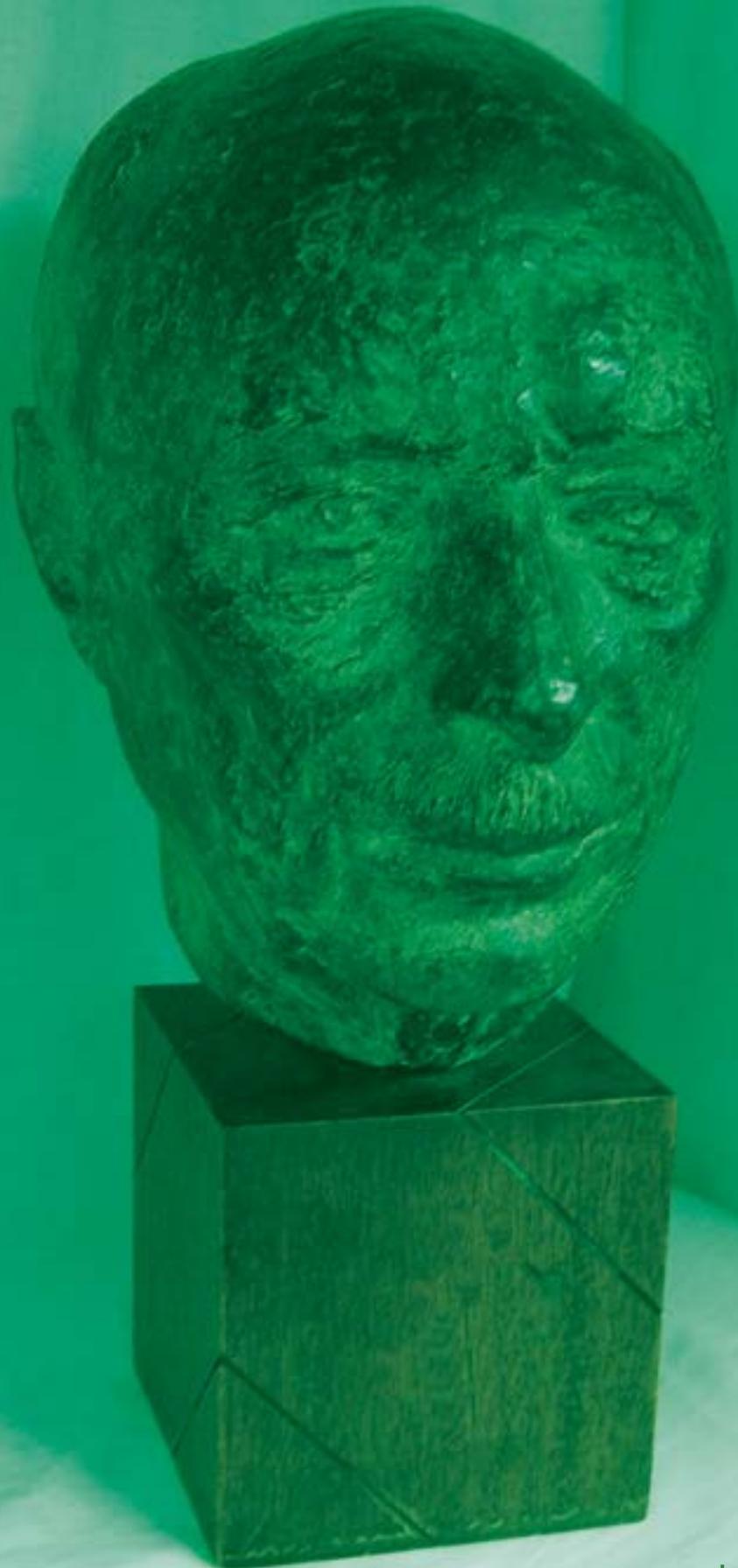


Movement & Dance



*Quarterly magazine of the Laban Guild
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Spring 2005*



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Back cover
Sylvia Bodmer photo: Sir Walter Bodmer's collection
Inside - Laban Lecture 2004
Epische Tanzfolge: photo. John Thiele, *Laban Collection, Archive at LABAN*
Laban and Gertrude Loeszer: *Laban Collection, Archive at LABAN*
Other photos and drawings from Sir Walter Bodmer's collection

letter

(Dr Alan Salter - a long-standing member of the Guild - has contributed many erudite articles to our Magazine; his reminder of Laban's humanitarianism is timely and his final maxim a salutary 'wake-up call!')

What a beautiful image of human movement graced the last magazine cover. The dancer, Lilla Bauer, became a distinguished teacher at *Goldsmiths College*, her participation a credit to the artistic concerns of dance education. She helped that department (which I later joined) to flourish until it became caught up - disastrously for its own fate - in the transition of *Laban Studio* to *Centre*.

The Green Table (Kurt Jooss 1932), in which Lilla danced the role of an innocent, remains a canon of *European theatre* and a memorable polemic against corruption and war. Our present world is also dominated by evils of ideology and violence so that the few who insanely amass profit and power make dupes or victims of the many. Like the *Young Girl* in Jooss' ballet, Laban's writings and movement choirs remind us that what is right is most often grounded in natural humanity.

There is a radical programme of action implied by the Laban perspective that has long been neglected but which - alas - I believe is again urgent and relevant. If this assertion seems to have travelled too far from the delight of a leaping girl, just look around. Symptoms on the merely physical level include wild excess of consumption (the obese and those getting out of their heads) and of inauthentic mannerism (politicians are inevitable examples) which combine with a morbid fascination for the body technological.

Good news of effective and harmonic progress seems far outmatched by bad, but Laban and his collaborators provide at least some tools for understanding and intervention.

Perhaps our own effort should be purposefully concerted to reawaken a wider application of Laban's principles (and just talking to people would be a start). The *Guild* itself is now rather frail but the dynamics of change can be rebalanced: the familiar maxim 'think globally, act locally' might even engender new life in ourselves.

Alan Salter

OPEN DAY OF DANCE AND GUILD AGM

Saturday 12th March 2005
at John Moore's University
I M Marsh Campus, Barkhill Road
Aigburth, Liverpool

Laban lecturer: Ken Bartlett
Director of the Foundation for Community Dance

Tutors: Dee Stott and Rhyan Parry
both graduates of the Laban Guild's
Community Dance Leaders Course

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Guild's
Courses Committee

After last year's memorable day at LABAN,
bring your friends and enjoy another great day!

See enclosed flyer for details and booking form

editorial



Just imagine a very high profile academic taking his seat on a trans-world airline having just concluded an exhausting high-powered University Conference in the Far East!

Barely has he time to tighten his seat-belt when out comes his laptop and he begins to type intently. His computer screen lights up with the following bold title:

LABAN LECTURE
Laban Guild AGM 2004 Creekside

Then begins the story his life, when as a boy and younger son of Ernst and Sylvia Bodmer (both of whom had escaped from Germany in the 30s), he found himself in Manchester stage-managing, stage-lighting designing, dancing, creating graphics - and all related to the ideas of one Rudolf von Laban - another refugee from Germany - with whom his mother was a colleague).



Sir Walter Bodmer
MA PhD FRCPath FRS

The computer screen becomes alive with text, illustrations and photographs (dragged and dropped from the 'picture gallery'). There is no time to glance down at the *Pacific* and *Indian Oceans*; no time admire the sun-lit cumulus clouds; no time to catch up on hours of lost sleep - only time to meet the deadline of the forthcoming issue of the *Laban Guild Magazine Movement & Dance* - February 2005! And after an absorbed spell of concentration, then:

'Send!' ... 'Quit!'

and within seconds the dramatic story lights up the editor's screen - 10,000 miles away in a wee corner of Kent! The story appears (unexpurgated) on pages 4-8 of this issue with a glorious picture of Sylvia - Walter's mother (known and admired by so many of us) on the back cover! Sir Walter had done the memory of his mother proud!

Sir Walter, in his lecture notes, reminds us that 'Laban and Lisa came to Manchester originally to collaborate with Mr Lawrence in the industrial aspects of movement'. In this issue we have seized upon this fact to remind ourselves of Laban's legacy in the field of non-verbal behaviour; and who better to front this reminder than Warren Lamb - who shared Sir Walter's experience in Manchester in the mid-40s. He has interviewed a colleague (Frances de Barre) on this very topic and solicited a new book summary in the field of *Movement Pattern Analysis* by Carol-Lynne Moore.

We were reminded by Dr. Betty Redfern in our Spring 2004 issue p.9 that our magazine "should serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and critical debate, especially on controversial subjects (such as how and to what extent Laban's 'theories' require re-interpretation today?)". We have, in this spirit, briefly looked at the claims of 'choreutic research' and the admirable efforts of Valerie Preston-Dunlop.

We have also welcomed a new distinguished member (Don Buckland) - and a letter from Alan Salter whose compliment and joyful reminiscences are coupled with a serious 'wake-up call' to all members of the Guild. We would wish for many more such letters!

Laban lecture 2004

Sir Walter Bodmer Delivers the Laban Lecture at
LABAN Creekside 27th March 2004

(Sir Walter is a Patron of the Laban Guild and Chairman of the Board of Governors at LABAN Creekside. He is Principal of Hertford College Oxford and travels extensively - having recently returned from Japan. He has a long association with the Guild and has served on its Council. His mother Sylvia was Vice-Chairman, Chairman and President of the Guild in the 50s and 60s).

Introduction

I am honoured to have been asked to give this year's *Laban Lecture*, and thank the Guild, and especially its President, Geraldine Stephenson, for the invitation. I am giving the *Laban Lecture*, as most of you will know, because my mother, Sylvia Bodmer, was one of Laban's early pupils and was a key figure in the development of his work in this country.

I may be the first to give the *Laban Lecture* (or at least one of the very few) who has had no professional involvement with movement or dance. I am certainly the first to give it in the wonderful new building LABAN, the school and *conservatoire*, which owes so much to Marion North's inspiring leadership for more than 30 years.

Being asked to give the lecture has given me the opportunity to think back to my youth when I knew Laban and Lisa, the founders of the *Art of Movement Studio* in Manchester and the precursor of LABAN and many of those then involved in modern dance as friends of the family. My theme is a historical overview of my mother's career in modern dance and her close association with Laban, as seen from my perspective. I have used materials from my own archive (now deposited at LABAN) as well as much input from others, including especially Marion North, and the splendid biography of Laban by Valerie Preston-Dunlop.

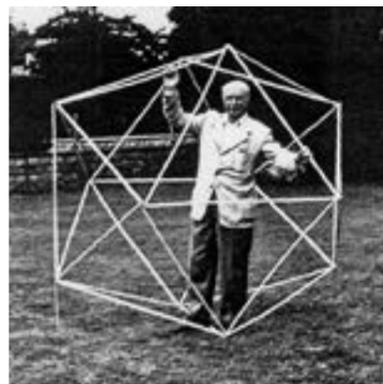


(Figure 1 Sylvia and Laban in Discussion)

Sylvia and Laban

Sylvia (my mother) and Laban are shown in Figure 1 having a discussion in about the mid -1950s when she was in her 50s and he in his 70s. They were very good friends and colleagues, and seem to have had a special understanding and respect for each other. Laban in this photo is very much as I remember him. He was already over 60 (born Dec 1879) when I first got to know him as a child.

Laban is shown in Figure 2, again as I knew him in his later years, in an icosahedron symbolising his combination of the artistic and the analytical.



(Figure 2 Laban In Icosahedron)

My mother wrote in an obituary of Laban in 1958: *'His artistic disposition became apparent very early. As a child he drew and visualized the most unusual patterns in space...'*

Laban formed his first dance group in Munich in 1910 and at about the same time organized his first *Movement Choir*. After World War I he returned from Switzerland to Germany to form his stage dance group, *Tanzbühne Laban*. That was the group my mother joined in 1922. He came to the UK in 1936 because of the Nazis and was invited to go to Dartington by Kurt Jooss, founder of the famous ballet company and later the school in Essen.

My mother went to Laban when she was about 20, having first had lessons in dance from Perrotet, a former student of Laban's in Zurich where she was brought up. My mother said that Perrotet, who came from a well-to-do family, had a child from Laban and mother assumed that that was why Perrotet did not tell Laban, as she had promised, that mother was going to him. Sylvia's high school (the *Freies Gymnasium* in Zurich) report of Sept 1920 (*Maturitaets Zeugnis*) shows that her best subjects were mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology, in nearly all of which she got the top mark of 6.

In a video (to be deposited in the *Laban Archives*) that I took of Sylvia in conversation with my late wife, Julia, in about 1987 shortly before Sylvia died, she averred that Laban was both a *Don Juan* and a genius. Laban, she said: had his own distinctive ways of teaching and, for example, just thrust her into a new part and left her to devise what was needed herself. She also emphasized Laban's friendship with my father.



2. Epische Tanzfolge presented in 1922 as *Die Geblendeten* (Illusions, or The Blindness). From left, unidentified, Sylvia Bodmer, Dussia Bereska, Edgar Frank, unidentified

(Figure 3 Sylvia dancing in Laban's Group)

Sylvia is shown in Figure 3 dancing in Laban's group in a typically dominant pose. Edgar Frank, also in the photo, was later a collaborator with her in Frankfurt.

Laban lecture 2004 (cont)

Father and Mother in Frankfurt

My father, Ernst, a medical doctor, met Sylvia after she had moved to Frankfurt, and they married in 1927. Ernst was a tremendous support for Sylvia, especially in the later years in Manchester. My oldest brother, Arnold, in a tribute to my father given on February 21 1968, just after he had died, emphasised Ernst's interest in the arts - music and dance - as well as science. He said: *'On many occasions and in many ways his criticisms and suggestions were of invaluable help to my mother in both the composition and execution of her dance compositions.'*



(Figure 4 Sylvia Dancing in 1928 in Frankfurt)



(Figure 5 Trudel Loeser and Laban Dancing)

Gertrude (Ruth or Trudel) Loeser is shown in Figure 5 dancing with Laban in 1925 while they were performing Wagner themes on a *duo tour*. It is hard not to believe from this photo that Trudel was not another of Laban's conquests! She was a contemporary of my mother's as a student of Laban, and so they must have met each other there. She was also my first cousin. It was not, however, through her that Sylvia met my father, whose sister was her mother and so Trudel and my father were near contemporaries in age, although he was her uncle - shades of Perrotet!

Father, in a talk to the *Manchester Dance Circle* in 1966, said that:

'Laban and I had been friends for 35 years and in addition I had been his doctor for many years, as well two nieces of mine were his master pupils (namely Trudel and her sister Liesl) and so was my wife. That was before Sylvia and I even knew each other ... In our talks we mostly touched on the relation of movement to

personality and character.'

Manchester, England

In a tribute to Sylvia at her Funeral on 3rd November 1989 (published in the *Guild Magazine*, May 1990) I said: *'Mother brought her young family to England on her own in mid -1938 because of Hitler. Father had gone on ahead to escape.'*

These were difficult times, as aliens were interned (my father fortunately for only 6 weeks). Jooss and colleagues had to leave Dartington in 1940 because it was a protected area then. They were also interned just before they had planned to go to South America. Laban and Lisa stayed at the Elmthirst's 'luxury flat' in London, Lisa teaching a 'sort of summer school'. Sylvia started teaching again in 1942 during the war. Her activities included, for example, a lecture to *The Manchester Ballet Club*, and demonstrations to the *Birmingham Contemporary Dance Club* and the *Gymnastic Teachers Association*. People had been referred to her by Lisa Ullmann, who was teaching weekend and other courses,

A letter to Sylvia dated February 1943 stated: *'The members present declared it to be one of the finest and most interesting lectures ... we are eagerly looking forward to the classes on Monday evenings'*. That was the beginning of the *Manchester Dance Circle*.

F C Lawrence was a businessman in Manchester, and it was because of Lawrence that Lisa and Laban came to Manchester and set up the *Art of Movement Studio*, the precursor of LABAN, with my mother as a key teaching partner. A letter from FC Lawrence to my mother in May 1943 thanked her for working with his trainees and included a payment to her of £4 and 15 Shillings! It was Lawrence who stimulated Laban's interest in *time and motion studies* and his development of the *efforts*, leading to Laban's book on *Effort*.

On the occasion of the 21st birthday of the *Manchester Dance Circle* in April 1964 my father, then the President, said: *'Laban and Lisa came to Manchester in 1942 where Sylvia was already giving courses to a group of enthusiasts ... who came to learn this new kind of dancing. Laban and Lisa came to Manchester originally to collaborate with Mr Lawrence on the industrial aspect of movement ... and became the first President of the Manchester Dance Circle.'*

An early helper and participant in the dancing was *Her Majesty's Inspector*, Myfanwy Dewey. She allowed her garden to be used for classes, and was, I am sure, influential in encouraging the teaching of *Modern Dance* in schools. This became an important activity of the *Centre* and for Laban and, especially, Lisa.

In a letter from Kurt Jooss to my mother and father in March 1943 he thanks them for the invitation to stay at their house while he was in Manchester. Jooss had tried to persuade my mother to join his planned company while she was with Laban, but she refused. She was, to say the least, for a while very closely involved with Jooss, who nevertheless remained a friend even though she did not join him and his Company. She decided to leave Laban for Frankfurt and form a school there with her friend Lotte Mueller, also a Laban pupil, but ten years older. Jooss' Ballet Company, which produced many notable dances, including *The Green Table* (a political satire that won a major prize) was perhaps, after Laban himself, the first successful professional stage company to present modern dance compositions, at least in Europe. Mother and her colleagues, including Edgar Frank, gave performances at the *Frankfurt Opera House*. It was, of course, in Frankfurt that she met her husband, my father, and where I was born.

Alice Roughton, who was a well known figure in Cambridge and a notable supporter of refugees, had helped Jooss in his early days in England, and was a director of his Company. It is through this connection that I, and my brothers and the rest of the family, met Alice Roughton, who became a close friend of the family.

Laban lecture 2004 (cont)

She was my family doctor and delivered our three children in Cambridge. Gabor Cossa who had been, as I recall, the stage manager for Jooss, also became a good friend and for many years ran a small antique shop opposite the *Fitzwilliam Museum* in Cambridge, from which we occasionally bought furniture and other antique pieces.

Albrecht Knust, who was an early dance student of Laban's, later was a major, if not *the* major, developer of Laban notation. The notation was first published by Laban in 1927, when Knust was presumably still with him. Knust remained friendly with my mother and sent her an outline of his work, (now in the *Laban Archives*), in June 17 1951 from the Jooss *Folkwangschule* where he was employed. He sent this quite extensive outline to her because she had shown an interest in the notation. In fact, he said she was the first of his 'circle of colleagues' to have shown any interest in his work. This simple outline of the basics, in Knust's own typing and hand writing, shows the early development of the Laban notation and the parallelism with musical notation, which however does not have the complexity of at least one extra dimension.

The Manchester Dance Circle

The *Manchester Dance Circle* was founded by Sylvia and Lisa Ullmann in 1943, very soon after my mother had started teaching in Manchester and after Laban and Lisa came there. My father succeeded Lawrence as President in 1962, after the latter had been President for 18 years. One of my few direct contributions to Modern Dance was to design the logo, which I cut out in fret wood and painted gold!



(Figure 6 the Manchester Dance Circle logo)

Father at the 21st birthday celebration of *Manchester Dance Circle* in 1964 summarized its activities as follows:

'recreational classes ... lectures by Laban, Jooss and many others. Week-end study courses, afternoons of Dance ... come to enjoy dancing in a movement choir composition. ... Children's Day of Dance, Discussion evenings, film shows on Movement and Dance ... also ... a news sheet ... not least there is the Production group ... for an advanced standard ... study for the performances ... originally mainly for children ... now ... also to adult audiences, drama societies ... the Central Council of Physical Recreation.'

It was a very busy programme! When Laban and Lisa left Manchester in 1953 it was a challenge to keep it going, but Sylvia did so with the help of many others. Father praised Lisa, who was there at the 21st birthday party, for her continuing support. She came every year to teach a week-end course with Sylvia.

I did the original lighting for the Production Group. It was a *Heath Robinson* affair in the extreme, made up from biscuit tins with coloured plastic sheets in front and a crude system of switches. There can be no doubt that nowadays it would have been well outside any conceivable safety limits. I later learned much more about stage practice behind the scenes of *Theatre Workshop* performances at the *Central Library Theatre* in Manchester. The *Theatre Workshop* was Joan Littlewood's inspirational, innovative and political company. Her actors learned their movement from the *Art of Movement Studio*.

At the *Manchester Dance Circle's* 21st birthday party in 1964, when he was 72 and 4 years before he died, Ernst said: *'Thanks to the wisdom, energy and vitality of Sylvia.. and the co-operation of an experienced committee, the Manchester Dance Circle flourished more and more.'*

Sylvia continued, if anything even more actively, with the dance after her husband died in 1968, and especially with the *Manchester Dance Circle*, helped in particular by Enid Platt.

Laban Art of Movement Guild

The notice for an early Council meeting of the *Laban Art of Movement Guild*, presumably the third, held in November 1947, shows that it took place at 1 Stanton Avenue, West Didsbury, Manchester. This was my parents', and so my home. The previous, second meeting of the Council held in August 1947, had been attended by many of the well known figures in this country in Laban's work, including Laban himself, Lawrence, Lisa, Sylvia, Joan Goodrich, Elsie Palmer, Diana Jordan, Gladys Stevens, Betty Meredith-Jones and others. My mother gave many of her classes at 1 Stanton Avenue in my father's doctor's waiting room (he became a family Doctor in the UK) as some may still remember, and that, I am fairly sure, is how I first met Marion North. The *Guild Officers* in 1956 also included a number of familiar names, for example: Marjorie Bergen, Elsie Palmer, Marion North, Lorn Primrose, Gladys Stevens, and Sheila McGivering, many of whom have played a key role in promoting Laban's work in the UK.

1952 Modern Dance Holiday Course at Dartington

There was a series of *Modern Dance Holiday Courses* held in the summers in Dartington in the early 1950s. I attended in the summer of 1952 at the age of 16, along with Bill Elmhirst, who played a major role in supporting the Laban school. It was the Elmhirsts who bought the Addlestone Surrey estate for Laban.

Laban himself gave the few men attending the course special extra lessons in which I took part and I still have the notes and diary entries I made at the time. In my *'Report on Summer Dance Holiday Course Dartington Hall 1952'* I listed the main activities as:

'Veronica Tyndale-Biscoe introduction for beginners, Efforts - the 8 basic movement qualities introduced, individual mixes of movement qualities: 3 groups - mime with Geraldine Stephenson, percussion with Veronica T-B, and dance with Mrs Bodmer. Geraldine - movement and acting, Veronica - movement with the instrument and rhythms.'

About Laban's special classes for the men, I reported: *'In these we were taught harmonic movements and movement sequences designed to exercise all parts of the body to their fullest extent'*. This we certainly succeeded in doing in a most exhilarating way.

And from my diary: *'Class with Laban. Very good and strenuous'*. The report continued: *'Then movement choir 'till lunch. Two more themes, red and white, repeated the first two, the green and the yellow. Laban told us the rough build-up of the composition.'* And on the last Day (of 13) *'After that, final run through of movement choir. After lunch Laban lecture - correlating the various aspects of the course, explaining the build up of it.'*

About my mother I said: *'Mrs Bodmer's classes had much more of a bias towards the purely dance aspect of movement ... We experienced the enormous difference between bound and free flow. The final classes in the open air theatre, conscious of all the space around one'*. This was reminiscent of her description of dancing in Gleschendorf with Laban's group in the 1920s where, as she put it, they danced *'Barefoot on the thistles ... up and down the hill with a feeling of incredible freedom and being close to nature.'*

Famously, in one of Sylvia's lessons at Dartington she exhorted us to *'Pair off in threes and advance backwards'*. This was characteristic of her slightly quaint, delightfully expressive and often slightly ungrammatical, but quite clear and fluent, though heavily accented spoken English. She retained her accent even after more than 40 years in England. Her written English was, in contrast, remarkably clear and fluent.

Laban lecture 2004 (cont)

Other comments in my diary included:

'Mother in free and bound flow' - her favourite topic?

'Laban and Lisa. Most interesting good general introduction to choral dancing.'

'Watched mother's production group class, Dance of the Blessed Spirits - a lovely floating movement'.

And on the last day: *'Class with mother. Free flow, bound flow, meeting parting, ending with little Mozart dance.'*

'Then production group performed twice. Quite amazing what has been achieved in so short a time.'

Sylvia's Dancing and Choreography

A black and white film was taken by Enid Platt of my mother dancing in the late 1950s, when she was certainly over 50. (It has been transferred to video and is now in the *Laban Archive*). This shows my mother then still to be very agile and expressive.

In an article by Sylvia Bodmer on *Dance Composition* in the *Guild Magazine* of May 1962 she wrote:

'How do you compose your group dances ... how do you conceive a theme? My answer would be: the theme arises through an intense desire to convey some of my own personal experiences to others through the medium of dance ... I start to move, I start to dance, I try, I play on my own body as on an instrument, I try again until I have found it: ... I have created a dance gesture'.

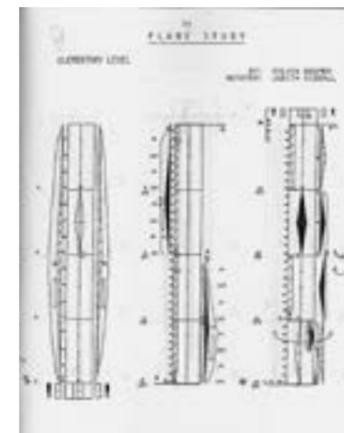
Commenting on the analogy with music she wrote: *'In dance the instrument is our own body. Dance gesture becomes ... the building stone with which any theme, any composition will be built up and developed ... Variations can be found.'*

'The next step in the building up of a dance composition I shall call the motif. It arises through the linking of dance gestures.'

'The theme arises through the development of variations of the dance gestures used in the motif.'

She goes on to give seven examples of dance gestures and ways in which these are combined in different people or in groups and how these are developed into themes and so dances.

Several of my mother's dances were notated, and brought together in a booklet, still available in the *Laban Library*. An example of some of the notation for one of these, done by Jude Siddall, is shown in Figure 7



(Figure 7 Laban Notation of Sylvia's Dance 'The Planes')

A letter from Marion to Sylvia, dated 10th June 1977, shows that Sylvia had to pay Jude Siddall's expenses for coming to Manchester to do the notation. Marion also wanted the studies to be video-taped. This was made possible by the re-creation of the dances with the help of Enid Platt. Enid had been a close associate of my mother's in the *Manchester Dance Circle* and its performance group for many years. Enid Platt sadly died last November. Valerie Preston-Dunlop was instrumental in arranging for the dances to be performed by Laban students under instruction from Enid, who had known them and danced in them for my mother. There is a tape of Valerie interviewing

my mother at the age of about 83, just four years before she died, and asking her about her reaction to seeing the recreated dances on video-tape. Mother was very positive and pleased with the result. (The video-taped dances and the interview are available in the *Laban Archive*.)

My mother followed in Laban's footsteps in her fondness for *Movement Choirs*, which were very carefully thought out. This is illustrated in Figure 8 which shows some of Sylvia's original notes indicating how she designed her choreography for one of her *Movement Choirs*.



(Figure 8 Sylvia's Notes for a movement choir)

The idea of a *Movement Choir* was developed from Laban's original work, and was something she always enjoyed creating. My mother was very concerned in her later years that Laban's ideas in dance and movement should continue to be promoted by the younger generation of dancers and teachers, and so she was concerned to pass on as much of her experience as she could to others. The concern for the continued promotion of Laban's innovative ideas is as important now as it was some 20 years ago when Sylvia Bodmer expressed these views which:

'emphasized the importance of guaranteeing the future of Laban, and of the Guild, maintaining in each a strong element of Laban's influence without, however, inhibiting new developments'.

Sylvia wrote a letter to Joan Goodrich, as Chairman of the *Guild*, dated 24th September 1979, arguing for a *United International Association* to bring together all the various national societies (or factions, as she put it) with an interest in Laban's work. Sylvia was then 77 and had been to New York to give a talk at a celebration of the centenary of Laban's birth while on her way to her then annual visits to my brother Arnold and his family in Chicago. The letter to Joan Goodrich was stimulated by her visit to the meeting in New York. Joan replied on 26th September, saying she was 'forming a committee', but I suspect nothing ever happened. The need for the sort of organization my mother proposed in 1979 may still be there today. Does such a thing exist yet, and if not why not?

The interplay between the analytical and the artistic.

In an article in the journal *Main Currents* (Sept-Oct 1974, 31.No1, 28-31) Sylvia wrote: *'According to Laban's concept of inner effort, the eight combinations of Weight, Space and Time correspond to the eight corners of a cube'*.

She deals with 'harmonics in space', being sequences of movements in the main 'crystalline solids', namely the cube, tetrahedron, octahedron, dodecahedron and icosahedron. The latter, she argues, is the most encompassing, being closest to a sphere, but surrounding the body with points of reference. This shows her paralleling Laban in combining analytical and artistic insights.

Laban lecture 2004 (cont)

Apart from the tribute to my mother, my one other publication in the *Guild Magazine* was an article in the issue of November 1958 on 'A scientific approach to the study of movement'. I wrote: 'Movement is, for the average person, an instinctive part of his activity ... hence it seems to deny any formal analysis or even descriptive classification. ... it is for such reasons that, until Laban's studies, no attempt at a systematic study of human movement had apparently ever been made.'

That still remains true, as far as I am aware. A scientific approach needs some sort of formal analysis. Hence, I wrote that I 'consider Laban's work as laying the foundations of such a scientific study of human movements'; I commented on the analogy with the *Linnaean* classifications of plants and animals. One can use abstract symbols to analyse the 2⁴=16 combinations of opposite qualities in space, weight, time and flow – the efforts. '... such formalism', I said, 'has little to add to the artistic side ... may be the basis for studying the inheritance of different movement qualities ... qualities of a person's movements are inextricably connected with his character'. Thus, I argued that Laban's analytical approach allows the relationship between movement and character to be explored. I suggested, using family studies to investigate the inheritance of 'movement qualities', that this may also provide 'a clue to the study of the inheritance of human character.'

Marion North in her thesis work used Laban's analytical approach to characterise the observations she made on the movement of very young children. In her words: '...both undifferentiated and clearly differentiated responses occur at three days old'. Apparently, the differentiated responses persisted into subsequent years. This clearly suggests an element of inherited movement tendencies, discernable at a very early age, and shows how features of movement may be defined that could be used for genetic studies.

When I wrote my article in 1958 the approaches to studying such patterns of inheritance were quite crude. Now we can use DNA marker association studies for such an investigation, just like those used for the study of the inheritance of common 'multifactorial' diseases, such as cancer, heart and mental diseases. There is a recent report that scientists at *Birmingham University* are teaming up with *Random Dance Company* to 'investigate how dancers use a particular area of the brain to remember body

positions and complex movements'. What is the relationship of this, if any, to the areas of the brain used on the one hand by musicians to remember pieces of music by "seeing" the score, and on the other hand to memorising a piece through the physical movements? How much in music, when, for example, playing a piece on the piano by heart, is movement memory which has its analogue in memorizing a dance?

The combination of science and art seems to me to be a unique feature of Laban's work. This is reflected in his ability to combine extraordinary artistic talent with a real analytical ability, essentially scientific in nature. This enabled him to work out ways of systematizing the study of human movement, and so led to his development of movement notation. That entirely distinguishes him from other key figures in *Modern Dance* in the 20th Century. He was unique in his development of the idea of 'efforts', the idea of scales related to points in space defining an icosahedron around the human body and in his applications to practical questions in time and motion study and the assessment of personality. As I experienced personally, however fleetingly, he could combine these analytical ideas with his artistry in choreography.

Sylvia always liked to emphasise that she had studied mathematics to a reasonably high level, certainly when compared with today's *A levels*, and so implied that she was able to combine this background with her artistry. Interestingly, my father also combined science and medicine with an artistic interest, which was more than casual. He could come home after hearing an opera and play it by ear on the piano. In his case the scientific interest dominated, although he was thwarted by Hitler in pursuing the medical academic career he really had wanted. That artistic streak, however, accounted no doubt for his appreciation of my mother's work and for the support he gave her. I think that mixture also came through, in different ways, to their three sons, including myself. It was, perhaps, most clearly evident in my middle brother whose first career was as a professional clarinetist, followed by a successful career in business.

I believe one of the main reasons my mother got on so well with Laban, was that in some ways she also combined an analytical mind with the artistic, though I would say that in her case the artistic was clearly uppermost.

Walter Bodmer

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distinguished new member!

(It is always a great pleasure to welcome new members to the Guild - and a particular delight to welcome a former HM Staff Inspector for Physical Education who brings with him a life-time's experience in movement (and dance). Don Buckland is one of the few male members of the profession who have, from his early training, shown an active interest in Laban's work and the expressive aspects of movement; he has also been influential in its development and we look forward to further contributions following this fascinating introductory biographical sketch).



On joining the *Laban Guild* I am prompted to review my association with dance and express thanks for the way Laban's work has enriched my life in ways that I neither planned nor expected.

I was not trained in dance but had my interest aroused when I attended *Bognor Regis Training College* in the 1950s and came under the influence of Marion Richardson who took all students for a weekly session of what was called music and movement. I was inspired by these sessions and could see how they would help my interest in amateur theatre which continues to this day.

Moving on to *Carnegie College of Physical Education*, I decided to submit a dissertation which I called 'Through Dance to Drama', for which I drew on visits to schools in the *West Riding* with the Adviser for Drama, Mr Stone. I well remember a visit to *Rossington Junior Boys' School*, near Doncaster (Headmaster Les Horner) at which the boys, many the sons of miners, showed intense concentration in movement, extreme lightness and sensitivity, freedom from self consciousness and well developed abilities to express feelings and mood using the body. The sensitivity carried over to their delicate art work.

At that time there was no lecturer for dance at *Carnegie* but, nevertheless, the dissertation was well received, possibly due to the good advice I received from Gordon Curl who was undertaking the *Advanced Course at Leeds University* at the time. However, one of my lecturers was Stan Beaumont who went on to become Principal of *Nonington College*, the first college to introduce specialist training for men and women alongside each other, so perhaps it was Stan who reviewed my study favourably.

After leaving *Carnegie*, I attended the first of my international Summer schools on *Modern Educational Dance* at Eastbourne. It ran for two weeks and was staffed by those who had trained with Laban, including Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer and Diana Jordan. I was surprised to discover that I was one of three men, including Gordon, among 100 women. The sun shone and we danced from breakfast to dinner time. Often, as the only male member of the group, I was at the apex of the arrow formation or at the local point of the group. I learned much about Laban's analysis of movement and how it could be used to develop creative sequences in gymnastics or to construct dances in an

educational context. I went on to attend many similar courses and often took part in training workshops at *The Art of Movement Studio* at Addlestone. In this way I built up a rich resource of ideas and materials for teaching physical education and what I called at the time, dance-drama.

Over the years I benefited from the contact I had with such inspiring teachers as Sam and Susi Thornton, Janet Goodridge, Maggie Semple and many others.

In 1963, I returned to Leeds to complete the *Advanced Course* and, once again, I was able to see some of the high quality work throughout Yorkshire. Returning to Surrey I was appointed advisory teacher for physical education alongside Nora Bromfield and then adviser in the newly created *London Borough of Sutton* where I had the good fortune to work with Betty Osgathorp who later replaced Athalie Knowles as the Vice Principal of *The Art of Movement Studio*. I was by this time gaining excellent experience of good primary school practice in teaching gymnastics, dance and games skills.

On being appointed *Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools*, I moved to Wolverhampton and saw impressive work in the *West Midlands* where the influence of some outstanding advisers was apparent. I reported on the early effects of the construction of sports halls, the growth of what had come to be known as educational gymnastics, and surveyed some of the outstanding work in special schools and schools for the newly-arrived children of ethnic minorities.

Moving to Kent in 1976 I was able to see work throughout the *South East* and *Outer London* but by this time my role had broadened to include outdoor education, the education of disadvantaged groups such as *Travellers* and children in community homes with education on the premises, and work in the *Assessment of Performance Unit* in Elizabeth House. It was, however, always refreshing to help on short courses for teachers, particularly those at *Woolley Hall* where dance was the unifying activity for a range of learning experiences in the primary years.

I served under four staff inspectors for physical education and dance. It was Bill Sagar and Alice Stephens who were in post at the start of my service and at a time when *PE* in secondary schools was virtually two subjects, girls' *PE* and boys' *PE*. When they both retired we worked to a single staff inspector, Jane Pollard. Denzil Flanagan replaced Jane and on his untimely death I was appointed to the post at a time when the *National Curriculum for PE* and dance was being formulated. B J Lewis took over from me until the demise of the inspectorate in 1992. However, the advent of *OFSTED* kept me busy for several years, albeit with many misgivings about the new politically charged system of inspection.

In retirement, my thoughts go back to *Plowden* and its central message that: 'At the heart of the educational process is the child'. And not just the child but the individual child with all its different needs and abilities. It seems to me that over the last 20 years under successive governments, the curriculum has become increasingly narrow, particularly at the primary stage. Children are constantly tested and schools are subject to a pecking order which takes little account of their varying circumstances. We need to realize that not all that is valuable in education can be measured and compared.

Dance would be included on my list of valuable learning experiences. We should do more to encourage it and to equip teachers with the confidence and skills to teach it. How good it is to see the excellent resource materials 'Dance Ideas', advertised in the Guild's information pack. We owe a great debt to Laban for making dance accessible to teachers and for providing a framework for the analysis of movement and the means to interpret moods, feelings and character in dance.

Don Buckland

Laban's choreutics - 'transformed' and 'fragmented'!

(The Editor responds to Dr Valerie Preston's 'Icosahedra and all that' (published in our last issue with reference to his article 'Movement in Nature and the Arts' Guild Magazine Vol 23 No.1 Spring 2004/11/12). He takes a glimpse at the 'monumental' 'transformation' and 'fragmentation' of Laban's original choreutics, proposed by Valerie and her colleagues, and her commendable search for 'virtual' forms for theatre dance; he concludes with some critical questions). (All quotations in this response are Valerie's unless otherwise acknowledged).

Dr Valerie Preston-Dunlop writes:

'... what monumental differences the (choreutic forms) undergo when their context changes from self-centred activity to audience-gear art ...'

(1979:144) (my bold)

'... I found that (Laban's) choreutic practice, which I received as movement scales, was capable of transformation into ways of using space for post-modern choreographers ...'

(1998:274) (my bold)

'... what does fragmentation do to human movement? Ultimately, it dehumanises it ...'

(2002: 264) (my bold)

'Monumental differences'!

In spite of the tireless and scholarly efforts of Valerie Preston-Dunlop and her colleagues over the past twenty-five years (1), it may not be fully realised by the majority of Laban followers (and others) today, just how 'monumental' are the differences between Laban's original conception of choreutics and the developments proposed in the interests of theatre dance. A glimpse at Valerie's characterisation of Laban's original choreutics might, therefore, be a wise precursor to a closer look at the radical 'transformation' of choreutics considered necessary as a resource for contemporary choreography. We might also profitably remind ourselves of Valerie's review of Laban's book *Choreutics* (1966), when she wrote in this Magazine, the following:

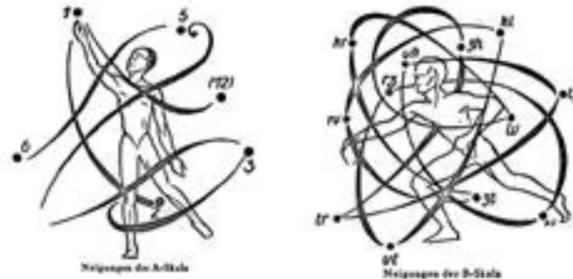
'... While it must be of interest to all students of movement and dance, for whom it is intended, I admit to serious doubts as to whether it will be comprehensible to them. I found it extremely heavy going although the information in it was well known to me ... I fear for this book, in particular Part 1, for it is full of statements which are not backed up by data or argument and rather vague references to such things as ancient and oriental forms ...'
The Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine No 37 November (1966: 49/50)

From the professional world of aesthetics and criticism, further concern was expressed by yet another reviewer who wrote of *Choreutics*:

'... never once does (Laban) refer to a choreographic work, nor is there a single illustration of a dance in action ... the space Laban is concerned with is that of regular geometrical solids. The assumption behind all his writing is that the proper task of the dancer is to trace out lines in space corresponding to geometrical forms ... Laban seems to be concerned with science, rather than art, and yet his scientific ideas are very odd ones any scientist would be baffled ...'
Fernau Hall *British Journal of Aesthetics* Spring (1967)

Clearly, neither of these reviews augured well for the future of Laban's *Choreutics*, and it has become the admirable life-time task of Laban scholars to redeem these negative first impressions in the belief that *choreutics* could still be a 'rich resource' - for amateurs and professionals alike!

(We might note, in passing, that Fernau Hall's charge of lack of illustrative material of 'dancers in action' in *Choreutics* could not have been made of Laban's earlier book *Choreographie* (1926) - for there we find an ample supply of lively drawings in Laban's own skilful hand).



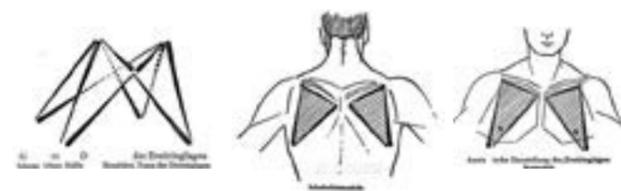
illustrations from *Choreographie* (1926)

Laban's Choreutics - recapitulated!

Laban's original choreutic theory and practice - familiar to many - can conveniently be recalled with a digest of Valerie's writings (see Notes and References); there we find, variously, that *choreutics*:

- * finds it's practice in the location of the kinesphere ...
- * it is this bit of space which forms the context for Laban's complex choreutic theory, and ...
- * consists of fixed (closed) choreutic forms (eg. the geometrical scaffolding icosahedra, octahedra, cube, etc) ...
- * these are tied by such geometry into tight forms, through laws of harmonic progression; the icosahedron is congruent with the human skeletal frame; (see illustrations below)
- * provides harmonic experience for the mover - is very pleasant to do and is danced for the experience of doing - the feel of the thing takes precedence over the look of the thing; it is dance as activity and
- * relies on no unnatural training through techniques and is therefore suitable for amateurs - non-theatrical and personal;
- * the norm was that if you danced the A scale you led with your right arm and leg and traced the flat steep and flowing line in a continuous circuit to come back where you started, usually to a regular rhythm. That was the norm and still is; the shape and location are locked;
- * (scales) are performed by the body congruently - predetermined learnt skills; Laban's early choreutic practice consisted of performing scales of movement much as a musician starts his day by playing his scales; the movement used when performing the scales emerges as a style;
- * choreutics can be seen as a study comparable to musical harmony, to which it is congruent. If musical harmony and construction can be regarded as a syntactical study so too can choreutics ...
- * to enter the icosahedral scaffolding, to follow the harmonious lines within it, was for Laban a religious act, a pantheistic act. Through performing the intricate forms Laban hoped to find the power of the dance which he first saw in the Dervish rituals.

It is against this background that research has been undertaken over the years to determine whether Laban's choreutics has any profitable application to dance theatre today.



illustrations from *Choreographie* (1926)

Laban's choreutics - 'transformed' and 'fragmented'! (cont)

Laban's Choreutics - 'an obstacle'!

The foregoing features of Laban's choreutics have been analysed and assessed by Valerie and her colleagues with the needs of contemporary choreography in mind, and the following conclusions have been reached:

- * Rudolf Laban's original choreutic concepts are too complex in both his practice and his writings to be usable for the analysis of contemporary choreography in the form in which he left them;
- * furthermore, contemporary choreography requires a quite different approach from that aimed at harmonic experiences for the amateur mover; then again:
- * choreutic forms 'look different' in theatre dance and, perhaps, most importantly:
- * choreutics has no significance for actual space, but for 'virtual space' (the true space of theatre dance);
- * Laban's scaffolding, his icosahedra, dodecahedra et al, were for him 'real'; they were not 'illusions' but 'actual', whereas in contemporary theatre dance, they are illusions - 'virtual'!

The not unexpected conclusion of these criticisms was that Laban's original choreutic concepts constituted an 'obstacle' for contemporary choreography.

Preservation or Rehabilitation?

The seeming insurmountable 'obstacle' presented by Laban's choreutics, however, did not lead to their abandonment - on the contrary - they were seen as belonging unequivocally to a 'continuum' which stretched directly from his 'fixed forms' at one end, to 'free associative' forms (relevant to theatre dance) at the other end. Laban's 'scales' could be seen as relevant - albeit 'fragmented' - to theatre dance. 'Artists', Valerie insists '... use choreutic form fragmented and clustered without having any knowledge of Laban's rings or scales'. Furthermore, 'fragmentation' is in keeping with post-modern dance practice' (instance William Forsythe's choreography, which exemplifies a fragmentation of Laban's choreutics - although in Forsythe's case he had a clear knowledge of such forms).

Of course, not all the problems of preservation and rehabilitation were resolved, for Laban scholars inevitably asked 'how do you fragment a choreutic form for theatre dance' - say a five ring scale? The challenge was duly met with an array of innovative choreutic concepts - concepts applicable to 'audience-gear art' - as distinct from dance as 'activity'. Let us glimpse at this fascinating development:

Methodological lift-off!

'choreological study leaves behind ... established methods in Laban-based movement analysis, and begins to forge its own methods, its own specialist modes of analysis and understanding ...'

(2002:2) (my bold)

So what are these newly devised 'specialist modes of analysis and understanding'? They are to be found in the pioneering language of choreutic research eg 'choreutic units', 'choreutic strands' and 'manner of materialisation, 'spatial progression', 'spatial tension'; and again in the increasingly pervasive metaphors of 'virtual space', where we find 'lines/curves in space that are perceived to be there but are not there' (2002:86). These phenomena are encapsulated and canonised in the concise term *Ch.U/M.m* - 'a method for finding out how shapes and patterns, both actual and virtual ... are made available to the audience through the dancer's performance of them' (*Dance Words* 1995:612).

This specialised language, with fine-tuning over the years, has been illustrated in the original student examination of contemporary choreography - subjected to *Ch.U/M.m* analysis. A brief glance at the kind of analytical language used for (say)

the observation of Graham's *Diversion of Angels* by students is illuminating. (1979:144-6).

'... This work is full of spatially clear movements, presented via spatial mass, spatial tension, and spatial progression, in that order of priority.... The White Girl opens with verticality dominant, dissolving into upper door plane, with a secondary LF leg tension... The Red Girl has a dominant, and many times repeated, theme in the diametricals of the door plane as spatial mass, arrived at via spatial progression in that plane ... The Yellow Girl uses a great deal of spatial progression with orientation shifting rapidly from octahedral to cubic to icosahedral ... etc'

It was concluded from this and other student analyses of such works that:

'... It is immediately obvious that some knowledge of the choreutic unit, and some ability to see it in dance works, and to use it in choreographic endeavour as a device for spatial content, is of practical use to the student of dance'. (1979:148)

The dancer/spectator/choreographer, must therefore, develop a 'choreutic eye' and 'learn to look for line as well as flesh and blood'. *Dance Words* (1995:297)

Critical Questions:

A host of questions arise from both the original and the on-going research in *choreutics*; the following are a few which may stimulate further debate - debate somewhat absent in our pages during the past 20 years, although more prominent in the 60s and 70s.

1) *ChU/Mm* - a scholarly sequestration of 'Choreutics'?

Bearing in mind the 'monumental differences' and 'transformations' that *choreutic forms* undergo, ('when their context changes from self-centred activity to audience-gear art ..'), we might well ask whether the term '*choreutics*', (coined by Laban with his own specific meaning in mind - see Laban's Preface to *Choreutics* 1966:vii) - can legitimately be applied to the context of such 'transformations' - transformations from 'actual' to 'virtual', from 'real' to 'illusory', from 'harmonious' to 'fragmentary'?

2) 'Continuum' - or chasmic divide?

'Choreutic research' proposes a 'continuum' between Laban's original 'space harmony' and contemporary 'choreutic forms'. But is such a 'continuum' credible? Is it not the case that the umbilical cord has been systematically cut with the rejection of 'the established methods in Laban-based movement analysis' together with the fact that *ChU/Mm* has now 'forge(d) its own methods, its own specialist modes of analysis and understanding ...'? (2002:12)

3) Aesthetic values or abstract geometrical attributes?

If the 'specialist modes of analysis' have supplanted 'the established methods in Laban-based movement analysis', we must then ask whether the new nomenclature of *ChU/Mm* and its cognates, are in fact any more user-friendly and accessible than the alleged 'incomprehensible' content of Part 1 of Laban's *Choreutics* (1966) - as reviewed by Valerie in this Magazine November 1966?

One might reasonably assume that choreographic analysis has, for its *prime* purpose, the enhancement of aesthetic values in the making, performing and appreciating of dances; but we may well be at a loss to find such aesthetic values (as distinct from abstract geometrical attributes - no matter how attractive the latter may appear to the mathematically inclined). When, for example, we read the *ChU/Mm* analysis of Graham's *Lamentation*, we find the student writes of Graham's moving work in the following terms:

'... Every movement of this short piece was examined for choreutic content. Both single units and the whole of the peripheral five-ring

form were found, and also peripheral three rings. The single units were either diametrials in the door or wheel plane, or dimensional R/L, or the flowing inclinations BH-FR and BR-DF. A tetrahedral tension between the two lower door plane locations and the upper wheel plane locations emerged ...' (1979:144/145)

Undoubtedly the students were encouraged to 'look for line as well as flesh and blood', but when we examine this *ChU/Mm* analysis of Graham's work - with its emphasis on linear and solid geometrical forms - do we not conclude that we have here an intensely formalistic approach to the analysis and description of a dance as a theatre art? We are reminded of the 'attraction' of such 'abstract form', for as one philosopher puts it (with a disparaging culminating caveat):

'However mistaken, abstract form does present what Wittgenstein called an attractive 'picture' of artistic composition. The picture is that of a skeleton beneath the flesh and blood, supporting and holding together the parts, and constructed in a way, through balance, harmony, order and symmetry, that we are inclined to call rational, orderly and intelligible. Nevertheless, despite its appeal, this picture is very misleading.'

H. Gene Blocker *Philosophy of Art* (1979:177) (my bold)

This then implies that the aesthetic understanding and appreciation is directed (mistakenly) to the *structure* of the work of art - the *bare pattern of relations* between its various parts. But we know that when we *experience Lamentation*, for example, these formal considerations, whilst of interest, are seldom - if ever - *central* to that aesthetic experience, and *never the sum total* of that experience (that is unless we have been directed in advance to adopt a discerning 'choreutic eye' - whether in the role of spectator or choreographer)!

Graham, by contrast, directs our attention to the 'tragedy', the 'boundaries of grief' encapsulated in the 'long tube of material' for does she not say?

'... Lamentation, my dance of 1930, is a solo piece in which I ... indicate the tragedy that obsesses the body ... to witness and test the perimeters and boundaries of grief, which is honourable and universal ...'

Martha Graham *Blood Memory* (1991:144)

Or as one critic observes:

'... you were not to view this Graham dance through your eyes alone but to experience it with your entire body, to relate it to your experiences with sorrow ...'

Walter Terry *I was There* (1978:144)



Janet Eilber in 'Lamentation'

Photo courtesy of the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance Inc.

Is not, then, a 'skeleton' without 'flesh and blood' a dead thing? The *ChU/Mm* research has forcefully reminded us of the 'skeletal'

aspects of dance works; but are we not persuaded that such analysis is only relevant when it immediately and unequivocally merges into a *synthesis* of form and content - in experience? To isolate and focus exclusively on the formal aspects of space is surely to distort the total aesthetic experience?

4) The 'virtualities' of *ChU/Mm* - to see or not to see?

'... If you are not into virtual elements, if you are not into creating illusions, if you are not into seeing the body as spatial form then ChU/Mm may not be for you ...'

Looking at Dances (1998:136)

And this brings us to some of the most exciting features of the *ChU/Mm* analyses - the virtualities of 'spatial tension' and 'spatial progression' - features which raise profound questions as to the very nature of aesthetic aspects of dance.

It is generally agreed among aestheticians that the notion of 'virtual' perceptual aspects are fundamental to the nature of creation, performance and appreciation of art works. And this is why philosophical aesthetics has paid so much attention to them; (*the more perfect the dance the less we see its actualities*), says Susanne Langer - 1957:6). But the very big question arises as to why the wealth of established literature on this very topic in aesthetics (much of which is very accessible and provides illuminating discussion on the nature of aesthetic perception) has received so little acknowledgement in the *ChU/Mm* research - with the exception, that is, of Susanne Langer's views (with all their strengths and weaknesses) and upon which the research draws so heavily?

We are reminded of Hume, Hutcheson, Kant's 'as-if', Bell's 'significant form', Beardsley's 'perceptual and the physical', Sibley's 'Aesthetic Concepts', Osborne's 'aesthetic qualities', 'emergence' and 'tertiary qualities' - not to mention the immensely fertile and relevant views of Wittgenstein on 'seeing', 'seeing-as' and 'aspects', and, of course, Elliott and Scruton on 'art and imagination'! The acknowledgement of this rich resource of analytical descriptive language, with its common currency of familiar critical terms and debate, might surely have been drawn upon - thus adding strength to the scholarly claims - and, at the same time, finessing the less user-friendly terminology of *ChU/Mm*? (paradoxically 'Chumm!'). Perceived *tensions, forces, volumes, mass, balance, density, solidity, viscosity, expansion, contraction, magnetism, weightlessness, ambient space, line, extension, time, rhythm, movement, powers and vicarious emotions* - all are common currency in the analytical and critical literature of the arts - whether in painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama or dance. Aesthetic discourse draws what it needs from *ordinary* language and bestows metaphorical status upon its predicates as and when it requires them - and without recourse to technical terms! Do we, therefore, really need the pseudo-scientific language of 'units', 'clusters', 'manner of materialisation', or, above all - '*ChU/Mm*' to capture otherwise most amenable and familiar aesthetic qualities of the dance?

5) 'Virtual Space' or 'Virtual Powers'?

Bearing in mind the deference shown to Susanne Langer's 'virtualities' (with her 'primary illusion of virtual powers'), we might well ask why *ChU/Mm* research has given such priority to virtual 'space'? For Langer herself says:

'... dance has been called an art of space, an art of time, a kind of poetry, a kind of drama. But it is none of those things ... It is a 'display of interacting forces' - 'virtual powers'! (my bold) (2)

6) Choreutics and 'musical harmony'!

Perhaps a final critical question might probe the alleged close relationship between choreutics and musical harmony, for if music and dance are languages, (and choreutic research says they must be for they both have syntax and grammar), then the claims of choreutics look promising! But alas, one of our most

eminent aestheticians writes in his *Aesthetics of Music* (3)

'... all that has been proved so far is that music has neither syntactical nor semantic structure ...'

(1997:208) (my bold)

Do not the prospects for choreutics as a 'language', therefore, look bleak indeed?

William Forsythe - a Patron of the *Guild* - has seized upon Laban's original choreutics and found it to be a highly fertile creative device for choreography. (But does one swallow a Summer make?). It presumably remains the self-imposed task of choreutic research to authenticate dance as a 'language' with syntax and semantic credentials (notwithstanding music's failure to do so), and to vindicate its claim as a 'rich resource' (if not a necessary condition) for creative, performative and appreciative endeavour in dance?

Notes and References:

1) The impressive list of published writings which provide considerable insight into choreutic research, and upon which much of this article is based, can be gathered from the following:

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1966) '*Choreutics* - Rudolf Laban, annotated and edited by Lisa Ullmann' (Book Review) in *The Laban Art of Movement Magazine* No. 37 Nov pp 49-51.

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1979) '*Choreutics the study of logical spatial forms in dance*' *Dancing and Dance Theory* Laban Centenary Publication

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1982) 'Going for a Walk with a line' in *Movement and Dance, Magazine of The Laban Guild* No. 69 November.

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1983) '*Choreutics Concepts and practice*' *Dance Research*, Vol 1 No1.

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1984) *Point of Departure The dancer's space*. London Verve Publishing.

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1995) *Dance Words*. London & New York Harwood Academic.

Preston - Dunlop, V. (1998) *Looking at Dances* London Verve Publishing.

see also Laban, Rudolf in *International Encyclopedia of Dance* (1998) Vol 4 pp. 83-105. OUP.

Preston - Dunlop, V. and Ana Sanchez - Colberg. (2002) *Dance and the Performative a choreological perspective - Laban and beyond (see especially Chap 4.5 'Choreutics with proxemics and the phenomenology of space pp83-92*. London Verve Publishing.

(2) see Langer, S. (1953) *Feeling & Form* Chap 11 'Virtual Powers' and Langer, S. *Problems of Art* (1957) Chap 1 'The Dynamic Image: some philosophical reflections on dance'. RKP

(3) see Scruton, Roger. (1997) *Aesthetics of Music* Clarendon Press Oxford

Gordon Curl



I read the *Wall Street Journal* from time to time and am struck by the frequency of reference to dance as a metaphor. Whether the writers have much understanding of dance as we know it I very much doubt. Typical is a report on a meeting of Chinese and Taiwanese leaders who met somewhere and "... their enduring diplomatic dance continue" (*WSJ*, 20 AUG 04). In this context dance seems to mean endless discussion without getting anywhere.

Dance as metaphor is one topic where I can report on similarities rather than differences between America and Britain. *The Sunday Times* recently headlined a reference to trade talks between the *EU* and the *US* on safeguarding potentially dangerous consumer goods as a "Safety Dance". Another British newspaper reported on the setting up of a commission to advise on the teaching of finance in schools as "... an elaborate dance around a very simple problem".

Journalists on both sides of the Atlantic, it seems, believe that to dance is to act complicatedly, protractedly, in tedious detail, to go round in circles (at least dancers often do that), to be repetitive (also a slight justification), or even something that can be done without.

In political writing the word "dance" often seems to imply something murky, deceitful, cunning, wily, as in "George Bush did not forget the first rule of politics ... you dance with the one that brung you" (*The Economist*, 7 OCT 04). At least *The Independent*, reporting on a credit card company's defence against accusations of unethical practice, referred to an actual dance by suggesting that the executive concerned would have to do the *Dance of the Seven Veils* if she was going to bare her soul (as she had claimed).

It is not only journalists but other writers who have a strange interpretation of dance. Catherine Hill's book "Dancing in the Sea" is about her years of suffering after being hijacked and what she learned from the experience. Of course, dance is often an integral part of religious practice and metaphors from this source do not have the scurrilous meanings that journalists give to it. Shirley MacLaine's book *Dancing in the Light* has a spiritual dimension and perhaps, for her, the title is more literal than metaphorical. However, there is a side of religion that looks upon dance as indicative of sexual pleasure. Knox, the Calvinist priest and bane of Mary Queen of Scots, exults over the beheading of one of her alleged lovers as "...having received the reward of his dancing for he lost his head" (quoted by Allison Weir in *Mary Queen of Scots*). Also on the dance-sin theme, the *Sunday Times* reported that Graham Green's life "... became a series of short dances with one girl after another".

If the mention of dance in the perception of most people derives primarily from its metaphorical meanings it is no wonder that we, in the true dance world, are the poor cousins of the arts and the lowest in universities' priorities. But there is one use that I delight in. For example, the *National Geographic* reports (SEP 04) that "... others are actually tracking the microscopic dance of particles inside atoms". Perhaps Laban's understanding of "dance its forms, laws, harmonies, and connection with the discipline of movement observation and analysis" may one day help inform how the body mind functions. Of course, there might be some slight difference in degree of scale!

Warren Lamb
November 2004

questions for the experts

(Warren Lamb requires no introduction to members of the Guild: his contribution over the years has been monumental - from his participation at the Art of Movement Studio in Manchester in the mid-40s to his Trusteeship of the Studio at Addlestone and Goldsmith's College in the 70s; from his teaching on Modern Dance Holiday Courses and his prolific writings and lecturing on Movement Pattern Analysis - to his involvement in the affairs of the Guild as its President in the 80s. Warren continues to take a lively interest in all aspects of Laban's work - including dance. As an unquestionable expert, he willingly answers questions on the development and refinement of Movement Pattern Analysis.)

Q1. Chris Jones, Research Officer for the NRCO, in her introduction to your address at your archive presentation at Surrey University, indicated that you were 'unique among Laban's students in that (you) continued the work in industry, developing it and making substantial refinements', and she added: 'Lamb's Movement Pattern Analysis is a significantly more precise tool than the original Laban Lawrence Personal Effort Assessment. In what specific ways is your Movement Pattern Analysis a 'significantly more precise tool'?

Laban Lawrence Personal Effort Assessment followed publication of *Effort* by Laban and Lawrence in 1946. Subsequent books, including my own, *Posture and Gesture* (1965) and *Management Behaviour* (1969), *Top Team Planning* by Pamela Ramsden (1973), *Executives in Action* by Carol-Lynne Moore (1982), and *Beyond Dance: Laban's Legacy of Movement Analysis* by Eden Davies (2001) all show *Movement Pattern Analysis* as an increasingly precise tool. Such a development is consistent with Laban's tendency overall to offer creative and inspirational ideas but not to systematise them. It was left to others to seek for precision. In respect to *Movement Pattern Analysis* a few examples of how this has been achieved are:

1. The nature of the information produced is specifically defined as a person's preferred way of going through a decision-making process not just an overall assessment of personality (which is a vast concept).
2. Precise matching of *Effort (Eukinetics)* in relation to *Shape (Choreutics)* and calculation of the degree of affinity.
3. Incorporation of *Flow of Effort* and *Flow of Shape* as an integral part of the *Effort/Shape Framework*.
4. The way in which the observations are taken, differentiating between *Posture movement* and *Gesture movement* and how they merge.
5. The integration of observation and analysis of movement with an interpretative Framework.

Q2. You say that 'we have only scratched the surface of what is possible; the potential is really enormous.' How would you characterise that 'enormous potential'?

In answer to this question I must switch from precision to vision. I am on record as saying that in years to come people who have not been educated in movement will be viewed with similar compassion to that which we now show towards the illiterate. You yourself have done much to develop movement education and I share your sadness at what now seems, in general education policy, a regression towards a narrow curriculum. However, whether our understanding of Laban is taking us beyond dance (during his twenty years in Britain Laban took almost no interest in performance dance) or whether there is increased acceptance of dance as an integral part of everyday activity (Laban's insistence that everyone is a dancer) I do think there has been continuing progress in getting his concepts over to a bigger public. Your pioneer work will not have been in vain. You have seen the incorporation of Laban's ideas provide so much benefit, particularly to children. Despite political obstacles I believe that these benefits are vaguely recognised (people are in general more aware of body movement even if they are not aware of how it can be studied) and that there will be continued growth even if the debt to Laban is not always respected. It is the case now that Laban has indirectly influenced a number of disciplines –

psychology, anthropology, ergonomics, brain research, therapy, management, theatre – without the participants being aware of its derivation from Laban. The Laban heritage still offers a lot of scope for new discovery of its meaning. Laban's name has sometimes been used so as to damage realisation of the potential. Nevertheless, the potential is still there.

Q3. When you take observations of how a person moves, you record and subsequently analyse these observations. What is your method of recording a person's movements? (whether Putin's, Yeltsin's, Blair's or Bush's). Is it a specific MPA method: a Laban Effort Graph? Labanotation? - or a combination of these?

There are two methods in use: 1) an adaptation of Laban's *Effort Graph* from which the merged *Posture into Gesture* or *Gesture into Posture* can be discerned or 2) a recording sheet on which a mark is made in the appropriate *Effort* or *Shape* box whenever a *Posture-Gesture-Merger* is observed.

Q4. You say that you can 'differentiate between what is for real in the way we act as distinct from action which is assumed ...'. This raises a host of questions in respect of 'real', 'simulated' and ('virtual') actions - both in ordinary life - and in particular in the arts; for is it not the case that a consummate raconteur, actor, mime or dancer can re-create the semblance of real-life expressions with amazing fidelity i.e.: characters on stage are convincing 'people'; simulated emotional expressions on stage or TV drive us to tears; gestures in dance create illusions of non-existent movement (Valerie Preston-Dunlop, for example, talks of: 'Virtual spatial forms 'lines/forms in space that are perceived to be there but are actually not there...') (2002:86). How does MPA cope with such perceived but illusory movements?

I agree that a host of questions is raised, and I agree that an actor, mime, or dancer re-creates the semblance of real life expressions. If, for example, the actor allows his or her *Gesture movement* not to have much linkage with *Posture movement* the expression will be puppet-like, as Shakespeare's *Hamlet* well knew in giving advice to the players: "Do not saw the air thus..". Of course, a particular theatrical convention may require puppet-like movement and the context of the performance always has to be understood. Irrespective of whether performance is realistic or illusory, *Movement Pattern Analysis* (MPA) helps an actor, mime, or dancer to be more aware of the unique, individually distinctive movement which their own body is initiating. Extraneous factors such as an actor's over-ambitious interpretation of a role will pull the actor away from his or her pattern of movement (in other words, going beyond their range) and give what appears to the audience a strained, contrived, performance. It is in this sense that *MPA* distinguishes the "for real" from the assumed. *MPA* is not against gestures – their linkage with posture movement is vital – but gesture-only movement is recognised as potentially meaningful only in relation to a context.

Q5. You say that your approach to team building based on MPA is 'exceptionally effective and different from other consultants' team building activity'. What distinguishes your methods from those of others?

Most team building programmes use moral principles in exhorting people to work better together or seek to develop team spirit, whatever that is. *MPA* seminars utilise everyone's *MPA profile*, including that of the leader. Team members recognise that everyone is different but that they also overlap. They learn where they have common ground and in what respect they complement each other. Recognition of both in terms of movement enables them to draw on each other's strengths and all get a personal benefit. It is personal benefit rather than subordination of personal interests to group requirements which

questions for the experts (cont)

is the key. Team members also recognise that in order to get the personal benefit they have to accept each other's preferred way of working but they do so relative to a measurement (deduced from the movement analysis) of the 'team balance' of their particular group. Only a method based on seeing movement as a process, constantly changing but fundamentally patterned, makes this possible. In other words, and to quote one of Laban's favourite words, team balance and team functioning is in a constant state of flux. I do not know of any other method that can cope with this. The role of the leader needs special attention, of course. Currently it is the fashion to model team exercises on Shackleton's leadership, or that of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, and I doubt whether it is effective. Instilling fixed concepts of what constitutes leadership, morals, good personal relations, or whatever, may elicit minor changes in gesture behaviour but not in "for real" behaviour. Some of the most effective teams I know include people who do not particularly like each other, are competing with each other for the top job, and even speak critically of each other. Acceptance that this can be so and that team work can still be enhanced is alien to other team building methods.

Q6. What recognition does MPA make of 'meaning' in movements - their interpretation according to differing 'contexts'? For example, one philosopher says that a simple act of raising a glass of wine can have a wide variety of meanings; it might be construed as:

'... an act of self-indulgence, an expression of politeness, a proof of alcoholism, a manifestation of loyalty, a gesture of despair, an attempt at suicide, the performance of a social rite, a religious communication, an attempt to summon up one's courage, an attempt to seduce or corrupt another person, the sealing of a bargain, a display of professional expertise ... an act of expiation, the response to a challenge ...' (Ayer 1964)

I have been saying the whole of my career that *MPA* never attempts to attribute a meaning to one isolated movement. We

are not in the business of *Body Language*. We only begin to seek a meaning after recording hundreds of movements and have analysed the *PGM* pattern. Then, meaning begins to become apparent in terms of the person's preferred decision-making pattern. It could, for example, be applied to your illustration of raising a glass of wine to assess whether the person was acting in accordance with his or her pattern, or contrary to it. If the former it would have conviction; if the latter it would seem contrived. If there was something about the context which led us to believe that the act was an attempt at suicide (to take just one of your suggestions) in the former case we would probably do something to try and prevent it. In the latter case we might laugh. Or, if it was a theatre performance, in the former case the audience would be horrified (unless it happened to be the villain) while, in the latter case, the audience would be either bemused (depending on the context) or disgusted with the bad acting.

Q7. Clearly human movement is not a uniform phenomenon, for like language it is deeply stratified - from the many and complicated aspects of organic movement to the complex range of:

... locomotor movements, gross operational movements, fine skilled movements, basic emotional movements, sophisticated expressive movements, playful movements, indicative, descriptive and prescriptive movements, ritualistic and religious movements, social movements, athletic, dramatic and balletic movements etc etc ...

How does MPA cope with these diverse manifestations of movement - or is it concerned purely with a basic 'patterned' response comparable to, say, DNA?

Yes. *MPA* is concerned with a basic patterned behaviour, primarily proactive initiative rather than a reactive response, comparable to *DNA*.

Warren Lamb

Laban in places workshops

In Association with the Laban Guild

We can help and support you anywhere in the country to set up and run workshops based on Laban's work. We lean on our experience of setting up many successful and profitable workshops in the West Country.

In discussion with you we will provide the workshop tutor; prepare advertising; produce leaflets; send fliers and leaflets to interested parties and groups; handle the finances, through the LG Treasurer, which will include paying tutors and venue, pricing the workshop and collecting the fees.

Does this sound interesting? If so please contact any of us.

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book reviews

Warren Lamb fields some questions for Dr Frances La Barre - the author of a new book

Moving and Being Moved

(Frances La Barre, Ph.D. is a supervisor and faculty member at The Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy and at The Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center. She practices psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in New York City).

1) Your book *Moving and Being Moved* seems to me to break new ground in respect of nonverbal behaviour, the serious study of which has languished since the people you mention, such as Birdwhistell, Chapple, Kendon, were publishing in the 1950-60s. Did you aim specifically to revive nonverbal behavioural study or is it just a side benefit of your psychoanalytical interest?

I did aim to revive interest in nonverbal behaviour research. In the 80s infant research, which is by definition nonverbal research, had begun to infiltrate psychoanalytic thinking in New York. At that time the work of Daniel Stern was especially influential. I thought his work was extremely useful in bringing the nonverbal more to the forefront of psychoanalytic thinking. But I also thought that Stern was ignoring very important earlier research that I had studied as a dancer and as a Ph.D. candidate. Specifically, I could read in his description of “vitality affects” his use of the same dimensions of movement experience that Laban had defined in a much more thorough-going way. (I read much later that he had, in fact, worked with Laban-trained movement analysts and dancers in developing a way of seeing nonverbal behaviour. So, my intuition had been correct.) Despite this link with Laban, Stern seemed not to understand Kestenberg’s work, which in a footnote he dismissed as “about style.” (You can read more about my thoughts on this problem in my book.) So I was concerned with an important part of theory related to the body and psychophysical development was being cut off. But also, and perhaps most importantly, I thought that in work such as Stern’s, thinkers were leaping too quickly to erect in abstract concepts various “new” versions and summaries of what *research showed*—and so, in fact, finding new ways *not to see the in the moment details of clinical encounter*. I thought the move into theory—using concepts like “vitality affects,” “core self,” “emerging self,” etc., were all right, but that they left the “seeing” with the experts, the infant researchers, and the over-worked abstract intellect with the analysts—not an ideal outcome. Theories were moving us too much to new things to look for rather than ways to see more detail. My aim, in contrast, is to give the tools of seeing nonverbal behaviour to psychoanalysts to enhance each clinician’s ability to take in and make use of the very data of movement analysis, not so much the summary theoretical conclusions.

2) You make a particular feature of self-observation and awareness of your own movement in relation to the client. Within your own professional field do others respect this and seek to emulate you?

This question touches on an ongoing development and debate within psychoanalysis on the prevalence, nature of, and use of countertransference, the experience the analyst brings into the treatment. The debate concerns to what degree the analyst’s own attitudes, values, emotional states, and body (my view) may influence what occurs in the treatment. The dominant trend in New York at the moment is that the analyst’s particularity has a great deal of influence, and that the analyst does best to seek to understand the countertransferential experience and make use of it to understand the patient’s difficulties. Within that common focus, there are those who think that the analyst can achieve a degree of “objectivity” about the patient and his/her difficulties, that is, that countertransference can remain self-contained and put to use to understand the patient’s experience. Others believe that they should reveal their experience of the patient quite openly to avoid mystification and foster a discussion of that experience with the expectation that the patient will benefit. I think that what I reveal depends upon the demands and difficulties in the specific treatment, but I always work with the countertransference in one way or another. Those people who, like me, are interested in working with what I call *kinetic countertransference*—the distinct physicality of conversational partnering in the analytic session—are indeed interested in my way of watching their own body movement as well as that of the patient. We find that viewing the kinetic interaction at the very least greatly enriches our view of what might be happening between analyst and patient, and often gives a different and essential view of how treatment may be bogged down and better facilitated. When I work with supervisees in this way, very often we develop an astonishing new view of what is happening.

3) Has your book fulfilled sales expectations?

Yes, and it’s still selling, and I believe has been translated into Czechoslovakian.

4) Current Laban Guild members are particularly interested in community dance. Would you ever advise people, and perhaps your own patients, to participate in community dance?

I was interested to read about this phenomenon in your journal. It sounds like a wonderful idea, and I would indeed encourage it, if we had such a thing here.

5) You mention in your book “hot debate about the salience of theoretical rationales” (page 165). Where does this debate take place?

This debate takes place in psychoanalytic institutes, journals, and at conferences.

6) Having designated three schools of nonverbal research, and argued for their complementarity, do you expect this to be picked up and argued by other researchers – or is it already happening?

At this point in psychoanalytic thinking, this argument is accepted by some and still rejected by others. The mind/body problem and its relative, the nature/nurture issue, are alive and well. Many within psychoanalysis are still polarized across a version of the nature and nurture issues, with some committed to the singular importance of internal and/or innate fantasy life and attendant conflicts, and others committed to the singular importance of what happens in relationships with others. Other analysts regard complementarity in the way that I do. Another issue that has come into the debate and touches on the question of the complementary schools of nonverbal behaviour centres on the usefulness of empirical studies of infant-mother interaction and new neuroscience of the brain. Many who regard fantasy and internal conflict as the only acceptable route to psychoanalytic understanding disregard any information that may be gleaned from research. I do hope that I can promote the idea that close observation of the movements of the patient and the analyst, from the three points of view that I drew from nonverbal research can help analysts move away from dichotomized thinking and augment understanding of where the patient’s difficulties lie, and how to organize the kind of approach we want to take with a particular individual.

7) You give credit to Dr Judith Kestenberg, whose work seems now to be gaining in recognition. In my opinion she identified Laban theory too closely, exclusively, and tendentially with Freudian doctrine. Is this your perception?

I must have missed the tendentious stage. I have always been a gatherer of ideas, so I am not inclined to let labels stop me. It is true that Judith Kestenberg’s work has been hurt in two ways through her connection to Freudian thinking. But I think this is unfortunate and based on misunderstanding. She had been trained in Freudian psychoanalysis, and yet had a difficult time having her work accepted by Freudians, who, at the time she began writing, were dominant theoretically in the United States. Of course, because of her Freudian language and thinking, her work was not even approached by Interpersonal Psychoanalysis, the version of psychoanalysis that has expanded most in America, which rejected Freudian thinking early on, but has slowly incorporated some aspects of it as it has evolved. Kestenberg was, I think rightly, drawn by the focus on the body that both Freudian and Laban languages share. She found in both theories a very rich beginning of a body theory of mental functioning. Despite her Freudian focus, I think that she wittingly and unwittingly expanded enormously on Freudian thinking in directions that Freudians were not ready to accept or think about for two reasons. The most clearly stated reason was that “drive” should not be concretized in the way that her colleagues mistakenly believed she was doing. But more oddly, and less clearly, she was marginalized because Freudians themselves were just beginning to drop drive theory on which Kestenberg’s links to Freud were built, and were taking up what has been called “two-person” psychologies, and it looked as though Kestenberg’s ideas were tied up into an earlier version of Freudian thinking. I reality, people just didn’t understand her new language. When one reads Kestenberg’s work closely, especially in the context of Laban’s and Lamb’s works, one can see how well it can relate to the dyad—to the attunements and misattunements of individuals at a physical, kinetic level. I see her work on tension flow, which is that aspect most closely aligned with Freudian thinking, as highly useful in identifying in a very detailed way temperamental trends that have a major impact on subjective and intersubjective, relational experience. As long as we don’t imagine that we have the whole of a person when we understand them in these terms, we can use these ideas to get a grip on problems and strengths in the individual’s connection to others

book reviews (cont)

and to work.

8) Laban students are more likely to recognise a connection with Jungian doctrine and see some correspondence with Jung’s categorisation of Thinking, Feeling, Intuiting and Perceiving. Is this justified, or sensible?

It seems to me that translating Jung’s categories into movement terms might prove to be an additional very useful way to view people. The terms themselves lack a directly observable connection to the body (but I can easily imagine finding links with Lamb’s PGM’s, for example). In line with what I said above in question 1, I am loathe to lose observational detail in abstractions that do not help us see the body in action, and see bodies interacting.

9) You seem to have a good sense for movement truly as a process, a ‘constant state of flux’ as Laban called it, and it is apparent in your writing.

I hope so; that is my aim. Movement as continuous is a crucial element in what I wrote because psychoanalysts have long written about symbolic gesture, “acting out,” and the importance of inhibiting action in favour of thought—as if there was some kind of stop-go to action, and that moments of acting out could be isolated from the river of movement going on all the time. Well, it’s clear to anyone who is trained to see movement that there is no time during which movement or action cease, and so we needed a lot of revision in our thinking.

10) Are you confident in being able to differentiate between merged Posture/Gesture movement, and isolated Gesture?

I can’t be sure, of course! But I’m confident that I can sometimes differentiate between them. I think that it helps to watch a person’s movements over time, as one has the opportunity to do in an ongoing treatment. In watching over time, the outlines of a person’s repetitions become very clear: for example, 1) when someone repeatedly makes an isolated gesture with both forearms and hands that breaks at the wrists, as if incorrectly holding the reins of a horse, without engaging the rest of the body; or 2) when someone makes a merged posture/gesture as she curls her torso and head forward and down as she jitters her hands in front of her face.

Movement and Making Decisions

by Carol-Lynne Moore

(Carol-Lynne Moore, Ph.D. is a member of the Guild and currently lectures in the MA Programme in Somatic Studies at the University of Surrey and the Graduate Program in Laban Movement Analysis at Columbia College, Chicago. In addition to other books she is author - with Kaoru Yamamoto - of “Beyond Words: Movement Observation and Analysis”. She is currently President of the Board of Motus Humanus).

The forthcoming book of mine, *Movement and Making Decisions: The Body-Mind Connection in the Workplace*, deals with *Movement Pattern Analysis (MPA)*. It inaugurates a new *Movement and Dance* series by the Rosen Publishing Group of New York, under the editorship Nancy Allison.

It is perhaps best to begin this brief comment with a definition of *MPA*, so as to clarify how it relates to Laban’s work. In fact, *Movement Pattern Analysis* is an application of Laban’s theories to the study of mental effort. *MPA* matches patterns of effort and shape to a decision-making model in order to create a profile of an individual’s characteristic approach to taking action.

The foundations of *Movement Pattern Analysis* were laid by Rudolf Laban and F.C. Lawrence in their initial studies of manual labor in British factories during the Second World War. This work, of course, will be familiar to Guild members, for it is documented in the Laban/Lawrence book, *Effort*. What may be less well-known is that Laban and Lawrence were already applying movement analysis to clerical and managerial jobs as early as 1943.

This application of movement study was still very much in an experimental stage when Warren Lamb arrived at the *Art of Movement Studio* to study dance in 1946. Laban quickly collared Lamb for the industrial work, and set him observing in steamy weaving sheds, garment factories, and pharmaceutical companies. Factory floor operatives were the major focus of Lamb’s effort observations, but occasionally managers would also be assessed using the same procedure. That is, observations of

the manager’s behavior during an interview would be taken, and these would be interpreted by Laban, first in one way, then in another, until at last some conclusion was reached regarding the manager’s suitability for a particular post.

Upon opening his own consultancy practice in the early 1950s, Lamb set out to develop a more coherent method for studying management behavior through movement analysis. He did this by clarifying movement observation procedures, refining the interpretation of movement, and couching this interpretation in terms that make sense to managers. This work culminated in the publication of Lamb’s own book, *Posture and Gesture*, in 1965, followed by *Management Behaviour* (co-authored with David Turner) in 1966.

Since that time, over 30,000 individuals have had their decision-making style assessed using *Movement Pattern Analysis*. The profile has helped these people find work that is satisfying and well-suited to their capabilities and also assisted employers to use human resources appropriately. Over 400 companies have utilized the approach to develop senior management teams. Some enterprises, such as *Albany International*, *Associated Biscuits Europe*, *Faithful Overalls*, *J. Evershead and Company*, *London Linen Supply*, and *Trebor*, have used *MPA* for over two decades. In a particularly trend-driven business like management consulting, the lengthy use of *MPA* is a quiet but powerful testimonial to its perceived value by client companies.

In addition to consulting work, my own involvement with *Movement Pattern Analysis* has been to write about it and to train other people to do it. A complex of skills are required to practice *Movement Pattern Analysis* to professional standard. These involve interviewing, counseling, and report-writing skills, as well facility with movement observation and analysis. The latter is by far the most demanding and labor intensive, for one can only learn to perceive and classify patterns of effort and shape in conversational behavior through closely supervised practice over time. When students have completed training, they are examined by *Motus Humanus*, a professional organization for movement specialists based in the U.S. Through this impartial process, *Motus Humanus* maintains standards of professional competence and ethical practice. Needless to say, training the next generation of movement analysts to an acceptable professional standard is the only way to vouchsafe the future of the pioneering work of Laban, Lawrence, and Lamb.

Why, meanwhile, should the future of *Movement Pattern Analysis* be of interest to *Guild* members? There is, I believe, one key reason why anyone interested in the promotion of Laban’s work should take notice of *Movement Pattern Analysis*. And that reason has to do with the relationship between theory and practice in the movement arts. One thing that sets Laban-based movement art apart is that it is not merely a set of clever body practices, it is a *coherent theory*. As a coherent theory, it *is* translatable. That is, its principles are valid, not only in dance as a movement activity, but also in work. And the beautiful thing is that Laban’s theory applies, not only to physical labor, but also to mental tasks which demand thoughtful effort. What Laban, Lawrence, and Lamb realized over 60 years ago is that even thoughtful effort is reflected in patterns of visible movement. That was, and still is, an astonishing theoretical insight.

In arguing for Laban’s work as a theoretician, there is always a question of accounting for how Laban came up with his ideas. Laban merely presented his ideas; he never indicated how they had been generated. This gives Laban the appearance of being an arm-chair theorist; or, as Lincoln Kirstein scathingly put it, “a *Nietzschean theorist, a Wagnerian innovator, dedicated to quasi-mystical attempts to enforce the unique supremacy of movement as movement.*”

Notwithstanding such an impression, Laban was an empiricist. Granted that he did not systematically present the empirical evidence on which his theories rest, his *effort* theories in particular were fleshed out through observations carefully taken in British factories and offices. The evidence of this creative and painstaking research is preserved in the *Laban Archive*, and further backed up by material in the *Lamb Archive*, both of which are now deposited with the *National Resource Centre for Dance* at the *University of Surrey* in Guildford. Combined, these two archives contain thousands of case studies collected across a period of more than 60 years. This is a remarkable data base of which any *Laban Guild* member can be proud, whether he or she is dancing in the community, or, in a manner of speaking, dancing into industry!

P.S. The publisher expects to bring out *Movement and Making Decisions* in February 2005.

Carol-Lynne Moore

Subscriptions 2005

Thank you to all those members who have sent in their subscriptions early or paid by bankers order. We hope that all our members will wish to continue their subscriptions now that we can offer an enlarged magazine, regular courses and many other benefits, but please remember that resignations must be received before 28th February, or you will remain liable for your subscription for 2005. All subscriptions will be acknowledged, but this may not be before April. Please forgive any delay.

As costs continue to rise, we now have to propose an increase in subscription rates for 2006. The rise from £20.00 to £25.00 for ordinary members, to £30.00 for corporate members who receive extra copies of the magazine, and from £10.00 to £15.00 for those eligible for a reduced membership fee, will be put to members at the AGM.

We hope that all members will continue to try to interest others in our work and encourage them to join the Guild. Publicity material is always available from the membership secretary.

Subscription rates for 2005

UK members: £20.00	Reduced rate for students, retired, unwaged: £10.00
Overseas: £25.00	£15.00
Eurozone: €35.00	€20.00

Cheques should be made payable to the Laban Guild and sent to the Membership Secretary, Ann Ward, 7 Coates Close, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex CM9 4PB

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FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

As you may have noticed, over the years I have become increasingly involved in running courses for the Guild. This has reached the stage where I need to share the work and the Guild needs more help, so we are looking for a volunteer to take over the position of Membership Secretary.

I have really enjoyed this position as I am in touch with every single member of the Guild and, indeed, feel that I know most of them personally. If you like communicating with people, can handle a simple data base on the computer, and would like to know more about what is involved, please contact me and we can talk it over.

Jenni Wittman, an artist, contacted Sue Grover (Laban Guild council member) regarding a project she is working on. She says: "I have been pointing my camera at the river Dart for a few years now and find it mesmerizing and beautiful. A composer friend has helped me put the material together into a 12 minute piece for screen and piano which we have on DVD. We have also performed the piece live and would like to do so again.

While in the Café at LABAN, a place full of people learning about movement, I imagined myself pointing a camera at this ocean. As I have also experienced some movement training, (Contact Improvisation, Five Rhythms, Yoga), I saw myself moving around with my camera using one of these new glidecam gyroscopic contraptions so that the image stays stable. Then who knows what could be arrived at, an installation in the lobby?.

The opening sentence of my website is: 'like water, like music, like bodies, like thought ... I feel as if I am looking for a way of embodying the purification cycle of a river.'

If there is anyone interested in working with me on this I would love to hear from you."

Jenni Wittman. jen@divinecut.co.uk,

FROM THE COURSES OFFICER

COMMUNITY DANCE TEACHERS COURSES

We are currently running three training courses. Stage 1 County Westmeath, Ireland, in conjunction with Midland Arts. This course has now reached the halfway mark and the course members have already had an opportunity to put their new found skills into practice. They produced some excellent sessions and we wish them every success as they move into the second part of the course, working towards a final assessment in September.

Stage 1 in Chelmsford, Essex, in conjunction with Essexdance and New Hall School. This course started in September 2004 and the group is really committed and producing some wonderful work. We are really looking forward to adding to our pool of Community Dance Teachers in this region and beyond.

Stage 2 in Newbridge, Co Kildare began with an introductory week end in November and we look forward to starting the full course in January. Course members come from previous Stage 1 courses in Cork, Belfast and Kildare, and we are looking forward to working with them again.

New Courses

We are currently negotiating a Stage 1 course in South Wales and another Stage 2 Course for Powys Dance. If you would like a Course or Professional Development Workshop in your area, please contact the Courses Officer, Ann Ward (as below).

FOUNDATION COURSE

This 30 hour course, which may be offered by graduates of our Stage 1 courses to students over 15 years, is proving very popular with both our tutors and their students. You get a syllabus and guidelines for your course, they get a certificate at the end of it!

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT

These are available to students from pre-school to 15 years. The courses relate to the National Curriculum Key Stage requirements and provide your students with evidence of achievement in Laban based creative dance at each level.

INSURANCE: We now have an excellent deal on insurance for graduates and tutors of our courses in both the UK and Ireland. For full details and an application form, please contact the Courses Officer, Ann Ward.

For information on all these courses, and our packs of Dance Ideas, please contact the Courses Officer, Ann Ward, 7 Coates Close, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex CM9 4PB

february

Tracing the Threads: Laban Lecture 4
Wednesday 9 February, 7.30pm, £8 / £6 (concessions)
Creekside 020 8469 9500

Led by Andreja Jelacic, this is the fourth in a series of illustrated lectures based on the life and work of Rudolf Laban, the 'father' of European modern dance.

Palucca Schule Dresden and Laban students in performance: Mixed bill
Friday 11 February, 7.30pm, £3

Students from the Palucca Schule Dresden and Laban join together in a performance of historical dance reconstructions and newly commissioned works by international choreographers. **Creekside 020 8469 9500**

Random Dance: AtaXia
Friday 25 – Saturday 26 February, 7.30pm, £12 / £8 (concessions) **Creekside 020 8469 9500**

Random Dance, has become a creative frontrunner on the British and International dance scene, renowned the world over for its extraordinary innovations in dance.

AtaXia explores a dislocating loss of control when Random's dancers' sophisticated ability to co-ordinate muscular movement is surprisingly and intimately interfered with.

march

Laban's resident artists: In The Dark
Wednesday 2, 7.30pm, £12 / £8 (concessions)

Two evenings of work from Laban's resident artists including live dance, film and music collaborations. In The Dark features performances from Melanie Clarke, Alice Sara and Gary Lambert. The programme will change each evening.
Creekside 020 8469 9500

Maresa von Stockert & Tilted Co.: More Grim[m] Desires
Thursday 10 – Friday 11 March, 7.30pm, £12 / £8 (concessions)

Maresa von Stockert invites the audience to revisit long forgotten places of their imagination in 'More Grim[m] Desires'. Through five well-known European fairy tales timeless themes such as jealousy, fidelity, betrayal and envy, are explored, interpreted with the choreographer's eye for the ironic and grotesque and her tragicomic style of social comment.
Creekside 020 8460 9500

More Grim[m] Desires for children
Friday 11 March, 11.30am, cost tbc

A workshop/performance opportunity for young people aged five to eight years. The workshops include a creative dance session exploring 'More Grim[m] Desires' as well as a child friendly 25 minute performance. For further information and to register interest, contact **Niki Lavithis on 020 8691 8600 or email: n.lavithis@laban.org**

The Laban Guild AGM and Day of Dance
Saturday 12th March 2005

Venue: Liverpool John Moores University

Cost: £30 members, £35 non-members

This is always a pleasurable and informative event so put the date in your diary NOW!

Contact Sue Grover, Tel: 01582 768001 or
e-mail sue.grover@bodytalk.fsnet.co.uk.

may

LABAN IN PLACES:

Laban in Dorset

Saturday May 7th.

Tutor: Wendy Hermelin

Contact: Wendy Hermelin

Phone: 01308 862332

wjhermelin@hotmail.com

ALSO BOOKING

Tracing the Threads, Laban Lecture 5:
Wednesday 16 March, 7.30pm **Marie-Gabrielle Rotie, Double bill:** Thursday 17 – Friday 18 March, 7.30pm

Specialist Schools Dance Platform: Saturday 19 March, 7.30pm

Bare Bones, Family Dance Day: Tuesday 5 April, 11.00am – 3.00pm

Bare Bones, Family Show: Tuesday 5 April, 6.00pm

Robert Hylton Urban Classicism (RHUC), Verse and Verses: Friday 22 – Saturday 23 April, 7.30pm

Transitions Dance Company, Mixed bill:
Wednesday 4 – Friday 6 May, 7.30pm and Friday 6 May, 2pm

LABAN CREEKSIDE LONDON, SE8 3DZ
BOX OFFICE: 020 8469 9500

laban based dance classes

Belfast, Crescent Arts Centre

Monday:

4.45pm - 5.45pm CRESCENT YOUTH DANCE;

5.45pm - 6.45pm ADULT MOVEMENT AND DANCE

Contact:

Brenda McKee 25 Malone Hill Park Belfast BT9

6RE email: brendagm@aol.com

Bromley

Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings

Community Dance classes for people with learning

difficulties

Contact:

Avril Hitman 020 8467 3331

Cambridge

Wednesday mornings over 55s - open class

Contact:

Maddy Tongue 01223 302030

Swindon

Saturday mornings, three separate classes for 4-5

years, 6-8 years, 9-13 years

Contact:

Kathy Geddes 02793 463210





Sylvia Bodmer