The Good Person of Sichuan'. It combined all the dramatic movement, acting, singing, choral speaking, vivid costumes, properties and lighting which have elevated this Youth Company into such remarkable - if not professional - standards of performance. We hope to illustrate this production in our next edition. Our congratulations go to Michael and his Company on their Anniversary.

the laban mask - the mask's story



I am one among thirty other masks carved by Lola Eytel who, in the days of the Kaiser, served as ambassadors in various countries including France, Greece and some in South America. Lola and her sister Margaret grew up speaking several languages and each in their way became amateur artists. Lola carved wood and Margaret played the violin. The fall of the Kaiser made it necessary for them to earn their livings, whilst maintaining their creative interests and their network of cultured friends.

For a time Lola, a fine horsewoman, worked in the stables which housed the horses and military mounts of Goring which she regularly exercised. Margaret found work in the American embassy as an interpreter. Both spoke idiomatic English in addition to their other languages.

These two occupations served the ladies well when in the thirties they were able to assist Jewish musicians to leave Germany. Margaret's work involved her in carrying legal communications between the American Embassy and offices in the Reichstag. When delivering legal affidavits to Himmler's office, a few extra ones with the knowledge of her employers were inserted to be signed by Himmler himself. Both sisters became involved in money exchanges and selling of jewellery to realise funds for journeys. When America entered the war, Margaret was under surveillance, but in spite of this they continued to take risks right up to the end of hostilities. They worked as interpreters in prisoner of war camps and frequently smuggled out letters from British prisoners to be "forwarded".

They continued to listen to the BBC in spite of knowing there was a spy planted in their block of flats. Their small battery radio was hidden variously between a hole in the floor under a bed and in a sewing box which moved from room to room as necessary.

Meanwhile their mother the Baroness, now a widow, protested vigorously in perfect French to various commandants of the French army who were permitting their troops to 'abuse' women in the countryside and take precious food from farmers. By the end of the war farm and dray horses were being fed on pulped cardboard so all fodder and grain was precious.

During these years I was "just a piece of wood" hidden at the bottom

of a kitchen drawer. Lola in the early thirties had met Rudolf Laban and he had commissioned her to create carved faces to be worn in a production he had devised and choreographed based upon his ideas regarding dance "being released from the restrictions of classical ballet". This production "Motherhood against War" featured Mary Wigman and Harold Kreutzburg in the main roles. Thus I and twenty nine others were carved to represent various aspects and faces of grieving women of different ages.

Partly because of this 'decadent' production Rudolf Laban lost favour with the rising Nazi regime and left Germany under circumstances which are well documented. His writings joined the banned and burned publications condemned by the Nazi regime. Before leaving he gave Lola three of her carved masks and these were kept quietly in the house she shared with her mother and sister in Stuttgart. An air raid caused them to rescue what they could from the fire and at this time two of the three masks were lost, believed stolen. I am the sole survivor of the gift of Rudolf Laban to their maker. After the war I was kept lightly oiled and displayed on the wall of their new flat.

The mask comes to England

In 1947 Dorothy (then Shutt) and Margaret Robinson took their marionette show to a summer camp. An invitation came to the camp inviting "the two English ladies to come to tea" from Lola and Margaret Eytel. The two sisters loved English poetry and seized the opportunity to have some read aloud to them. This visit began a friendship between the two elderly ladies and Dorothy which lasted until their deaths in the seventies. I visited them to record poems on their little tape recorder and learned of their lives before and during the war years of risk. "When you were out after curfew on some errand, you could smell fear" they told me.

I had been taught for three years by Rudolf Laban at the *Northern Theatre School* in Bradford and on the occasion of my last visit, just prior to my marriage, Lola gave me as a wedding gift, her last carved mask. So I have shared space with this reminder of my links with Laban, the commissioner, and Lola, the maker of the mask. Now it should be housed where more people can see the beautiful grieving face carved so sensitively by my dear friend Lola Eytel.

A photograph of the chorus line wearing all the masks, together with Mary Wigman and Harold Kreutzburg are amongst my archive papers in *Manchester Metropolitan University* Drama department in the education building. There is also a photograph of Rudolf Laban as he must have appeared at the time of the production.

Dorothy Heathcote
February 2004

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stimulus for dance *carmina burana* - movement choir

The following notes by Sam Thornton will bring back vivid memories to scores of Movement Choir devotees - for Sam is a legendary figure in community dance and has for many years inspired holiday course delegates with his participatory choreography.

Where to Begin?

I thought the best place to begin, perhaps the only place to begin, was with an experience many Guild members have shared: *Carmina Burana*. I have restricted myself to a retrospect of the process I went through as I attempted to make the first chorus of *Carmina Burana* into the first canto of a Movement Choir.

What is it about?

To me, *Carmina Burana* is about a journey from before the cradle until after the grave. This is a hopeful view but not bounded by a religious or esoteric focus. An alternative title for *Carmina* - "The Wheel of Fortune" - provides two strong, but contrasting images: the material world we can see and touch - the Wheel - and the invisible world of influences we can't see, only experience and live through - Fortune. I tried to acknowledge both images without defining which was being worked on. The dancers were going to dance the un-danceable and present the un-presentable. What an adventure for me and I hoped, for them.

My Initial Response:

The first chorus, however, is only the introduction to a longer piece, so the 'big' picture has to be established before each component can be considered. I listen to the music and write down phrases and draw patterns and shapes as they happen. This is an initial, non-intellectual response. The mind has no place here. Then I listen to it again and again, writing things down each time. With a long piece like *Carmina*, it is necessary to be selective, so I decide which choruses I will use, which 'speak' to me and make a provisional running order. Of equal importance is to decide which are beyond me.

Running Order - Cohesiveness!

I look at this running order and my scribbles. Are they cohesive in terms of changes of relationship and group shape, spatial and effort variation? Is it an appropriate length? Does it have, overall, a balanced 'feel'? If the answer to all these is 'yes' then experience can now fill in the detail and 'count the bars.'

Simplicity - Economy!

Whatever movement events are required, they need to conform to two fundamental criteria - 'Simplicity and Economy'. The more dancers there are on the floor the simpler things have to be. Ideally every dancer should be successful from the first note of a movement choir to the last. If they err, they will know it and feel it. I want them to enjoy the experience and, because of what they have danced, be able to enter the world of mediaeval monks through the music of Carl Orff. The first chorus has three quite distinct sections: none very long but each clearly defined. The number three recurs, implicitly, throughout the whole piece. In the first chorus three things need to be done: establish the dancer in his space, place him on the wheel, set the wheel in motion and accelerate it to destruction so that the next part of the story can unfold.

Three Worlds!

Three phrases of music, clearly defined and powerful, begin the whole work. There are three dimensions to our physical world, there are three planes of movement. Throughout the first chorus, journeys around the planes are the recurring movement theme. These define the physical world and the dancer's place in it. The dancers circle the 'door', 'table', the 'wheel.' They are positive, bold, eager to go on into the world. Their movements are crisp, firm, accurate and assured. Each circuit preceded by one measured arm gesture or one step. No indecision, no 'spaghetti' limbs. Clarity and confidence are the key notes to the opening. At the end of those first three musical phrases, the dancers have

established themselves and are ready to begin their journey.



Wheel, Hub and Spokes!

Now the dancers make the wheel with hub and spokes. The 'stepping' is carried out with pauses, 'holds' that have to be mastered. This stepping is brisk but not hurried, prance-like with little knee lift, stride length short. The dancers are purposeful. Their body carriage is a celebration of man's ability to walk on two legs. By the end of this section the Wheel is complete and has been turning. Each dancer knows his/her place and has arrived. Journeys around the 'door' and 'wheel' re-appear and are used to expand and contract the Wheel and move it on. Punching and stamping become part of each circuit to build up the energy, re-affirm man's physical world and his physical nature.

The Wheel's Disintegration!

Finally, as a preparation to the Wheel's disintegration, the dancers turn. Turning is exciting but I have to be aware that it can involve too much 'free flow' for some to contain. The first chorus is about carefully placing one movement after another, making order out of chaos. When this has been accomplished, turning can be used as a way of moving from one situation to the next; it can temporarily make a transitional chaos. The Wheel flies apart. All this has taken just two minutes and thirty five seconds. And what happens in the next chorus? The dancers are born.



The Final Chorus!

The final chorus of the Movement Choir is an exact repetition of the opening chorus but for the very end. The Wheel does fly apart but re-assembles as the final notes fade. The dancers are joined, stable, grounded, held in the circle, held by the energy they have together created.

Sam Thornton

questions for the experts

The editor questions Anna Carlisle MA MBE on her career as a dance practitioner as well as on her research into Laban's metaphysics for practice.

(Anna Carlisle has a distinguished career in dance education and choreography. She was Head of Dance at Lewes College, founder of *First Edition Dance Company* and co-director of the Anglo-French Company *Sauter Le Pas*. Anna was tutor-consultant for the MA Language, the Arts and Education at *Sussex University* and recently Lecturer in Choreological Studies at the *Laban Centre London*.)

Anna's background was in Classical Ballet from whence she graduated at the *Laban Art of Movement Studio*. She subsequently was awarded an MA at *Sussex University* for her Special Study of Kurt Jooss' *Green Table*. Anna also won acclaim with her choreographic work *Snow on Water* for which she and her Youth Company won the *BT National Award* in 1977. Her publications include: 'The Dynamic Image: Changing Perspectives in Dance Education' in *Living Powers, Towards a Coherent Arts Education* ed. P. Abbs Falmer Press 1989 and a chapter in *Key Concepts in Aesthetics* ed. T Pateman Falmer Press 1989; Anna has also written articles for 'Animated' and provided a critical analysis of *Mastering Movement: The Life and Work of Rudolf Laban* J Hodgson Methuen 2000 - printed in the *Guild Magazine* Summer 2000. Anna contributed to the Guild's Symposium on 'Laban's Artistic and Philosophic Foundations' at the *University of Surrey* in 2001 and was Chair of the Guild Council from 1988 to 1994; she gave the 'Laban Millennium Lecture' at the AGM in 2000. Anna's Choreographic Commissions, Workshops and Summer Schools have taken her to: France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Northern and Southern Ireland.

Q1: Insofar as your background training was in Classical Ballet, what induced you to turn to Laban-based training at the *Art of Movement Studio* - and what impact did this latter experience have on your subsequent career?

I was on a *Royal Ballet* Scholarship, twelve years into training, when the small insurrections I had never dared voice, exploded in adolescent rebellion. The strongest image that I remember was of a shrinking world - I felt trapped in an autocratic culture - a network of fixtures and fittings which were militant and military. I had never heard of Laban. Escape to the *Art of Movement Studio* was a reaction rather than a life-plan. I came across a brochure in the theatre department of *Nottingham University* - where I was doing secretarial work. I'm not sure I read it with any degree of understanding but at the time was fascinated by Sartre and the French Bohemian scene. It was the photographs on the flyer that prompted my application - barefoot dancers in Bohemian black! I was convinced the place would be rife with existentialism.

I'd like to say that my training there was shot through with delight, illumination and passion. The first year was painfully difficult. I was a good technician but creatively rigid, - stiff with the imprints of classical training. It took the entire year to effect any changes. It was a small series of personal transformations - activated through the practice - which helped to reshape the patterns of a false identity. I saw myself as an aerial creature - permanently cast in the role of the Sylph. It was a great relief to discover a part of me which felt more real - a Northern earthiness and the ability to pack a punch. I suddenly understood what Laban meant by the 'impressive' effects of movement. I've been learning ever since. Laban's work constitutes an extraordinary body of knowledge. It's been a continuous resource throughout my career - as a dancer, teacher and choreographer.

Q2: How would you describe your overall experience (preparation, performance, after effects) when your Youth Company *First Edition* won the first *BT National Award* at the *QEJ* in 1997?

The preparation period was intense. I had already begun to make *Snow on Water* when the *BT* competition was announced. It was very challenging material - technically difficult and full of dynamic changes - designed as a 'development' piece. The dancers really had to reach for it. So although it meant working through weekends over several months, we decided to enter. I had a great group of dancers, talented and highly motivated so it was a very positive and enjoyable process.

The actuality of the competition itself seemed forever distant - until *Meridian TV* came in to make a documentary about the Company. We were fortunate to have Ross McGibbon direct the film. He was used to working with dancers - but being on camera more or less continuously, inevitably added an additional strand of stress to the run-up and to the day itself.

Dealing with issues around the psychology of performance during a day of rehearsals at *QEJ* had to be orchestrated carefully. I was very aware that the group needed to conserve energy for the evening show.. They arrived in a fairly confident mood but the size of the venue, the stature of the judges, the knowledge that this was a competition - and they were being filmed - in dressing rooms, in corners, warming up, in the wings, on stage - brought a massive attack of the nerves. Neither was I confident that we stood much chance. *Snow on the Water* was not popular fare. I knew it was a good work and I knew they were capable of a beautiful performance but it was an abstract piece with a very *avant-garde* sound score. I was quite certain it would not appeal to Wayne Sleep. How wrong I was.

The aftermath was euphoric - but more importantly, many of the dancers - including those in the original company (1991) - have gone on to work successfully in the professional field.

Q3: In her seminal book *The Art of Making Dances*, Doris Humphrey refers to 'Sources of Subject Matter - What to Dance About'. What are your views on subject matter for dance? Briefly, do you yourself have any 'principles' for 'design' in your own choreography?

Your question has prompted a re-reading of *The Art of Making Dances* - and a search for its publication date - 1959. It's a pity that many contemporary dance artists - many contemporary artists - have pulled up anchor on history. The early pioneers have a wealth of experience to offer but are either ignored, or bracketed out as old fashioned. Humphrey's perspective on 'Sources of Subject Matter: What to Dance About' is thought provoking. It would be excellent material for debate.

Nevertheless, as she herself points out, we are influenced - and shaped - by the dominant cultural paradigms and preoccupations of our time and inevitably, choreographic perspectives have undergone radical changes over the last half century. In today's technological, multi-cultural society, with extraordinary advances in physics, neuro-physics, neuro-biology etc., cultural parameters - and the frames of Western theatre dance - have exploded in a kind of centrifugal whirl. The sources and subject matter of choreography are currently eclectic and multifarious.

I don't have any hard line views on subject matter for dance. I'm a real fan of Cunningham - and his subject matter is the medium - movement itself. I think Bausch's work is touched with genius and though packed with 'subject' matter, her source material often comes directly from the dancers' life experiences and the work evolves - shaped out of improvisation. It does seem to be the case that ideas, concepts, themes do inhere in the work of exceptional choreographers - a unique 'voice' emerges - a point of view. But for me, the best choreographies have moved me into a silent space - have exerted such a powerful visceral response - that I have had no desire to enter into post-performance discourse. In *Mastery of Movement* Laban talks about movement reaching into the domain of the ineffable ...

You ask me if I have any 'principles' for design in my own

questions for the experts - continued

choreography. Whilst I often proceed with ideas, images, states of feeling, the fact that I am interested in working collaboratively with dancers - and using a mode of task-setting which is both open and closed - means that I can't have too many preconceptions about product. Much of the process is intuitive - yet the 'outside eye' is ever present, preoccupied with choreutic elements. Because I have a predilection for space, recourse to eukinetics is essential. I often turn to Laban analysis when I hit an impasse - or when problems need solutions.

It will be interesting now to work from the opposite perspective - in the sense that the Platonic forms will constitute the subject matter!

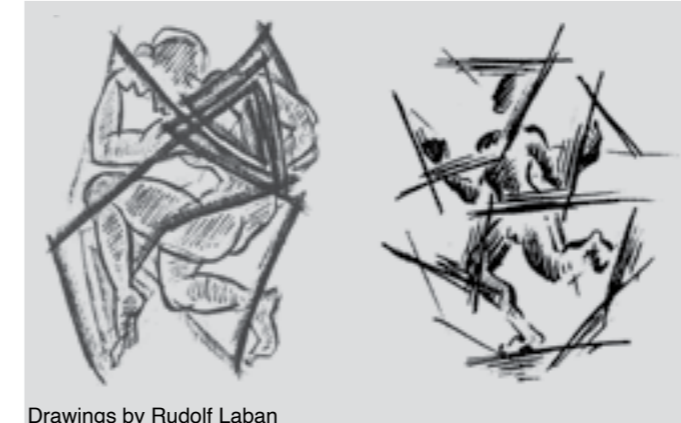
Q4: What are your aims, objectives and methodology for your current research into Laban's 'metaphysics for practice'? Have you any tentative pre-conceptions as to the outcome of your research?

I have two main aims for the *Research and Development Project*: an exploration of the creative - and choreographic - potential which resides in the crystalline configurations delineated by Laban in *Choreutics* and I want to investigate the interrelationships between corporeal space and the abstract, or mental space of geometry.

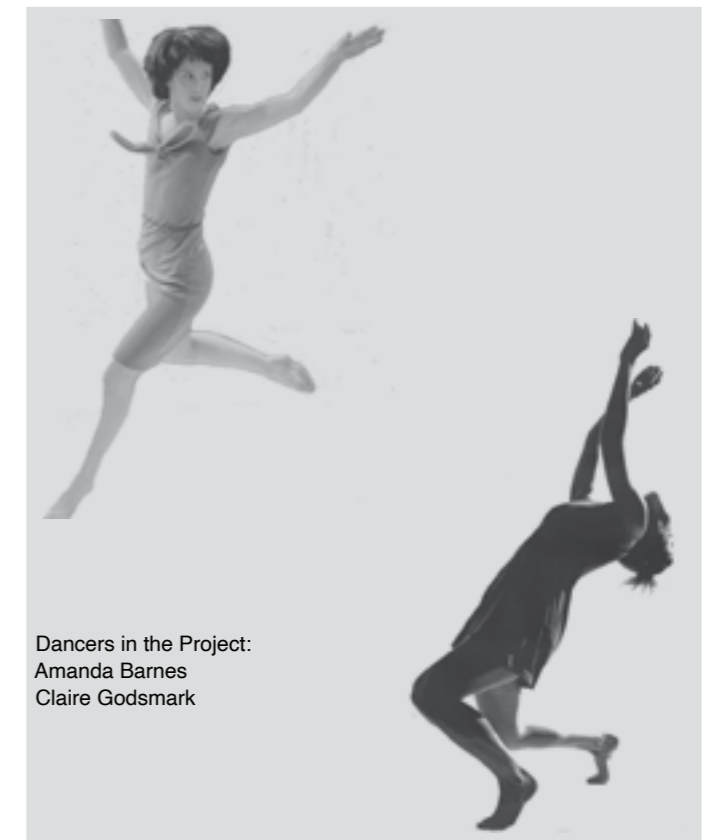
The fundamental objective is to create an ethos of enquiry - of searching, questioning and researching. Towards the end of the project though, we will construct small sections/fragments of *choreutic* material to be developed into a full length work in the future. I have three professional dancers on board - Amanda Banks, who has worked with a number of major British companies; James McBride has a European track record, having worked with Bejart, Decouffle and Saparta. He was introduced to Laban's work through an intensive course run by Cebon and Bausch in Paris in the late 80s and is currently working with Warren Lamb and Carol-Lynne Moore on *Movement Pattern Analysis*. And Clair Godsmark, who has recently graduated from the *De Keersmakker School* in Brussels will make up the trio. So - with such excellent dancers - and with generous support from the Guild, we also plan to make a video documentation of the work.

The methodology is simple. I'll teach the fundamental forms and scales as scaffoldings for the creation of *choreutic* material. In order to push the parameters of the work, however, I want to include spatial rotations, displacements, tilts and disruptions. The maintenance of an approach which is fluid and open will be vital - so improvisation will also be a key aspect of the work.

You ask me if I have any tentative preconceptions as to the outcomes of the enquiry. I know from a practical experiment - presented recently as a lecture demo to postgrads at the *School of Architecture* in Brighton - that the *choreutic* archetypes appear to unfold logically in kinetic constructions. At least, that's my experience thus far. (In any way, to any student of geometry, this would probably be an obvious supposition). But I am resistant to preconceptions. I think they contradict the concept - the spirit of research.



Drawings by Rudolf Laban



Dancers in the Project:
Amanda Barnes
Claire Godsmark

Q5: Kurt Jooss worked closely with Rudolf Laban and in A V Coton's biographical book of Jooss - *The New Ballet* he referred to Laban's point of departure as: 'the Platonic view of the Cosmos, for, from mathematical and scientific hypotheses advanced in Plato's work (notably the *Timaeus*), is developed his enquiry into the nature and purpose of bodily movement ...' p.30, and Coton added Jooss' conviction that Laban was certain that: 'the regularised mathematical shape that absolutely expresses the harmonious correlation existing between all the possible movements of the head, limbs and torso, is the icosahedron' p.31. How far do you consider the 'Platonic view of the cosmos' relevant to contemporary practice of movement and dance? And in particular what relevance has the icosahedron (one of Plato's Divine solids) for such practice (amateur and professional).

That's a big question! I can only offer some reflections. Implicit in your question are considerations - or judgments - about what is relevant and what is irrelevant to art and art-making. We can theorise about this but approaches to the arts have always been diverse and characterised by revolution and difference. Artists are pathologically resistant to fixity - to didactic or prescriptive perspectives. Nevertheless - it is interesting to observe that the 'Platonic view of the cosmos' appears to have underlined and informed art-making for centuries - right up to the 20th century 'modernist movement'. According to Walter Sorrell, for example, (*Dance in its Time* 1981) Anchor Press/Doubleday NY) the foundation stones of early forms of Classical Ballet in Italy were shaped by Platonic concepts - by the configurations of sacred geometry.

And Plato continues to hold a powerful place in the history of great Western thinkers. He won't go away - neither from the field of philosophy, the history of ideas, nor from the esoteric streams of belief systems which were - and are - manifest in a multitude of Schools and Movements concerned with the evolution of consciousness.

But we live in an increasingly secular society - and Plato's *Timaeus* is an account of the Creation, reverencing God as the Divine Architect. In contemporary culture, and in popular parlance, it doesn't stand a chance! It's not very sexy! Also, the notion

questions for the experts - continued

of the 'artist-philosopher' - so prevalent in Europe in the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries - and so evident in Laban's work - has all but disappeared. A small number of contemporary artists, however, continue to be influenced by metaphysical ideas. A handful of examples in the dance world would include Cunningham, Forsythe, early exponents of Butoh dance - and though Bausch continues to resist explication, the presence of primordial and elemental forces are powerfully interwoven into her works.

You ask me what relevance the icosahedral form might have for contemporary practice. I don't know whether Laban's conviction (Coton via Jooss) is correct. I'm not aware of any specific investigation into anatomical correlations - but I think the scaffolding can only be relevant to current practice if a practitioner perceives it to be so. A case in point here is William Forsythe. As you know, some of the inspirational spatial devices Forsythe has used to create a new form of ballet come directly from Laban's *choreutic* concepts.

Ultimately, only contemporary dance artists will decide what is and what is not relevant to current dance practice. Laban's work is still available and has a committed following, albeit on a very small scale. (There are, too, signs that dance practitioners are becoming progressively interested in a number of movement practices with a spiritual dimension - yoga, tai chi, Feldenkreis, for example). In my own practice, the work is utterly relevant - metaphysics and all! Laban's legacy is both seminal and profound. It is a multi-layered body of work - an extraordinarily rich resource on an almost epic scale - and most crucially, it is a body of work open to further research.

In my early training, I scanned over the references Laban makes to esoteric aspects of Platonism. Right now, it's the metaphysics

that remind me I reside in a finite body in an infinite universe. That's a really healthy wake-up call!

Q6. You were Chair of the Guild for six years; what developments do you envisage would be appropriate for the Guild today?

I want to answer your question with another question. And I want to address it not just to the Guild Council but to all members of the Guild. 'What developments might be envisioned as appropriate to the Guild's work in twenty years time?'

There is currently a very small Guild membership and no concrete signs of future expansion. It is top-heavy with the older generation and by 2024 the small handful of *real* experts - practitioners who worked with Laban and Ullmann - will be celebrating their centenary birthdays. The even smaller number of second generation practitioners will have long since retired.

There is no question that some talented and inspiring teachers have come through the *Community Dance Leaders' Scheme* but ten to twenty training week-ends cannot match the experience of a full-time course.

The Guild has spread its resources wide over the past twenty years. Perhaps it is time to focus on specialisation. Perhaps the searchlight should settle on a few potential young experts and put professional training high on the agenda.

This would be my personal answer to future developments. But the uncomfortable questions remain. Given the paucity of highly qualified practitioners, does the Guild have a future? Does Laban's work matter? Time is running out!

computer access to resources in dance

(Dr Jacqueline Smith-Autard is a partner in *Bedford Interactive Research* and part time lecturer in Dance at the *University of Leeds Bretton Hall* where she tutors PhD and MA students. Jacqueline has been a dance educator for over 40 years; she is the author of *Dance Composition* which is now in its 5th edition (2004) and also *The Art of Dance in Education* (2nd edition 2002) - both of which show evidence of her 'midway' art of dance model. Readers may well know that she retains reference to Laban's ideas in all of her work. Indeed the 'midway' model constitutes an integration of Laban derived principles with some of the elements of what might be termed professional dance practice, in order to provide a dance education model that focuses on performance, composition and appreciation - the three aspects of study manifest in most contemporary dance courses today. Jacqueline talks to the editor and introduces her colleague Jim Schofield)

In the context of Bedford Interactive (an independent research and multimedia production partnership) dissemination of my work has now progressed far beyond the writing of books in that technology has offered many visual ways of analysing dance in order that students can learn from interactive digital resources to inform their own creative work.

The *Bedford Interactive* partnership comprises myself as dance educator and Jim Schofield, mathematician, physicist and computing expert. It is my pleasure to introduce Jim Schofield to the *Laban Guild* readership. Jim and I have been partners in *Bedford Interactive* for 16 years so he has become knowledgeable about dance and teaching/learning dance and I have learned an enormous amount from him on ways in which technology can enhance dance education.

Jim is a world-leading multimedia expert and innovative author of all our products. A computer author of over 40 years experience, dance education benefits from his depth of knowledge, inventiveness and his exceptional ability to push technology boundaries and solve the most difficult problems in order to develop quality resources. Jim's expertise in computer control authoring, linked with his affinity towards dance, always results in first class products that extend and enhance dance teaching and learning. Keeping ahead in the constantly changing technology world is no mean feat in itself but Jim continues to conquer new languages, new software parameters and continues to invent original ways of presenting full-screen quality video with many value-added facilities to produce my dance teaching and learning materials into 'cutting-edge' resources for dance education.

Together we have published seven such resources for dance teachers. Our current titles are sold across the world. In the UK they have been registered on the DfES Curriculum on Line list of technology products that schools can purchase using learning credits funded by the government. This should benefit dance teachers who frequently have very small budgets. The titles we sell at present are:

- 1) Wild Child CD ROM Resource Pack (2001) - a huge pack containing 2 discs and a 273 page book full of worksheets and ideas for teaching dance performance, composition and appreciation. This suits all from aged 7 upwards to higher education in that there is a compendium of multimedia tools to teach basic to advanced concepts and principles in practical dance contexts.
- 2) Graham Technique - analysis of 10 basic exercises (2003) - a distinctive CD ROM resource to help students identify and describe the characteristics of the Graham dance style and to recognise it in dance works by Graham and others.
- 3) Motifs for a Solo Dancer-improving dance performance (2003) - a 'state of the art' CD ROM resource that develops and extends the teaching of dance performance. This is achieved by means of exposure to principles and practices that apply in any solo performance context through interactive access to many views, accompanying Labanotation, floor plans, rhythm and timing cues

and voice-over teaching points whilst learning to perform the dance study demonstrated by a superb professional dancer on the disc.

For further information and visual demonstration go to: www.dance-interactive.web.com <<http://www.dance-interactive.web.com/>>

We have three further titles in the pipeline for 2004-2005. One of these *Spaceometry* - an analysis of the processes involved in choreographing a group dance - features a third year degree student's work from initial idea to final production and assessment. In this context the student's study of Laban's spatial concepts would feature, hence Jim asked me to produce texts on Laban's work in this area. In a few weeks Jim had made all the models we have all made - octahedron - cube - planes - an icosahedron in order to propose ways in which we might present these on screen. As a mathematician he was intrigued to know why Laban had selected the icosahedron form and having read that Laban admitted problems with this, Jim set about using Laban's 26 directional points to produce a more comprehensive polyhedron form. He has plans for making the structures embedded into this form controllable by computers to allow dancers to select and possibly light up a range of elements that make up the whole - developing and extending from Laban's principles to produce a more comprehensive polyhedron form. I am very excited about this work since not only could it be featured in our CD ROM disc, but it could lead to a resurgence of interest in Laban's initial theories and further developments of these. Jim Schofield is certainly contributing new ideas in this area and we as dance exponents should seriously consider and apply such ideas so that we move forward in our art form. I am sure that you will find his article interesting and we both would be pleased to receive feedback.

Jim Schofield

Jim Schofield has qualifications in Nuclear Physics, Mathematics, Biology, Geology and Computer Science, and whilst these are not central to the interests of dancers - he maintains that this impression would be wrong!

During his degree at *Leeds University* he says he often ducked out of Physics lectures to slip into ones in English Literature, and even took to joining classes at the nearby *Leeds College of Art*. He became a painter and somehow became the Secretary of the *University Art Society* for two years.

Though his qualifications and abilities were in Science he spent a great deal of his time interested and involved in the Arts and discovered sculpture - his best area - which has occupied him ever since (25 years). By the time he was working in Higher Education, (Hong Kong, Glasgow, Bedford and London), his specialism had become interdisciplinary work, and for the last sixteen years he has been involved with Dr. Jacqueline Smith-Autard in the creation of Multimedia Resources for the Teaching of Dance. He spends a great deal of time writing on Education and Philosophy (probably about 250,000 words a year), and has a collection of 45 musical instruments from China, India, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Ireland, USA, South America and the U.K., and he frequently attempts to tune them to exotic open tunings, and then attempts to play them!

Jacqueline Smith-Autard

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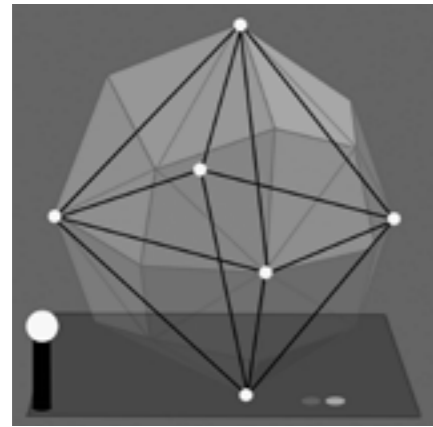
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dance in the park



The idea is to put Dance education on display within a Country Park.

First, let me stress the location and resources of a particularly appropriate site.

The Bretton Hall Campus of Leeds University is situated in beautiful rolling countryside at the heart of a Country Park. The Campus is based around a magnificent mansion - Bretton Hall, and is surrounded by sumptuous lawns and trees, which also make up the dazzling home of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Here a priceless collection of world class sculpture is scattered over the countryside, and includes not only that great son of Yorkshire, Henry Moore, but many other masters of the art. The River Dearne here expands into a pair of delightful lakes, followed by a staircase of weirs and waterfalls extending down from the retaining dam to the deep valley below. Alongside the biggest lake is an Area of Special Scientific Interest – much loved by Botanists, and a magnet for those who delight in flowers and insects of all kinds. Mature woods surround the lakes, and visitors from far and near consider this area unsurpassable for its beauty and tranquillity.

The University has a Dance Department at the Campus, and a Sculpture section. The latter regularly holds classes for outsiders under the enormous trees.

O.K. So we have this wonderful place, not only an established centre of higher education, with services to the community, but also considered by all to be an outstanding cultural asset to visitors to Yorkshire. To me, such a unique focus of purposes should be applauded and extended.

We should put Dance routinely on display as work-in-progress, and it should be placed right there on the lawns in the midst of all that beauty.

A nice thought, you might say, but rather over-the-top and inconvenient for the university staff. No, I think not! I did say work-in-progress, and I am proposing an all-weather Dance Space of transparent polyhedral construction, so that students doing their classes will be enclosed and comfortable, while surrounded by the visible beauty of the location. Onlookers would not be seated in an auditorium, but walking through the Park, sitting on the grass, or passing from one part of the outdoor sculpture display to another.

This Dance Space would be expressly designed for Dance teaching, and have all the comforts of a tailor-made educational dance facility. But, in addition, the activities of the dancers would be visible also to the public outside the building.

But, there is also another, very important reason to develop such facilities.

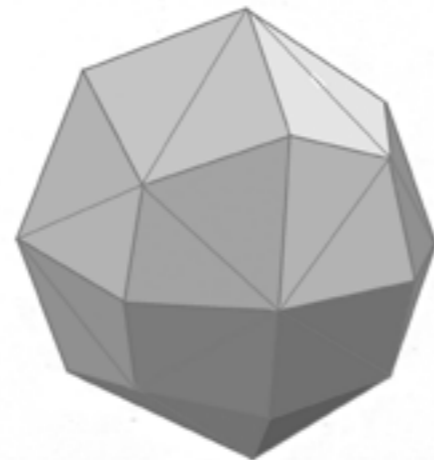
For many years now Bretton Dance Department has been

working closely with Bedford Interactive on innovative dance projects. In fact, one of the partners of B.I. now works part-time in the department, and is clearly a highly valued member of staff.

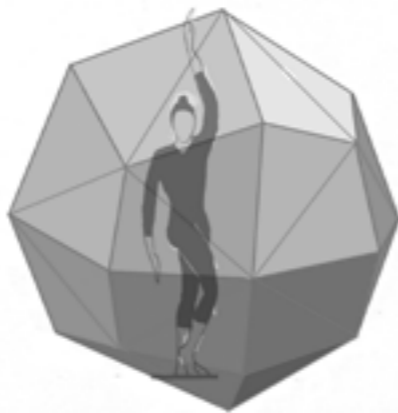
The specialism of B.I. is in Multimedia Resources in the Study of Dance, and the partners have recently completed their 4th and 5th CD-based resource packs for Dance, and the 6th and 7th are scheduled for completion during 2004. This partnership is the leading producer of quality multimedia resources for Dance in the world. Early on in their history they won a British Interactive Video Award, and this standard has been maintained ever since.

Currently, the partnership is in the richest vein of work of its entire existence, and in the last few months has discovered an important aid for Dance Education concerned with Rudolf Laban's work on the classification and notation of Dance Movement.

This aid is, surprisingly you might think, a 48 sided polyhedron, based on Laban's classification of orientations around the performing dancer, which was developed into the world famous Labanotation system of recording dance works.



Recent work has revealed some difficulties with the original "orientations Icosahedron", in many of the geometric constructs that were proposed for use in helping students to come to grips with Laban's system, and his notation. This work has generated a series of alternative and more intuitive figures, and associated ways of using them in teaching Dance. Just to give a flavour of these –



A Dancer-sized step-inside enclosure has been designed, which is itself a version of one of these figures - a new polyhedron. This enclosure has built into it simple and intuitive guides to all 26 of the major named orientations as described by Laban, and is designed for the dancer to use in carrying out sequences of movements, and for helping such users to write down their own original movement sequences in Labanotation, directly as they

dance in the park - continued

are creating them.

It is intended that this aid will be available both in the internal dance spaces of the Department, and, once more, on the lawns of the Park. And, indeed wherever else it might be useful in other institutions. Many versions of this beautiful polyhedron have been developed from complex desktop models, via dancer-sized enclosures, through to our first-mentioned Dance Space. These would NOT be just different in size, but intrinsically different, determined by their uses. For example, the dancer-sized version needs to be big enough to enclose the dancer when standing, giving enough room for him/her to reach out in the various orientations, carry out series of moves between various positions, and be presented with appropriate information required for these activities, visible on the INSIDE of the polyhedron (or its fixings).

All information would of course face inwards, and be associated with the relevant parts of the structure. Such an enclosed space must be uncluttered, with no struts impeding easy movements, and clear, direct and immediately obvious markings for the dancer to read in a no-hands way from the inner surface of the structure itself. Also, a small area must be provided for sequences of movements and orientations to be jotted down (in Labanotation?) while trying them out within the enclosure.

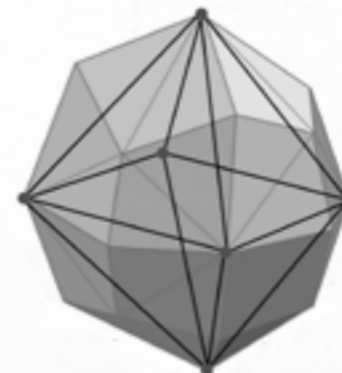
On the other hand, a desktop model would have different purposes. No dancer could get inside such a small model, so its purpose will be to act as an aide memoire to users working at the desk. NO internal markings would be necessary, but external ones would be essential for the user to read easily. In addition, constraints on an uncluttered interior would not be appropriate here, so inscribed aids such as the octahedron and the cube could be added to give extra structured information. It is clear also, that experienced choreographers and notators could effectively use the desk top model, without having to run to the nearest dancer sized enclosure.

One possibility is exemplified by the figures shown here, though several others based on the same polyhedron as above have also been designed.

Inscribed cube - Tertiaries



Inscribed octahedron - Primaries



The figures above also show how alternative figures could be used in certain situations if it was considered helpful. The core figure could be a cuboctahedron, which also reveals all the required orientations, but requires a bit more skill in extracting the information. Notice that this also could easily have both octahedron and cube included.

Finally, the large Dance Space, though essentially the same original polyhedron would again be different due to its different role.



It will only carry instructional information incidentally – both in its FORM – our ubiquitous polyhedron, and in any figures, or symbols painted internally, as these will effectively be on the inside of the roof. They could be quickly referred to, whilst performing an exercise or dance segment, to remind the performer of the symbol for a particular orientation, or to SEE the local symmetries around a certain group of directions, and movements between them. In the main, though, the space will be inspirational, both to its users, and to people passing by – particularly when it is in use!

Imagine such a place, either surrounded by sun-lit lawns, or all lit up at dusk as visitors are about to go home. Then the wonderful shape would be revealed by its internal lighting, while the lyrical figures of the dancers would be clearly seen working together to conquer a particular set of movements, or developing an articulation in a piece of their own making.

A veritable jewel across the valley.

Now, to return to the proposals for dance teaching aids and a Dance Space.

You can see that our proposals are grounded in concrete experience of Laban's spatial ideas and notation, and the recent developments and inventions of aids was a necessary process in addressing effective and meaningful use of such notation at the heart of teaching Dance. The proposals are not, therefore, only a pleasing-on-the-eye enhancement of the current facilities in the Park. They are that, of course, but they are also a set of new facilities that are intrinsically products of our pedagogical researches over 16 years of our existence.

Visitors would not only see wonderful dance in breathtaking buildings, but would also see the integration of sound pedagogic principles in every construction, and the wedding of all this into a truly beautiful landscape.

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mid-summer madness - in the park?

The Editor reflects upon: a) Jim Schofield's fascinating polyhedral 'Dance in the Park' at Bretton Hall - and Dr Jacqueline Smith-Autard's introduction; b) Anna Carlisle's penetrating observations on Laban's 'seminal and profound' legacy - with particular reference to his Platonically-inspired geometrical forms and the related underlying Platonic and Pythagorean World Order; and c) the origins and use of Laban's innovatory descriptive language.

Reminiscences:

Fifty years ago I walked through the impressive portals of that gracious mansion *Bretton Hall* - a *Teacher-Training College of Music Art and Drama* situated in that 'beautiful rolling countryside at the heart of a Country Park' in the *West Riding of Yorkshire* (so aptly described by Jim Schofield). I was to teach *Movement and Dance* - and Margaret Dunn, the Vice Principal, was to be my much admired colleague.

The 1950s were times of great excitement and ferment in the *West Riding* - with teachers clamouring to take courses in Laban's ideas: *Woolley Hall* and neighbouring colleges and schools were stretched to capacity with weekend and holiday courses - led by inspired tutors, County Inspectors and visiting lecturers.

Diana Jordan OBE (*doyenne* of dance education and Warden of *Woolley Hall*) wrote at the time:

'... all over the country, here and there, individual teachers, training college lecturers and Local Authority Advisers were, through their experimental work with children, building confidence in a fresh approach to physical education based on the needs of children and a better understanding of human movement gained from the teaching of Laban ...' (1)



This 'new' approach had not escaped the notice of the universities either, for Professor Bantock of Leicester University referred to '... the carefully wrought and elaborated work of Rudolf Laban ...' (2) and his invention of '... a technique as a means to the creativity of bodily movement, a disciplined aid to a fuller and more varied expressive life than that implicit in the 'pop' dance ...'. Professor Meredith of *Leeds University* referred to Laban as an example of 'the deep draught drawn by our country from the pool of frustrated Central European talent ...', and he added:

'... Several years ago at a school in Yorkshire I witnessed something of the educational impact of Laban's ideas. It was an impact through physical exercises. What it demonstrated was that by starting with the movements of the child's own body the whole educational behaviour of the child, including reading, writing and drawing could be freed, energised and enriched in ways which have to be seen to be believed. As a psychologist I am ashamed that I have done nothing yet to ensure that this manifestation of 'transfer of training' shall not forever pass unrecorded in the literature of this perennial problem ...' (3)

And having watched Lisa Ullmann teaching, Professor Louis Arnaud Reid eulogized:

'... A spectator of Miss Ullmann's pupils at work can feel strongly convinced of the inseparability of feeling, desire, striving, and bodily posture - attitude, stretching, reaching, moving to fill three dimensional space. The observer seems to perceive before his eyes the dynamics of spirit ...' (4)



As we all know, this revelation marked a radical shift in teaching method and response - from the hitherto rigid formality of prescriptive physical education to a creative mode of expression.

I recall the occasion when a General Inspection was visited upon *Bretton Hall College of Music Art and Drama*. The H.M. *Staff Inspector for Physical Education* (nearing retirement) had arrived - looking a little uneasy in this heady atmosphere of all-pervading physical education. He lost no time, therefore, in asking me to take him to the gymnasium. But we had no gymnasium - only a theatre, art studios, music rooms, a stable block, a kennel block, lovely camelia houses and two sublime lakes! So, on a sunny mid-summer's afternoon (to his undisguised disorientation) I escorted him up to the beautiful terrace gardens, where, on a secluded sward, surrounded by rhododendron bushes (in full bloom), he met, to his astonishment, two dozen male music, art and drama students busy practising their Shakespearean dance-drama sequences in 'Montague' and 'Capulet' tea-shirts.

It was in this seductive setting that our Inspector eyed these imperious young 'Elizabethans' with some suspicion - even more so when they were encouraged to indulge in 'weight' and 'free-flow' - not to mention the heightening of 'body awareness', 'spatial orientation' and a multiplicity of delicate (and less delicate) 'effort actions', and, (oh yes), some alarmingly intimate *contact improvisations*. Only when they engaged in some *controlled (DV8) violence* did the Inspector's eyes widen with the slightest hint of admiration (or was I deceived?). The interplay of the warring 'houses' with their expressive moments of confrontation, aggression, and of course their triumphalism and despair - for those were our Shakespearean (physical theatre) themes - seemed to leave him perplexed. What had all this to do with *physical education*? (What was this mid-summer madness?) He turned aside to meditate among the rhododendrons scouring my *Labanese* teaching notes for some enlightenment! (I was convinced that my inspection was doomed to failure!)

Revolutionary ideas!

But the revolutionary ideas of Rudolf Laban did not, of course, originate in that secluded rhododendron garden at *Bretton Hall* - they were born many years before in Central Europe where Laban's fame had spread. Fritz Böhme had already described his legacy:

mid-summer madness - in the park?

'... In ancient times, Laban would have become a great priest or ruler, like Akbar the philosopher, the priest Khan, whose figure became a myth. Today he is the creator of the new art of dance and choreography, who was able to instil his strength and power into human beings ...' (5) Without doubt, one of the many sensational innovations which Laban brought to both European dance and latterly to British education, industrial management and to personality assessment, was a radically new *descriptive language* - a language of 'universal movement forms', of 'movement analysis', 'spatial harmony', 'diametricals', 'axis and chromatic scales', 'inclinations', 'icosahedral three-rings', 'five-rings' - not to mention the lively 'effort action' predicates of 'glidings', 'thrustings', 'pressings' and 'floatings' which invaded a hitherto restricted language of physical education, dance training, industrial practice, and recreational dance. From whence, then, did such lively descriptions originate? Had we witnessed the birth of an entirely new and innovative language - or the resurrection of a vocabulary from ancient times? Perhaps we should seek out Laban's source of inspiration - for we are often reminded that it is always profitable to trace to their source the ideas that inspired a prophet, for there alone is to be found the secret of the strength of their influence.

Ancient Wisdom

There is ample evidence to confirm that Laban was fascinated by 'ancient wisdom' - not only on his own admission, but also from many of his contemporaries and biographers. Laban maintained that towards the end of his life he had achieved a number of things - among them that he had 'reminded people of the existence of the world of movement and of its importance as it had been in ancient times ...' (6) (my italics). This inspiration from ancient times is again explicitly acknowledged in his *Choreutics* where he prefaces his book by saying:

"... 'Choreosophia' - an ancient Greek word, from *choros*, meaning circle, and 'sophia' meaning knowledge or wisdom - is the nearest term I have discovered with which to express the essential ideas of this book (*Choreutics*). These ideas concern the wisdom to be found through the study of all the phenomena of circles existing in nature and in life. The term was used in Plato's time by the disciples and followers of Pythagoras ..." (pviii) (my underlining) (7)

The essential ideas of Laban's *Choreutics*, then, rest: a) on the ancient wisdom to be found in the 'study of circles', and b) on the knowledge that Plato and Pythagoras were associated with such ideas (more exhaustively to be found in Plato's *Timaeus* (a Pythagorean). So what does *Timaeus* tell us?

The Platonic and Pythagorean World Picture:

The historian puts it quite simply: '... this world of ours was not like it is now. ... It was what the older poets call 'chaos'. There weren't any laws, or regular patterns. There weren't any 'elements'. ... There was just a vast swirling sort of motion. You couldn't call it earthy, or watery, or fiery, or even airy. In fact, it hadn't any definite character at all. ...

... But God ... somewhere at the beginning of time ... decided that it would be more beautiful, if He superimposed upon chaos - law and order, and reduced its behaviour to some sort of organised unity ... So God ... superimposed upon the 'chaos' - mathematical patterning; in fact the very patterns which our clever Pythagorean brothers have been discovering ... First, God made of all the uneasy motions - one great motion: circular motion. This enclosed all the chaotic material there was ... What did we have then? ... a sphere. And in this sphere there was formed, very gradually ... regular mathematical solids ... tetrahedra, octahedra, dodecahedra, icosahedra, and cubes. These are like crystals you can sometimes see ... in ice-water, when it is nearly frozen. They are all based ... upon a certain principle of triangularity: so that solids which have the same triangular base can be transmuted... All these beautiful crystal-like forms which enclose

parts of the original chaos, make up the world we see and know ... R P Lodge *The Philosophy of Plato* p45/46



This fascinating story goes on to tell us that these Platonic solids formed a *Great Chain of Being* and all subscribed to the divine proportion - the Golden Section, and that the Creator implanted into the Divine Forms an animating spirit with the uneasy motions of 'up and down', 'forward and backward', 'left and right'; but the most 'rational' of all motions was *circular motion* - for this was akin to the movements of the Divine, exemplified in a *pre-established harmony* of the universe - the most desirable state of affairs. The cosmos as a whole was an animate Being constructed in the image of the Creator himself. (8) And how did this account of the creation appeal to the average realist Pythagorean? According to the historians, it was gospel! The Pythagorean Brotherhood - sometimes referred to as a Guild - consequently called upon their followers to purify their lives:

'... by copying, imitating ... the mathematically perfect regularity of the celestial orbits, (by which means) they ... hope to develop an ideally cosmic law within. The true way of life for initiates will thus be a ritual forthshowing of the systematic implications of the Pythagorean triangle inscribed within its circle ... Meanwhile, the importance, the overwhelming importance, of suitable choric dances resting upon a principle of unity of rhythmic patterning, for community education of individual boys and girls, men and women into community citizenship as human beings at their best ...' (9) In the words of the Pythagorean *Timaeus*, then, it was imperative that the body should be looked after following the pattern of the cosmos: '... for the motions in us that are akin to the divine are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe ...' (*Timaeus* p119). 'Circular motion', it would appear, was not only the essential function of the celestial bodies, it was also (most importantly) a necessary condition for the personal, moral, social, aesthetic and physical development of individual Pythagoreans.

Reality, Virtual Reality or Myth?

Now we may find the story of the *Timaeus* amazing! We may variously regard it as: a) a wonderful piece of poetic imagination - possibly visualising it as a 'virtual reality' to be exploited for artistic purposes, or b) we may dismiss it as little more than an antiquarian curiosity, or yet again c) we may consider it to be a serious attempt to account for the creation of the universe and man's responsibilities within it - and thereby find esoteric inspiration from it. But whatever our immediate reaction, we are warned that we should be doing history a grave injustice if we dismissed it as naive and inconsequential. We are told that it has profoundly influenced the sciences, mathematics, astronomy and the arts for over 2000 years - from ancient Greece to medieval times, as far as the Renaissance and thence onward to the present day. The *Timaeus* 'is a document of great importance in the history of European thought ...' (*Timaeus* p7). Anna Carlisle, in her penetrating answers to our questions, reminds us that Platonic ideas have underlined and informed art and art-making for centuries - right up to the present day.

mid-summer madness - in the park?

Laban - a Pythagorean?

The inevitable question will arise as to whether Laban's interest in these ancient notions of 'circularity', and 'choric dances' - not to mention his fascination with the Platonic regular polyhedra, was purely as a creative device - or a *literal* belief in the *Pythagorean World Picture* outlined in the *Timaeus*? (Kurt Jooss, with whom Laban worked closely, tells us that Laban was very much influenced by the *Timaeus*). But let us ask Laban himself: 'Our body' he says:

'... is the mirror through which we become aware of the evercircling motions of the universe with their polygonal rhythms ...'. *Choreutics* p.26 (10)

And again:

'... it cannot be said too often, and it is a unique conception to be stressed repeatedly and remembered: movement, the path of our surroundings, a sign, a symbol of the complex pathways of the universe - it is to this that today we are directed ...'. (11)

From this directive it would appear that Laban's Pythagoreanism was quite literal, compelling and didactic - even to the practice, by Pythagoreans, of carrying around miniature models (orreries) of the circular movements of the cosmos together with Plato's 'crystals'. Did, then, Laban subscribe to such a practice? A friend of Laban's relates:

Mysterious little box!

In the winter of 1937 Laban stayed with a schoolmaster in Bavaria in 'the snowed up and frozen Banz'. The schoolmaster subsequently wrote:

'... But one thing I shall never forget, and that was the mysterious little box with crystal shapes, which he guarded like a magician, and only opened when he wanted to give final emphasis to his words. He carried this box around with him through thick and thin, until he arrived and could make further use of it in England ...'. (12)



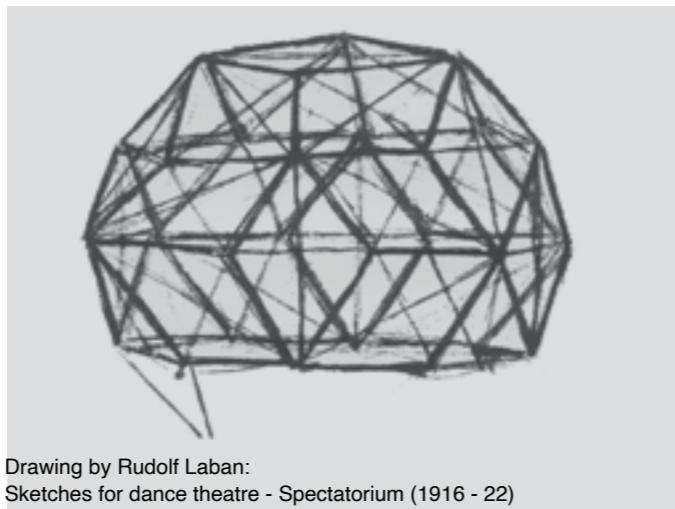
That this 'mysterious little box' contained the crystal shapes of Plato's five regular solids: the cube, the octahedron, the tetrahedron, the icosahedron and the dodecahedron was undeniable; and had our schoolmaster asked of Laban: 'Does any one of these crystals hold pride of place?' - doubtless he would have replied: 'the icosahedron'. And why? Laban would have explained:

'... The movements of our body follow rules corresponding to those of mineral crystallisations and structures of organic compounds. The shape which possibly offers the most natural and harmonious tracks for our movements is the icosahedron.

It contains a rich series of combined inner and outer trace lines ...'. (13)



Undoubtedly, the icosahedron has become an *icon* of Laban's followers - an *icon* which in its graphic form was created and presented by Laban himself to the Guild - together with his name. It may, therefore, come as a jolt to find in Jim Schofield's fascinating article, 'Dance in the Park' (and Jacqueline Smith-Autard's introduction) that an alternative geometrical model is now being proposed. We have already recorded that Laban's work was 'carefully wrought' and we might, therefore, feel disinclined to repudiate the validity of his original 'choreutic' conceptions without very adequate and detailed justification. But we should also bear in mind that Laban was essentially a *catalyst* and would have deplored any retreat into narrow obsessive Laban fundamentalism - fundamentalism in which his ideas all too readily fossilise. Indeed, he would undoubtedly have welcomed subsequent developments in the areas of community dance, movement therapy, movement pattern analysis, education, Labanotation, dance theatre, and also developments in Jacqueline Smith-Autard's alignment of Laban's ideas within the needs of performance, composition and appreciation (14) - and now in the realm of 'computer access to resources in dance' (for was not graphic design very near to Laban's own heart?).



Drawing by Rudolf Laban:
Sketches for dance theatre - Spectatorium (1916 - 22)

We might, in summary, conclude that: a) as with the *Timaeus*, we should be doing history a grave injustice if we dismissed Laban's Platonically-inspired work as naive and inconsequential, for it has profoundly affected movement and dance development for the last hundred years and will doubtless continue to do so; b) Laban's descriptive language - whether derivative from ancient wisdom or not has proved to be a valuable tool for movement analyses, dance teaching, dance technique and dance criticism. The anthropomorphic action terms stemming from the *Timaeus* (the model of the universe as a living creature) with its perceptual, sensory, kinaesthetic, tactile, muscular, emotional, phenomenological

mid-summer madness - in the park?

and existential features - these are eminently suitable for describing, analysing and evaluating human movement, as well as choreographing the dynamics of the art form of dance; c) to regard Laban's interest in Platonic ideas as 'irrelevant' would be to sever the very explanatory foundations upon which his considerable heritage rests. However, when we consider the necessity or otherwise of using Laban's (say) *choreutic* ideas, we might consider Anna Carlisle's reminder in relation to dance artists that it is *they* who ultimately 'will decide what is and what is not relevant to current dance practice' (and I take it - *mutatis mutandis* - to other aspects of movement practice). But Anna does add that it is interesting to observe that the 'Platonic view of the cosmos appears to have underlined and informed art-making for centuries', and her current research confirms her continued interest in the 'potential which resides in the crystalline configurations delineated by Laban in *Choreutics*'.

More 'Madness' or a 'jewel' in the Park?

It will be recalled that it was Laban's descriptive 'universal' language of movement that broke the silence on that delightful mid-summer afternoon in the rhododendron gardens at Bretton Hall some fifty years ago - movement and language which was greeted with dismay by our perplexed visiting Inspector. Whether this dance session was assessed as 'mid-summer madness' or not, only the HM Inspector's Report can tell; but certain it is, the 'beautiful rolling countryside' of Bretton looks set for the revival of Laban's 'universal movement forms' with Jim Schofield's polyhedral interpretations and their accompanying trace-form pyrotechnics, computer images, 'dancer-sized step-inside enclosures' and the re-affirmed choreutic polyhedral orientations in space - and all of these situated in that idyllic sculpture park in West Yorkshire. We cannot wait for such dramatic revelations! (15)

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Gordon Curl



view from america

Problems to do with immigration are very much in the news in Britain and Europe as they are in America. How they are handled is different, however.

Here in Britain it seems we do a lot to prevent people from entering the country illegally, keep them in detention centres if they are caught, and if they do not fulfil the rules send them back.

In California, immigration from South American countries across the hundreds of miles of border with Mexico has been going on at a great rate for decades. Those caught by the many police patrolling the border are promptly returned; those who run the gauntlet and escape become part of a work force without which the Californian economy would be severely damaged. Such acceptance of illegal status may happen to some degree here but has not been institutionalised.

In California, however, once successfully across the border the illegal immigrants gain a status. This was exemplified when a law was passed to give illegal immigrants driving licences. The law has recently been repealed only to intensify the arguments in favour of it and it may be reintroduced.

It is not that Americans are indifferent to law and order, quite the contrary, but it seems to me they have a more expedient as well as ambivalent way of applying it, at least in this instance. Californians do not want to be denied their farm workers or nannies and the lack of public transport means that a car is necessary to get to work. Employees are often encouraged to drive without a licence, which also means without insurance.

Such attitudes show a pragmatic streak, evident as much from liberals as from conservatives. The readiness to institutionalise illegal practice shows a toughly applied work ethic but not a moral ethic.

The contradiction of giving illegal immigrants a legal status seems not to get a mention the arguments currently taking place. It is interesting to question whether contradictory behaviour is observable in movement. It often seems so in the sense, for example, of a harsh gesture being contradicted by a smarmy smile - evident in Britain too, of course, but perhaps more in America.

Whether contradictory, expedient, pragmatic, or just plain barbaric, I don't know, but the American approach to law and order as a whole is certainly different. European professional criminologists do look upon American practices as relatively barbaric. It is evident, perhaps, in the retention of the death penalty and the way the prison system is run. Laban used to illustrate how primitive barbaric man moved relative to those who have reached an advanced stage of civilisation.

It would be wrong to categorise the most advanced nation on earth as more barbaric than European nations but perhaps there are just a few tendencies. And tempting immigrants to suffer extremely risky and often fatal border crossings, with the attraction of an illegal/legal status with job and car, seems a case in point.

Warren Lamb
March 2004

laban in places

at Bracknell Saturday 17th April
- Tutor Gillian Hibbs -

A sunny blue sky and a white fluffy clouds day, plus a purpose built dance studio arrived at by passing lively paintings and flowing sculptures, put us in the ideal frame of mind for the day of dance ahead. Gill's theme for the day centred on four paintings by Paul Klee and she cleverly linked these with Laban's principles of movement. The first, titled "Fugue in Red", had repeated images progressing sideways across the painting but with the use of dominant and recessive colour giving depth. The movement ingredients were simple, travel sideways and hold a still shape plus a change of level and size. Once having established our own sequence we developed a dance in groups of three or four. Gill chose a front for the work initially avoiding the mirrored wall and then by popular demand we became our own audience.

The second painting was called "Bird Drama" and this engendered a feeling of fun. We worked in different groups using follow-my-leader travelling ideas, often with some humorous bird-like gestures. Taking inspiration from Klee's work we mingled in groups, used spiky movements as in the birds crests and feet, scooped like the necks of the birds and ended with eyes growing and glowing. It was great fun to dance and I went to eat my lunch in the grounds of *South Hill Park* and watched the birds.

After a walk around the Arts Centre, looking at the lively paintings, I was ready for more creativity. The third of Klee's works was titled "Spatial Study" and it definitely held a resonance with Laban's work. Gill had discovered links with Laban's notation and from this, a *three-ring*. We began with a clear and concise explanation of the links between the dimensional cross, the three planes, and a three-ring. We then experienced these in movement as a whole group before linking in yet another group of people to develop the three-ring with particular emphasis on canon, travel and varying the dynamics of speed and weight. It was a very satisfying process and both a challenge and delight to dance. These three sections, all dances in their own right, were linked, *rondo* form, by ideas from Klee's chosen fourth work "Fig Tree", a flowing line, with blocks of colour filling in the spaces. This was developed in the form of a *farandole* with the dancers using coloured material to link them together. Gill led the line weaving in, out and under, to an eventual stillness in a group shape to depict the "Fig Tree".

The day finished with us enjoying dancing the work in its entirety. The music used throughout was the *3rd Brandenburg Concerto in G Major*. Paul Klee was an accomplished musician and hugely influenced by both Bach and Mozart. It was a very well crafted day with original ideas and expert preparation and delivery. I loved every minute!

university of wales institute cardiff dancing in mind conference

30th -31st January 2004

This important conference, an all-Wales event, was planned by the *Welsh Arts Council*, *Sports Council*, *Community Dance Wales*, the *Wales Joint Education Committee* and the *University of Wales in Cardiff*, and supported by the *Welsh Assembly*. It was attended by almost 100 delegates from all parts of the country. The main reason for the conference was to move dance forward in education implying training of some kind. The concern was that there should be an agreed direction, planning for the next stages, so that dance education in Wales might grow and develop across the country. The prospect of each organisation developing its own training, standards and criteria, was seen as a road to fragmentation and confusion.

Both the Welcome Address by Dr. John Pugh, Pro-Vice Chancellor of *UWIC*, and the Keynote Speech at the start of the conference

by Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas, *Welsh Assembly Government*, were unreservedly very good and expressed considerable sensitivity toward the Arts.

On the second day there were speeches by Ken Bartlett of the *Foundation for Community Dance*, Veronica Jobbins, *NDTA* and Alison Hanbury, *PE and Sport Action Group for Wales*. There were contributions based on practical experience, from a primary and a secondary school teacher, a head teacher, and a county dance adviser. The conference programme included a fascinating workshop on traditional Welsh clog dancing. Dr. Jacqueline Smith-Autard highlighted movement observation in a practical workshop using a CD Rom of *Ludus Company* dancers. Groups of dancing children - early years, boys performing individual feats of agility and break-dancing to a musical accompaniment, girls dancing with precision in carefully constructed sequences - all performed with energy and enjoyment.

Topics for consideration ranged from the training of general teachers who deliver dance, the role of specialist dance teachers, work of county advisors, promoting, fostering and raising standards of *Dance in Education*, *Community Dance* and *Continuing Professional Development*. Discussion was lively. All the speakers, without exception, set a very high standard both in their presentation and in their subject matter as well as in their feeling for dance itself. The atmosphere of enthusiasm was all-pervading. The question about dance being a sport or an art was avoided by involving both the *Welsh Arts Council* and *Sports Council*.

The conference was suddenly cut short during the final afternoon by severe weather which succeeded in cutting off the power supply and seemed to threaten the building which we were then asked to leave. We therefore await the conference summing up until such time as the Conference Chairman: Geraldine Hurl is able to collate all the contributions from delegates and produce a conference report. However, the feeling was that this was a thought-provoking, stimulating and exciting conference which provided a splendid forum for the expression of the concerns and enthusiasms of the delegates, many of whom were seeking genuine long-term and effective solutions to their problems. In addition it raised expectations that the millions of pounds mentioned as being available might truly result in support for Dance and the Arts in Wales. The Guild's ability to mount various training courses in many localities was explained in a paper. The *Laban in Places* workshop in Swansea on 11th June was highlighted.

Janet Whettam

magpie dance

(Magpie Dance is an inclusive group of dancers with and without learning disabilities and has carved out a national reputation for its exciting and inspiring approach to inclusive dance. Collaborating with professional artists, Magpie gives performances and undertakes dance classes and workshops across London and surrounding areas. Its aim is to encourage all people, regardless of their ability, to take a full and integrated part in the artistic life of the community. In 2003 Magpie was shortlisted for an award from the prestigious national 'Charity Awards' in recognition of its work with people with learning disabilities).



To mark both the *European Year of Disabled People* and to showcase the achievements of its dancers, *Magpie Dance* gave two very successful performances of 'Reflections On...' to much acclaim at its 'home' theatre, *The Churchill Theatre* in Bromley, Kent in November 2003.

'Reflections On...' profiled five new dance pieces, ranging from a masked dance which was heavily influenced by physical theatre, to a piece for the full company entitled 'Every Body Talking, Any One Listening?' which was premiered at Trafalgar Square in September. However, perhaps the most notable achievement of the production was the premiere of two dances, each choreographed by learning-disabled choreographers, Linda McCarthy and Karen Grandison. Their pieces were the result of work developed via a mentoring project instigated by *Magpie* in 2003, which enabled both women to work closely with professional choreographer David Nurse of ad hoc dance company over a six-month period. He explains the principles of the scheme: 'It was very important to me that I should not exclusively influence the choices made by Karen and Linda, and that their pieces were a result of their own artistic choices. Watching the dances I was struck by how individual and distinctive they were and how clearly the themes were followed through.'

The mentoring programme is just one of the new developments at *Magpie*, another one has been the realization of a long held ambition to set up a new Youth Group for younger people with learning disabilities aged between 16 and 25, which is supported by a three year grant from the *Community Fund*.



These programmes run alongside our regular community classes during term -time in Bromley and Orpington; education residencies and performance projects in dance involving over 600 - 800 people with learning disabilities each year across London and surrounding areas. Professional musicians who are commissioned to write original music for performances support our classes and workshops.

Magpie receives no regular funding support to undertake the work outlined above; we have to rely on private support, grants and donations from a range of organisations and individuals. 'The work of *Magpie Dance* is brave and pioneering because it is rooted in the belief that theatre is primarily theatre, not therapy, and therefore engages the abilities, personalities and talents of all of its member dancers in the creation of new art-forms. We are delighted to have been able to present the Company as part of our programme.'

Derek Nicholls, Chief Executive, Churchill Theatre, Bromley

For more information about the mentoring scheme or *Magpie Dance* projects and performances, please see www.magpiedance.org.uk or call Avril Hitman, Artistic Director on 020 8467 3331 or email maggie_dance@ntlworld.com

fluxusdance

Award for Guild Member

Artistic Director Cathy O'Kennedy, and her Kildare based contemporary dance company *Fluxusdance*, were invited to Geneva in December where their work was honoured by the *World Summit Awards* for e-content and creativity. As part of their award, *Fluxusdance* was invited to perform at the *Summit Awards Ceremony*. *Fluxusdance* has been exploring the creative use of interactive technologies since 1997 and, in collaboration with *Smart Lab London*, *Media Lab Europe* in Dublin and *Catlab New York*, has been involved in ongoing research and collaborative work around performance and assistive technologies for people with disabilities. Members of *Counterbalance*, a company founded by Cathy to include people with disabilities, were co-partners in the collaboration.

Cathy has long been a member and supporter of the Guild and our work in Ireland, and now tutors on our Community Dance Courses in Ireland. Several members of *Counterbalance* have completed the *Laban Guild Community Dance Teachers Course*, and other members from our recent course in Kildare were also involved in the original project. Although not all were able to go to Geneva, they put on a stunning performance in the theatre in Newbridge in September in the middle of their final assessments for the Guild certificate!

Many congratulations to Cathy and to everyone taking part in the project, especially Bobby Byrne, a member of *Counterbalance* and graduate of the Guild training scheme, who was a member of the group performing in Geneva.

We are looking forward to working with Cathy again on the Guild's Stage 2 course, projected for Autumn 2004 in Co. Kildare.

Ann Ward



Sam and Susi Thornton receiving one of their several 25th Anniversary presents from their many friends at *L.In.C* in recognition of inspired directorship of the Summer Courses. The artist, Jean McColl, from Brighton, regularly spends a day each summer in the studios at Eastbourne sketching the moving dancers; Susi and Sam chose one of their favourite pieces depicting a moment from one of Sam's movement choirs.



Sam Thornton teaching 18 year-old Ned Lunn *Laban's Defence Scale*. Ned has formed his own theatre company and is producing and directing a physical theatre production of *Macbeth* and will use the Defence Scale as the basis of the battle scenes.

ELLINOR MARGARET HINKS

Born on February 6th 1912, Ellinor Hinks, former Principal of *Nonington College of Physical Education*, passed away peacefully on January 18th at the age of 92 following a severe stroke. She will be greatly missed as a wise and knowledgeable supporter of many aspects of Laban work.

Trained at *Bedford College of PE* (1930-33) she first taught at *Queenswood* (1933-38) and then at *Harrow County High School* (1939-44). She then became a lecturer at *I M Marsh College of PE* in Liverpool (1944-50). Her main subjects were swimming and Educational Gymnastics. Ellinor was an original thinker, interested in, but not a slavish follower of, other people's ways and creeds. At the time many PE teachers were suspicious of the radical new *Laban* approach to movement education, and on the other hand Gymnastics was despised by many *Laban* devotees. In 1950 Ellinor was appointed as Deputy Principal to *Nonington College of PE* in Kent, and as Principal of the College in 1959.

Ellinor had many gifts: she was a facilitator, instrumental in enabling things to happen - executive and decisive. If she saw value in something she actively supported it and didn't merely think about it. Her breadth of vision encompassed all different aspects of the College as a community, not only students and academic staff, but domestic staff, ground staff, caretaking staff etc. In all areas she encouraged individuals and treated them with concern and dignity, discussing with interest their work and ideas - ready when needed with thoughtful advice.

As Principal, Ellinor also had the necessary dignity, courage and skills to function successfully in the public domain, in relationships with *Kent County Council*, the *Ministry of Education* and the *University of London Institute of Education*. She fought tirelessly for the expansion of the College as a mixed College with new facilities - Gymnasia, Theatres, Swimming Pool, Laboratories, Sports Hall, Library, which opened in 1972. She also fought tirelessly at the University along with other constituent Colleges for acceptance of the concept of the 'Art and Science of Movement' and 'Movement Studies' as degree courses.

Ellinor's deeper interest in 'Laban-based' work and ideas sprang from the time she became Principal of *Nonington* in 1959 when Sally Archbutt and later Hettie Loman were appointed to the staff. They had the broad interest of Laban himself in movement altogether, not only as manifested in dance. Very interested in Ellinor's approach to Gymnastics, in the filming of her work, they encouraged her to continue teaching in spite of her heavy work-load as Principal. Through their work and friendship, Ellinor gradually became deeply involved in assisting the advancement of many aspects of *Laban* work, and 'Laban' people.

At *Nonington* she supported the work of the Dance Department on both the educational and the artistic side from the point of view of time allocation, finance, studio, theatre and library resources. Also in the appointment of staff, not only to the Dance Department but also in Music, Drama, Art and Philosophy. She developed an interest in Laban movement notation and in the 1960s gave support and advice to Valerie Preston-Dunlop in relation to her development of *Beechmont Movement Centre* at Sevenoaks. She enabled Sally to have leave to study *Kinetography* with Albrecht Knust at the *Folkwangschule* in Essen-Werden. The 1973 Biennial Conference of the *International Council of Kinetography Laban* was held at *Nonington*.

Both Lisa Ullmann and Albrecht Knust developed firm friendships with Ellinor. Ellinor became a member of *ICKL*, acted as Chair of Technical discussions at several *ICKL* Conferences, and acted in an advisory capacity in relation to the formulation of the Constitution.

When Lisa and Ellinor had both retired as Principals, Lisa needed



someone to help her with sorting and cataloguing *Laban's Archive*; it was suggested that she should approach Ellinor. They worked together on the *Archive* until Lisa's death in 1985, and after this Ellinor continued for ten years until the work was completed and then became responsible for Lisa's own *Archive*. Both of these are housed in *The National Resource Centre for Dance* in the *University of Surrey* at Guildford.

After Lisa's death, Ellinor (and Athalie Knowles) were responsible for the setting up of the *Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund*. Ellinor served for many years on the *LUTSF* Executive Committee, then as an advisor and Patron. She was also a Patron and member of the *Laban Guild*.

Ellinor was an artist as evidenced in her own photographic work. She photographed and filmed much of Hettie Loman's professional choreographic work and latterly helped Sally with the *Hettie Loman Archive*.

She was a Patron and supporter of many organisations: - the *World Wildlife Fund*, *National Trust*, *Royal Horticultural Society*, *Redwings Horse Sanctuary*, *RSPCA*, *Royal Lifeboat Institution*, *Tollers' Design Centre*, *Croham Hurst School*, *Centre for Dance and Related Arts* and the *Laban Guild*.

Ellinor's last outing was a visit to the new *LABAN* in Deptford, (she was not enamoured of its design or ambience).

(The Editor is indebted to Sally Archbutt for the detailed background to this tribute to Ellinor Hinks. A Memorial Thanksgiving Service will be held on Saturday June 12th at 12.30pm in the Croydon Parish Church, Church Street, followed by refreshments and reminiscences in the Church Hall).

book review

Movement and Dance in Early Childhood
Mollie Davies
Sage (2003), 240pp, £18.99

When I was a naïve student teacher, looking at a time-table for seven year olds, I blanched at the sight of 30 minutes PE (*Physical Education*) every day of the week. I asked the class teacher for help. A whistle was thrust into my hand and I was told to, "Run them round the yard three times, that gets rid of their energy".

I had a lot to learn. The idea of the mind-body separation was

entrenched and the negative attitude to human energy as a waste product was established. It has taken a life-time to change those ideas. It was working with Dr Mollie Davies as a colleague at the *Froebel Educational Institute* that was largely responsible for shifting my professional understanding of her subject from "running them round the yard" to Movement and Dance in education.

This updated and extended edition of Dr Davies's book encapsulates her lifetime of study and practice with young children. She states at the outset a clear framework of principles, justified with reference to historical and modern research, which underpins all the information, analysis of firsthand observations and suggestions for educational practice which follow.

Starting with babies and going through to the middle primary school years, there are chapters describing the development of co-ordination and extensions of bodily and mental actions. The part that parents play in interactive contact with babies and toddlers is highlighted and encouraged as it lays the foundation for progress in healthy emotional and physical growth and development. A generous number of excellent photographs illustrate the kinds of shared activities that are enjoyed, and show the growing confidence of children to increase their range of movement as it gradually extends to the exploration of new objects and apparatus which demand greater skill. At nursery school the sharing of such activities continues, and with the guidance of trained teachers, establishes emerging social trust and enjoyment with peers.

Students will find many expert, detailed analyses of observations, made by the author, of individual children engaged in spontaneous and purposeful activities. The descriptions and photographs of the actual children are delightful and together make clear what trained professional insight is. The examples of tabular recording are models of instruction for preparation, execution and assessment of lessons in school on which sequences of future sessions can be built. There are many and varied suggestions for what can be done to stimulate children to learn and progress in ideas and skills through movement.

Movement and dance are seen throughout as important parts of a total curriculum. Examples of teaching strategies for linking them with other subjects eg maths, literacy and science (which are usually given priority) identify the sharing of common vocabulary and concepts, plus opportunities for representing in drawing, painting and writing the activities that have taken place in movement lessons. Attention drawn to such connections increases the chance of learning, with conscious interest and reflection, new concepts, skills and modes of expression right across the curriculum.

The last two chapters concentrate on Dance and bring together all the ideas that have been presented earlier. The creative, imaginative and communicative aspects of dance are emphasised by presenting them through a developmental perspective. What begins as the natural expression of feeling and fun in very young children is raised, through dance education at school, to performance and appreciation of the efforts of others. The gradual learning of the vocabulary of movement to give dance structure is explained: practice leads to the understanding of what performance involves. Once again there are telling photographs, children's drawings and writing to illustrate the *Foundation Stage* and *Stages 1 & 2*. Listed outlines of lessons give examples of dance titles followed by headings concerning teacher's and pupil's roles, challenges and assessments.

Finally, Dr Davies not only shows extensive knowledge of her subject and long experience of educational practice, but also her continuing enthusiasm and appreciation of children, which she would like us all to share by becoming more aware of the potential holistic benefits of education in movement and dance. Her clarity of thought and flowing prose (splendidly presented in

print by *Sage Publications*), make the contents of her book an accessible and valuable read for parents, teachers, researchers, students and tutors.

Human energy is creative and is to be used freely and constructively. It is not to be wasted. Dr Davies must have the last word, "Movement matters".

E. M. Swan-Roberts

motivating moves for people with parkinson's disease

"Motivating Moves for People with Parkinson's" is a unique program of 24 short, stimulating exercises especially for people with Parkinson's created by *Laban Guild* member and *Certified Laban Movement Analyst* Janet Hamburg. She also is a professor of dance at the *University of Kansas* and a *Registered Somatic Movement Therapist*. The *Laban-Bartenieff*-based exercises were designed to improve breathing, flexibility, sense of balance, spatial awareness, vocal range and dynamic expressivity. Caregivers and friends have found the exercise program to be beneficial and enjoyable, as well. The seated exercise program is now available on videotape and DVD, including PAL (the UK video format) and SECAM versions.

The *Parkinson's Disease Foundation* in New York City, with support from the *Parkinson Foundation* of the Heartland in Kansas, funded the production of the video and DVD. The *National Parkinson Foundation* in Miami, Florida, and the *Struthers Parkinson's Foundation* in Minneapolis, Minnesota, also recommend "Motivating Moves for People with Parkinson's." Lucien Côté, MD, neurologist and Parkinson's specialist at the *Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center* in New York, gave the video a rave review:

"Exercise is critical to the overall care of a patient with Parkinson's. This video meets the needs of a Parkinson's patient because it concentrates on stretching and balance. It also provided extremely helpful tips on mobility. The video is upbeat and inspiring, as well as educational. Janet Hamburg's expertise and excellent teaching skills put this video at the top of the class."

The video features three color-coded sections for easy cueing:
How to Do Motivating Moves (45 minutes)
The Exercise Class (36 minutes)
Practical Tips for Daily Living (4 minutes)

Each exercise has a piano accompaniment that was composed especially for the dynamics, rhythm, timing, and phrasing of every movement. The music was composed and performed by Robert Abramson, an internationally recognized master teacher of *Dalcroze Eurhythmics* on the faculty of the *Juilliard School of Music* in New York City. He created wonderful music that entertains and makes it easier to do the exercises. Practical tips for daily living include demonstrations of getting out of bed, rising from a chair, reaching, turning around, getting into and out of a car, releasing from a freeze and stopping hurried steps (festination forward or backward).

To order the videotape or DVD, go to www.pdf.org or <http://www.motivatingmoves.com>, or e-mail info@pdf.org or Janet@motivatingmoves.com or write to:

Parkinson's Disease Foundation,
710 West 168th Street, 3rd Floor,
New York, NY 10032-9982.



may

May - six weeks from **12 May - 23 June** every Wednesday from 1 - 3pm Training for Teachers. Walli Meier will be looking at how Laban Studies can be applied during the preparation, teaching and reflection of dance.
Dance East, Northgate Arts Centre, Ipswich email info@danceeast.co.uk

20th and 27th evenings Ilminster Somerset - Wendy Hermelin
'Elements of Stitch, Glass and Footwear'
Stitched textile constructions, glorious stained glass and unusual shoes will provide an interesting environment for three, open, Laban-based, creative dance classes, using the exhibition pieces as starting points.
The dance work will be videoed.
Contact Wendy Hermelin: Tel: 01460 76829 email: wjhermelin@hotmail.com

june

Saturday 12th Laban in Swansea: 'Creative work with Laban's Principles'
Laban in Places workshop led by Wendy Hermelin
A day of fun closing with a group dance in a beautiful dance space. (see enclosed flier).
Contact: Rona Morgan, email: rona.morgan@esport.com

Saturday 12th University of Surrey Guildford Surrey
Somatic Studies Lecture Demonstration and 2 Movement Workshops led by
Jean Johnson-Jones and Carol-Lynne Moore
Contact: a.ball@surrey.ac.uk Tel: 01483 686509

Saturday 19th June Crewe Cheshire
Fundraising Workshop looking at funding sources and application writing with an introduction to
Arts Council England's Funding. Led by Dance North West Pam Johnson
Contact: admin@dancenorthwest.org.uk Tel: 01606 863845

july

Laban Summer School 2004 **19-30th July** offers two weeks of intensive training with a world class faculty in the inspirational surroundings of the RIBA Stirling Prize-winning Building of the Year 2003.
Additional events include performances by Transitions Dance Company (**21 July**), H20 (Henri Orguikie Dance Company's sister Dance Company) and LamatDance (**29 July**).
For further information and to book a place visit www.laban.org or contact
Julia Mirkin on +44(0)20 8691 8600

Saturday July 17th - Picnic at Janet Whettam's home Silverwood House Woolaston
Lydney Glos. Further information from Janet Tel: 0159 452 8176 email: janetw@woolaston.fslife.co.uk

september

Saturday September 11th Laban in Chesterfield:
'Carnival - a dancing day of fun and celebration' led by Ann Ward (see enclosed flier).
Contact: Laban in Places - Studholme, Sandley Gillingham Dorset SP8 5DZ Tel: 01747 826007
email: lydia.everitt@btinternet.com

laban based dance class listings

Bromley, Avril Hitman Wednesday afternoons
020 8467 3331 Thursday mornings
Community classes for people with learning difficulties
Cambridge, Maddy Tongue Wednesday mornings
01223 302030 over 55s - open class
Swindon, Kathy Geddes Saturday mornings, three separate classes
01793 463210 for 4 - 5 years, 6 - 8 years, 9 - 13 years

DAY AT LABAN

As Membership Secretary, it gives me particular pleasure at each AGM to meet, not only old friends, but members who are usually only names on our database or whom I haven't met for some time. An extra treat comes from meeting new people who are joining us for the first time. Our venue at LABAN was certainly inspiring and we all enjoyed a wonderful day of workshops, lectures, talks and tours of the new building. As promised, a draw was held for all members paying their subscription by 30 January. The mystery prize (a mystery to us as well, as we hadn't decided what to offer was won by Jean Newlove. Jean has asked that this prize, equivalent to a years subscription, should be donated to the fund set up to achieve justice in the case of the death of her daughter, Kirsty McColl, while diving in Mexico. Anyone wishing to know more of this cause or to subscribe, should visit www.justiceforkirsty.org.

Ann Ward

REPORT FROM THE COURSES OFFICER

We have now started our new Stage 1 Community Dance Teachers Course in Westmeath, Ireland, for Midland Arts, and welcome all course members to the Laban Guild. We are delighted with the progress of our courses in Ireland and are currently planning a Stage 2 Course to be hosted by Lucina Russell, Arts Officer Co. Kildare, starting in the Autumn 2004.

We are now also in a position to take applications for our next Stage 1 Course in England. This will be based in Chelmsford, Essex, in conjunction with Essex Dance and New Hall School, starting in September 2004.

A recent survey of past graduates of our courses is currently being evaluated and will be followed up in the near future. Thanks to all our members who provided information.

Our Foundation Course continues to be popular with our leaders and our new schemes of work for younger children are completing their pilot year. Full details will be published in the Autumn.

We continue to update our guidelines for Guild tutors and our new recommendations covering a tutors Duty of Care are now available on application.

We have also negotiated a new deal on insurance available to our members.

Information on all the above is available from the Courses Officer, Ann Ward,
7 Coates Close, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex Tel: 01621 850 441 email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

IDEAS FOR DANCE

Our current collection of Ideas for Dance has proved so popular that we would like to expand it. Have you got a favourite session you would like to share with others? Please send your outline to Ann Ward, indicating the age group for which you feel it most appropriate. Everyone contributing will get a free copy of the 12 lessons already in our pack.

LIKE TO TEACH COMMUNITY DANCE?

Our next course will be starting in Chelmsford, Essex, in September 2004, in conjunction with Essex Dance and New Hall School. For details, please contact Ann Ward.

LABAN STUDIES

MA part-time Scholarship in European Dance Theatre Studies at LABAN. Suitably qualified members of the Guild are invited to apply. Further information from Gillian Hibbs email: gillian.hibbs1@virgin.net

CALLING ALL AUTHORS:

We are currently updating our booklist featuring books written by Guild members. If you have recently had a book published which is not on our list please send me details so that it can be included. The current list is available from Ann Ward.

WANTED!

A Laban Teacher for the Gloucester area for both children's classes and adults! Contact Ann Ward for details.

WANTED:

Immediately for rehearsals - enthusiastic and committed people from sixteen years of age upwards to help stage a new show 'A String of Pearls' to be staged at Bedford Corn Exchange December 9-11 (actors, musicians, singers, dancers, technicians, stage crew, stewards, stage design and construction, make-up and costume).
email: richard.hancock7@btinternet.com or dancers. Phone Carol Wallman on 01234 767618.

APPLICATION FOR GUILD MEMBERSHIP

(Members please pass on to non-members)

I wish to apply for membership of the Laban Guild and enclose a cheque for:
£20 UK Members; £25 worldwide Members; £10 concessions - Students, retired and unwaged; £15 institutions;
Eurozone £35; Eurozone reductions £17.50. (Eurozone cheques only if drawn on Irish Banks)
All cheques payable to Laban Guild and sent to the Membership Secretary
(Membership renewable on 1st January each year) £

Name: Address:

.....Phone No.: email:

My interests in Laban's work are as follows (please underline):

Education, Community Dance, Performance, Choreography, Therapy, Personal Development.

Signature: Date:

Please return this form to Ann Ward Membership Secretary,
7 Coates Close, Heybridge, Maldon Essex CM9 4PB email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

