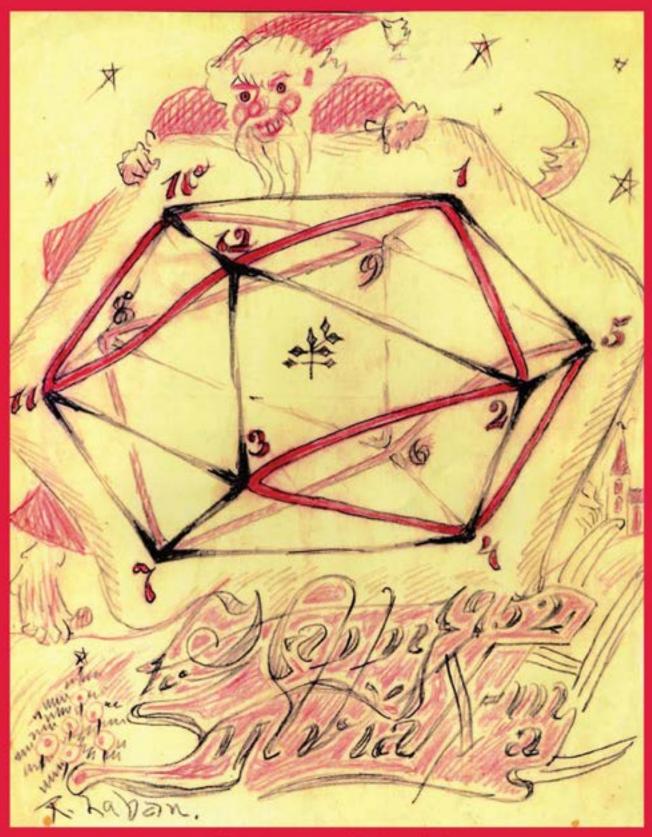
# Movement & Dance



Drawing by courtesy of the Laban Archive

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# **Editorial**

This celebratory year has brought with it many memorable occasions – in London, Manchester, Dartington and back to London. Our congratulations and thanks are due to Anthony Bowne, Director of *LABAN* and Valerie Preston-Dunlop, and to all those who supported their initiatives – administratively, tutorially – not least our President Anna Carlisle MBE, and financially and inspirationally our Guild Patron William Elmhirst.

Our pages have highlighted some of these events, and reports are scheduled to continue in this and subsequent issues. However, no Laban celebration would be complete without tribute to the Guild itself (to which Laban personally gave his name), and its 60 years of dedicated service. It is fitting, therefore, that one of our Vice Presidents – Sheila McGivering – opens this issue with her thoughts on the Guild's achievements.

This edition includes: further Questions for the Experts, two Abstracts from contributions to the International Conference at Creekside (where over 80 speakers gave their papers and presentations), a lively past, present and future of L.in.C., and a mammoth nine page contribution from our USA friends of *Motus Humanus*. It is encouraging to know that our Magazine will reach so many Laban followers in America.

We continue with Sally Archbutt's valuable series on Laban's Scales and Rings; our 'Critical Debate' is an open invitation to members and non-members to join us in these lively discussions.

We wish our readers and very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year; (our front cover Christmas design was a drawing made by Laban and sent to Sylvia Bodmer in 1952) for which we thank the *Laban Collection* and Valerie Preston-Dunlop.

# Gordon Curl



Front Cover:
Christmas card sent by Laban to Sylvia Bodmer in 1952 by courtesy of the Laban Collection (see p.4)
Back Cover:
LinC venue for 2009



Sheila McGivering - Vice President

# 60 Years of the Laban Guild

(Sheila McGivering - a long-standing Member and Vice President highlights the Guild's achievements in this celebratory year , fully aware that in the limited magazine space there are scores names which could have been mentioned. (Ed.)

The Laban Guild consists in its Members - YOU are the Laban Guild.

In the Autumn Magazine Vol 27 No. 3, Darren Royston wrote: "The word 'guild' always makes me think of the mediaeval idea of a guild: an association of craftsmen in a particular trade." When the Laban Guild was formed in January 1946 that was the idea behind the choice of words. There would be Masters who would safeguard the standards and teach those who aspired to advance in learning. To that end there were special study courses led by Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer, Joan Goodrich, Lilla Bauer, Betty Meredith Jones, Diana Jordan and others who attained the status of Master. The international character of the Guild, in the beginning, was represented by Juana de Laban (USA), Ann Hutchinson (USA), Milca Mayerova (Prague) and M van de Veen (Paris). Today there are Members in many countries of the world.

From the first the Guild has represented different aspects of Laban's work eq Industry (Frederick Lawrence and, later, Warren Lamb), Theatre (Jean Newlove, Annie Boalth, Geraldine Stephenson, Hetti Loman) and Education (Enid Platt, Elsie Palmer and, later, Joan Russell). Already there were recreative dance groups in England with a basis in Laban's work eg Birmingham Contemporary Dance Club, led by Leslie Burrows and Manchester Dance Circle, led by Sylvia Bodmer. With the formation of the Laban Guild all these groups had a central focus, informed by a News Sheet. The News Sheet, which soon expanded into the Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine, contained lively accounts of Members' activities and acted as a notice board as well as a forum for ideas. From the earliest days the Magazine has published articles of substance, providing a valuable resource for research scholars. It is a 'learned journal' deposited in libraries around the world. Mr Laban himself was an early contributor and his annual lectures were always reproduced. In his memory, the President of the Guild invites an eminent speaker to give the Laban Lecture at the Guild's AGM. Among the many well respected contributors to the Magazine have been Prof. L A Reid and Prof. David Best and many, many others. The original purposes of the Magazine continue with Movement and Dance Quarterly magazine of the Laban Guild, which is published in a most attractive format. The actual content of the Magazine depends upon the contributions of Members.

Guild Members have been involved in establishing internationally known organizations and continue to maintain contact with them. Some examples are:

The Art of Movement Studio (Lisa Ullmann)
The Laban Centre (Marion North)
International Council for Kinetography Laban (Albrecht Knust, Ann Hutchinson, Valerie Preston)
Language of Dance Centre (Ann Hutchinson-Guest)
Bartenieff Institute, NY - now LIMS (Irmgard Bartenieff)
National Resource Centre for Dance (Judith Chapman)
Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund (Athalie Knowles, Ellinor Hinks)
Sherborne Foundation (Veronica Sherborne neé
Tyndale-Biscoe)

Laban International Courses (Sam and Susi Thornton) (Names in brackets indicate founders or pioneers).

The Guild has close association with other organizations, eg the *Central Council for Physical Recreation, Physical Education Association UK* and the *Foundation for Community Dance*. The Guild has taken part in exhibitions, demonstrations and open classes in many areas of the country eg *Olympia, Royal Festival Hall,* Blackpool and *Birmingham International Exhibition Centre* on many occasions over the years.

The most ambitious of the Guild's promotions of group dance was to celebrate the Guild's 25th Anniversary in 1970. Geraldine Stephenson masterminded a spectacular event in the *Royal Albert Hall*. This was called *Kaleidoscopia Viva* and involved 500 dancers, performing twice before a full house. Affiliated groups formed the nucleus of each of ten episodes, working independently, to a brief provided by Geraldine. The groups worked in different parts of the country, coming together for regional rehearsals and learning the finale choreographed entirely by Geraldine. Much travelling was involved. There were 69 Affiliated groups in 1965, many of whom took part.

The next big event celebrated Laban's Centenary in 1979. This took place in the *Sports Centre* in Coventry. Joan Russell trained 36 people to be leaders in a choral dance for an unknown number of participants. In the event there were several hundred dancers with a wide age range. Under Joan's direction it was highly successful. In another part of the Centre there was an exhibition attended by Mr Roland Laban and his daughter.

The Guild has participated in numbers of events under the banner of *CCPR* and *PEA(UK)*. One might pick out a group dance for 60 people in April 1985. The piece was entitled 'Stillness and Stir', by Sam Thornton. Lisa had recently died and the performance was very fittingly dedicated to her memory.

In 1999 the *PEA(UK)* organized a huge celebration of the history of Physical Education and invited the *Laban Guild* to take part in the *Royal Albert Hall*. The Guild Treasurer at that time pointed out that funds could not support such an enterprise. The Chairman, Gordon Curl, was of the opinion that Laban's great influence since the 1940s could not be ignored. Members, when appealed to, agreed and responded with donations. Gordon's vision of our contribution to the event was outstanding: he personally directed the presentation. Michael Platt contributed a lively, colourful group dance. No one will ever forget the descent of the icosahedron from the roof of the *Royal Albert Hall* and Janet Lunn's dance within it.

Past President, Maggie Semple, was responsible for planning a series of events which would take place in the *Millennium Dome* in the year 2000. Schools from all over the UK would send children to represent their locality in dance or drama. Michael Platt brought a group of *Suffolk Dance Theatre* and Cher Mather's group of handicapped children represented Shotton, Flintshire, and performed to great acclaim.

Dancing together has always been the common factor, uniting the varied Guild interests. This activity provides 'life-giving' experience to those taking part in holiday courses, days of dance or regular meetings of dance groups. With the decline in teacher -training it was feared that in the late 70s and 80s there would be a shortage of people to teach, or lead, dance groups. Joan Russell, with Ena Eades and Janet Whettam, set up the *Dance Leaders' Training Scheme* in 1980. The first members on the course were drawn from the people who trained as leaders in Joan's group dance in Coventry. This scheme, ably administered by Ann Ward, has expanded and become the backbone of the Guild's activities today.

The most remarkable achievement of the *Laban Guild* is that it is still in existence: this is because of you, the Members.



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# Questions for the Experts

(Part 2)

(Dr Valerie Preston-Dunlop continues to respond to questions posed in Part 1 of our last issue - which focussed on biographical detail. Questions in Part 2 are more concerned with Valerie's research interests - which undoubtedly have become recognised as a major contribution to the understanding and development of Laban's theory and practice of movement and dance). Ed.

Q1: You have held the position of Consultant, Hon. Research Fellow, at the Laban Centre Laurie Grove from 1995, and thence at LABAN Creekside to the present time. What aspects of these roles have you found most satisfying?



I have been most fortunate in having a fellow scholar of Laban's work as a colleague, namely Dr Marion North, and it was she who invited me to curate the Laban Collection, a collection of documents and other evidence that complement collections at the National Resource Centre for Dance. Collecting started before 1995, continued through the publishing of An Extraordinary Life and is still continuing. It has been a most fascinating search with luck, curiosity and enthusiastic helpers making it possible, especially John Dunlop whose knowledge of old German handwriting was invaluable and Dr Dorothy Madden whose facility with French bureaucracy made searches go smoothly in Paris. Highlights were finding the brochure of Laban's exhibition of drawings (1919) held in Nürnberg, finding his home in St Maurice by the Bois de Vincenne and his *ménage a trois* home in Hombrechtikon. Kurt Peters shared with us his incredible archive in Cologne on dance in the 1920s, Fritz Klingenbeck in Vienna gave us images of the summer school at Gleschendorf (where Sylvia Bodmer joined the company). I searched the Secret Archives of the Prussian State in Dahlem where the archives of the Berlin Opera are held and found Laban's schedules and correspondence there, we read his interview by the Gestapo in 1936 and the correspondence with his arch rival Dr Bode on dance as art or physical culture in the *Bundes Archiv* in Koblenz and then Potsdam.

Translating Schrifttanz 1928-31 with my colleague Susanne Lahusen was a delightful collaboration, while setting up and teaching the MA in European Dance Theatre Practice was a challenge as the heritage I had learned about through the Laban Collection research had to be turned into a resource for contemporary dance theatre making. As Project Champion for a year, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to develop and transform the way dance and movement are archived was a journey I shared with LABAN's archivist Jane Fowler. Old ways

had to be confronted and new ways put in place with imagination. My collaboration with Ana Sanchez-Colberg, whose knowledge of Laban comes via Wigman and Jooss and with a specialism in Bausch, was an intellectual tussle as we sorted out the concepts for Dance and the Performative: a choreological perspective on choreography, Laban and beyond. Meeting up with Laban's ideas via Wigman or Jooss or Ullmann gives you three very different perspectives on his work. My challenge was to locate what was pertinent of his work for today's dance theatre practice.

I have been so fortunate in tutoring outstanding doctoral students amongst them Dr Anita Donaldson now Dean at the *Academy of Performing Arts* in Hong Kong, Dr Sarah Rubidge now a Professor, Dr Ana Sanchez-Colberg artistic director of *Theatre en Corps* and scholar Dr Jeffrey Longstaff. I have learned from them all

My current project with Forsythe and *Ballett Frankfurt* on the creative processes in the multimedia work *The Loss of Small Detail* has attracted *AHRC* funding. Getting first hand at how Laban's choreutic models have served his purpose is an opportunity not to be missed.

Q2: Your record of international engagements has taken you to many countries, including: France, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Slovakia, Italy, Finland, Canada, Brazil, Hong Kong, Australia, America, Russia and Japan. What expertise of yours has been most in demand on these visits?

I worked regularly as jury member for *Choreographic Competitions* first for the *Fédération Française de Danse* and then for the *Fédération Internationale de Danse*, the *Bagnolet* and Groningen festivals. Some were followed up with residencies as mentor for emerging choreographers. In these I was able to put to the test the way that Choreological Perspectives, which as you know are Laban centred, were developing as a creative and editing tool. Residences led to the sponsoring by the Dutch government of *Looking at Dances: a choreological perspective on choreography.* 

As author of Laban's biography I have been invited to symposia and courses where historical information was the topic of discourse. These are always events to learn from as well as share. People are particularly interested in the mountings of Laban's *Kammertanz* repertory 1923-28 that I have been able to do following my journeys in Europe interviewing very old but passionate dancers who were part of Laban's early companies, Kathe Wulff, Herta Feist, Fritz Klingenbeck, Albrecht Knust, Ilse Loesch, Aurel Milloss, Gertrud Snell and our own Sylvia Bodmer. These performances took me to Japan and Brazil and with *Transitions Dance Company* to Volgograd, and this year to Manchester and Dartington. Performing these works, participating in them is the best way of understanding what Laban was experimenting with. They impress the performer as well as the spectator.

My early writing on Laban's *Modern Educational Dance* remains of interest in some countries and took me, some years back now, to conferences in Canada and Sydney and to residencies in Bern and Iowa and more recently San Paulo. It surprises me that something I wrote in my twenties is still studied as current, but it is.

Latterly the more academic side of my work has been asked for, particularly after the publication of *Dance and the Performative*, a postgraduate text on choreological discourse. Practical

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scholarship is a topic that I champion and since practical doctorates and their criteria are now a live issue I am asked to contribute what my experience of tutoring practical PhDs might add to the current discussion.

Q3: Turning to your award-winning biography Rudolf Laban An Extraordinary Life (1998), which broke new ground and revealed detailed and dramatic events ranging from Laban's often penniless condition, ill-health, sexual appetite, triumphant choreographic productions and movement choirs, theoretical publications, - to his elevated appointment as Director of Movement in the Prussian State Theatres, especially in Berlin:

a) It is said that: 'It is always profitable to attempt to trace out to their source the ideas which inspired a prophet; for there alone is to be found the secret of the strength of their influence in his teachings'.

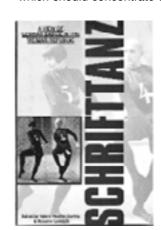
How would you characterise briefly the most powerful driving force underlying Laban's life's achievements in movement and dance?

Green Clowns ends with 'Club of the Eccentrics'. Slurping licks, snarling bites, tickling pokes, smacking kisses ...'.

Photo by Toni Nandi

dance? licks, snarling bites, tickling pokes, smacking kisses
Photo by Toni Nandi
He was a complex man and I would say

there are several issues that drove him on. He loved dancing, he loved bodies, he was fascinated by people and that drove him to make the shift in 1912 from static visual art to dynamic kinetic arts of all sorts as the media for his life's work. He was obsessed by movement and its power to impress the mover as well as express itself in dance, begun when he witnessed the power of dance on the Dervish priests as well as his own teenage ecstasy in the czardas. His conviction that dance must be recognised as the primary art of man and not some third rate form of entertainment drove him on. The experiences of his youth led him to reject privilege and to value the equality of all people. Hence, his embrace of improvisation, creativity and ensemble company structure, very different from the restrictive star system he met up with at Mannheim National Theatre, and hence his dismissal of the soloists in Berlin's opera ballet. He regarded the erosion of community culture through the industrial revolution as catastrophic. Compensating through participation in ensemble works of celebratory dance art designed for lay people seemed to him essential and led to his forming the city Bewegungschore. A Life for Dance is full of statements of his credo; one reads "The purpose of life, as I see it, is to care for the human as opposed to the robot: a call to save mankind from dying out in hideous confusion", and he goes on to say celebratory dance is the way "which should concentrate on deepening the sense of mutuality



and the appreciation of the personal identity of each individual." He was convinced of the power of movement "to enhance the inner light" of each individual, reflecting his own insights into spiritual truths through his Rosicrucian studies. His intense sense of mission was to share that power practically, verbally, administratively, artistically. How to do it was his problem and the enabling force there was his never satisfied curiosity to study and to observe and to operate an intense 'WHAT IF?' policy of experimentation.

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b) Among the influences on Laban which you identify in your book is that of the AMORC (The Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis) and yet when looking at the basic

principles of this Order, we find they bear a striking resemblance to the principles of the Pythagorean Brotherhood. Both the *AMORC* and the Pythagorean Brotherhood were, of course, Secret Societies and expositions of their beliefs are not readily accessible. However, it would be relevant to research if you could estimate the debt which Laban owed, for example, to Plato's *Timaeus* - with its Pythagorean doctrines?

Laban was a Rosicrucian, according to his two pupils and collaborators Albrecht Knust and to Kurt Jooss. His *Grand Mastership* is recorded in documentation of the 1914-18 period in Zurich. Was it *AMORC* in Paris or *Peladan's Rose Croix salon*, was it *AMORC* in Zurich or the *Ordo Templi Orientis?* They are not identical. While he had a good knowledge of Pythagorean mathematics as his archive shows,

there are other layers to Rosicrucianism that are equally important to him, in my view. It is a deeply esoteric discipline and its studies go further back in time than the cultures of ancient Greece, to Confucianism and Taoism and beyond. Laban was a regular user of the I Ching. You have to attend current Rosicrucian gatherings, as I have, to begin to approach it and as you say, it is a secret society.

Laban cites the *Timaeus* in *Choreutics* so we know he was interested in its propositions for that side of his work but his work is broader than that. He also listened to what Rudolf Steiner was saying in his *Anthroposophical* lectures, and his call for "a new movement art". He was familiar with the proposals of Gurdjieff on sacred dance and the living architecture concepts of Freemasonry. He was aware of Dalcrose's recommendations for musical education through dance as well as the conflicting ideas on the psychological base of movement of Freud and Jung. He shared in the strivings of fellow artists in Munich, the painter Kandinsky, the composer Schoenberg the dramatist Hans Brandenburg, the sculptor Obrist all of whom were tussling with how to embody the spiritual in their art.

All of these things led to the decisions that he made on what to reject, what to embrace, what to develop, and what to keep to himself, in order to come up with his bodily practice, for it is that that is the base of his work. When I read Laban's writings with my eyes focused on his spiritually awakened self he is continuously leading his readers to "the land of silence". You either go there with him or shy away from his deep commitment to the spiritual dimension of the human race. It is your choice.

c) In your biography you say that 'Harmony was ... to become a keystone in Laban's theory and practice of movement'. Can Laban's concept of 'harmony' be given any precise meaning – and can its alleged 'congruency' with musical harmony be convincingly substantiated?

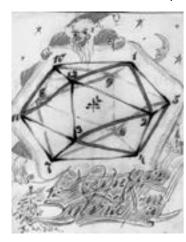
His opening statement in *A Vision of Dynamic Space* provides one answer to your question "I am interested in the possibility that a very great number of individuals should share my outlook

on life which is a dynamic outlook on harmony between men, i.e. Balance between the claims of the individuality and the community". In the same text he is quoted as writing "The fundamental feeling which leads us to establish harmonious values is our sensibility for contrast and balance". He is referring to the balance of opposites on which terrestrial life is based and, as part of that, to his effort and choreutic praxis, documented straight-forwardly in the effort cube and dimensional and diagonal scales. The subtleties of his dynamic harmonic theory and practice appear when you study forms like the A scale and the 7-rings in which opposites of lability and stability, motion and destination, impulse and impact, arabesque and attitude, arc and axis, volute and steeple occur. The harmony in more complex in the balances in five and three and seven-rings. Harmonic relations within the cosmos are also in his credo. Choreutics is full of it if you look for it.

Laban emphasises that harmony is experiential, you feel it and its discord, you hear it and its dissonance. If you need to you can measure it but the experience is enough for me.

I find the article by musicologist Hans Hastings in *Schrifttanz* 1931 interesting on the physicality of musical harmony. He is struggling with the arrival of Schoenberg's 12 tone harmonic system and its lack of a base note to return to. Hence, he implies, there is a lack of any physical experience of grounding that the return to a base note, *doh*, provides after an unfinished and tension-filled melodic phrase. In dance we have that resolution after the lability of moving as we return to the stability of a home base in place. What Laban is doing is building on that experiential relationship between tension and resolution in musical harmony and lability and stability in movement harmony. Just sing a tune and you know when you have finished it or are left hanging, equally in dancing. The proof of a connection is in the experience, in phenomenal knowledge.

Laban's own first music/dance correlation studies took place in Zurich when his musical experiments were played at *Dada* events at the *Cabaret Voltaire*, but more substantially in Manchester with Eric Hudes, pianist at the *Art of Movement Strudio*. These resulted in his publication in 1949 of the mixed 7-rings and their correlation with the major scale of music. Through that work Laban proposed the alternative numbering of the icosahedral locations based on the primary scale not the *A scale* which enable documentation of the relationship of all 'scales' and



'rings', kinetic and sonic. (The numbering is amusingly first shown on the Christmas card to Sylvia Bodmer in 1952 during their period of intense choreutic collaboration).

Q4: On to the rich veins of Laban research which you have pursued during your career:

a) In your seminal Symposium paper: 'Choreutics: the Study of logical spatial forms in dance' (1979), you refer, variously, to the 'monumental differences in treatment and appearance

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(that) the (choreutic) forms undergo when their context changes' ie the change from dance as 'activity' to dance as 'art'. You also say that 'choreutics have no significance for actual space'.

Understandably, these claims are perplexing for the average person familiar with Laban's theory and practice in particular his 'scales' and 'rings'. Can you briefly indicate these 'monumental differences'?

1979 is thirty years ago and maybe giving the paper a status of seminal is more than it deserves. What I was struggling with at the time is what William Forsythe so resoundingly resolved some 8 years later when he saw how to use the profound insight of Laban on dance as "living architecture". And Forsythe's work is indeed monumentally different in treatment and appearance. Choreutics is so much more than scales and rings. It is the larger concepts in the book that I was fumbling with and which Forsythe focused on (and he included the spatial principles of kinetography in his studies.) While most of us got locked into the fixed forms Forsythe homed in on superzoning, on knotting and releasing, on the cube as a basic map, investigating where centres for movement might be, on space holds and spot holds, on units of choreutic form clustered into 'combinations', and so on, all touched on by Laban in the first part of Choreutics. Embodiment of form is the key. How are you going to dance a spatial form? Laban's eclectic outlook is obvious in the illustrations in A Vision of Dynamic Space. The difficulty is that he writes almost nothing about performance in Choreutics, and I recall as a young dancer how frustrating I found that as my review of the book in 1966 shows. Forsythe uses 'replace' as a basic way of changing one embodiment of a line with a quite different embodiment of the same line. He uses 'isometries' like 'invert, shift 90°, drop to floor, reverse, arc the line, collapse the line' and so on to structure or modify the form into phrases (see his Improvisation Technologies CDRom). Many of those isometries are all hidden in Laban's scales so available to anyone to find.

My term 'activity' in the 1979 article is quite unclear because at that time I was unclear. I would now express it as making clear the difference between dancing the rings and forms to enhance the experience of its harmonic symmetries, (or as Laban would believe as a way into the land of silence), contrasted with dancing them as art which is a profoundly rule-breaking and new-rule-forming event.

b) 'Ch/U' ('choreutic unit') and 'M/M' ('manner of materialisation') are terms which appear in your more recent penetrating research. Do you think the meaning of these terms can be reasonably accessible to the average student of Laban who is interested in determining the relevance of his work today?

Yes I do and students don't find any difficulty at all. Most students don't start from a knowledge of rings and scales so they don't have a starting misconception that choreutics equals rings and scales only, when it means the study of the grammar of spatial form. Form is found in all dance, since forever. The other day my colleague Rosemary Brandt was using ChUMm, taking a ballet combination with it and the dancers found beautiful ways of performing. Manner of materialisation was a term I proposed in 1981 so it has been in use for a while but 'ways of embodying' is just as good in studio talk. Choreutic units are what Laban is dealing with; flat, steep and flowing are units, pin, wall, ball and screw, ouvert, rond, are choreutic units, the A scale is 12 units. The continuum of choreutics between fixed form and free form that we have now was anticipated by the ChuMm research and is not problematic but releasing once you understand choreutics as more than scales.

(Two further questions were asked of Valerie concerning the Guild and these together with some responses will be published

# Abstracts from presentations made at the Laban International Conference 2008

(Darren Royston uses Laban's sequences for the actor) Ed

At this memorable conference, Darren Royston presented a lively paper/demonstration entitled: 'Using a Laban Approach to make Physical the Historical: an application of Laban's spatial theories to the teaching of period dance as dramatic art'.

His presentation focused mainly on the use of Reverence (ie established systems of greeting, bowing and beginning and ending ceremonies such as dancing) and how he uses the choreutic structures of radial lines producing circles of adoration, benediction and submission, as recorded in *Choreutics* (1966) Chapter XII Free Inclinations.

### Abstract:

In classical theatre, the historical context of the play contributes to the actor's choice of physical character. Movement training for the classical actor concerns itself with how the actor's physicality can connect to historical modes of movement. Considering social structures, architectural structures, and studying rules of etiquette

and dance manuals can create awareness of these modes. Once the imagination is activated, certain physical responses have to be analysed and retained as a sense of historical period, before blending with other physical choices to create the character, and considering the present day audience. Placing historical dance forms into Laban's choreutic framework can enable actors to feel that they inhabit a different period with different spatial rules. Exploring the affinity to certain eukinetic (effort) qualities allows a specific movement dynamic to be created. This Laban-inspired process allows the actor to present a character either in harmony with the historical space, or "out of joint" with the time, in the pursuit of a dynamic live performance.

(Darren is the Artistic Director of Nonsuch History of Dance and teaches movement and dance at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) London). Diagrams are from Choreutics (1966) Chapter X11 Free Inclinations pp 133, 134, 135 - with Darren's titles).

# Darren Royston

# Door of Adoration

Fig 50 - A sequence of radial lines resulting in circles of adoration (implying adoration, awe, resignation, disappointment).

# Table of Benediction

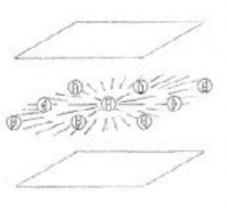


Fig 51 - A sequence of radial lines resulting in circles of benediction (implying blessing, welcome, humility, solitude).

# Wheel of Submission

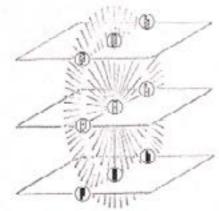


Fig 52 - A sequence of radial lines resulting in circles of submission (implying domination, obedience, devotion, pride, command).

# LABAN: THE WAY FORWARD IN DANCE EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

(Maggie Killingbeck, Chair of the Guild Council, gives a presentation on an educational research project involving choreutic material) Ed.

### Abstract:

The research project aimed to discover the extent to which extended knowledge, skills and understanding of Laban's work enhances the teaching of dance in an educational setting. The research project involved seven experienced specialist dance teachers, twenty hours of intensive Laban studies directed by Anna Carlisle and supported by Amanda Banks, pre and post project questionnaires, reflective diaries, reading and sharing experiences. Choreutic material was at the heart of the twenty hours of Laban studies although sessions addressed action, dynamics and relationships also. The research subjects were required to use the Laban studies material experienced in the workshop sessions to inform their teaching of dance performance and composition in schools. From interrogating the data it

became clear that Laban's analysis, in providing a uniquely universal vet extremely discriminating theoretical framework, was a valuable educational tool insofar as it offered the possibility of access to high standards whilst permitting a significant degree of autonomy. The research subjects considered that central to the value of Laban's analysis was the language, which, through its comprehensive application, facilitated accuracy, precision, depth, innovation and subtlety. This combined with the systematic approach to understanding human movement they felt, enabled progression from the very simple to the extremely complex. Such a means of articulating movement, they agreed, was of value for the performer, choreographer and/or viewer of dance. The research project whetted the appetites of the research subjects for further Laban studies opportunities. It is planned to offer some Laban Scales workshops, develop a Masters module and work towards a Phoenix 2 for dance educationalists.

# Maggie Killingbeck

# Laban International Courses

- Past Present and Future -

Susi Thornton reflects upon: the past; the 30th L.in.C. Course at Eastbourne; the prospects to come!

### 1979

What excitement. Our very first Course. Many had signed up to continue the movement experience that they had enjoyed from days when the Summer School had been organised by the Art of Movement Studio. We had rescued Lisa's Course from extinction believing that the energy which had begun with her and Mr. Laban must continue. In the Autumn of 1978 we began the organisation – working out the costs, booking the teachers chosen by Lisa Ullmann, planning publicity, setting up a business with the help of Su and Bill Johnston. It was a steep learning curve – a very new venture for both of us. We were supported by many people and delighted that Geraldine Stephenson was pleased to come and take the whole group in a movement session of carnival – a suitable theme for the beginning and the end of Lin.C.

Dartford continued to be the venue offering good dancing spaces, good enough catering facilities, open, grassy spaces and room for evening activities which often included more dancing. Many of us oldies remember with affection those late nights of fun and games but no one missed the dance training at 9.00am. Memories abound - special colleagues such as Vera Maletic. Henry Metcalfe, Hen van de Water. Later we welcomed Janet Goodridge. Other staff members who will not be forgotten are Anna Carlisle, Jan Fear and Maggie Semple. We are indebted to Rosie Manton who has been with us at every L.in.C. Course, despite a move to Spain. From the ranks of delegates came Franki Anderson and Wendy Hermelin who is a present core team member. We have had to say goodbye but that allowed us to welcome someone else to join the team. We had to say goodbye to venues so comfortable and familiar - from Dartford to Avery Hill, to Guildford, to Brighton and finally to Eastbourne.

We remember the times we had an administrator, Philip Bennett, always eager to have a part in the staff contribution to the Dartford Follies. The very name is connected with our dear friend John Rockett whose departure from L.in.C. was a great sadness and loss in so many ways. He put up the notices, erected the ico, taught, was the social secretary and always brought tears to everyone's eyes when he played the last number, closing down the Follies telling us the Summer School was nearly over. We would all have to get ready to leave this wonderful, creative, fantasy and return to our everyday lives, changed and more aware of who we were. Another helpful administrator — Andy Weston — will be remembered for the Course in Egham where he drove us in a little bus to and from the working spaces.

We were following the traditions from the past – the dance farms of Rudolf Laban, held in Ascona between the wars. Here Laban worked with his concepts, his ideas, his theories. He offered the space for all people to come and find themselves through the dance, free themselves from societal constrictions, let their creative energy emerge and be expressed. Artists of every discipline came together to work, to interact, to become part of a community. L.in.C. has tried, in miniature, to mirror something of this atmosphere. The link with this past was Lisa. We felt a huge loss when she died – we had lost a friend but also a guide and mentor. We felt insecure. Would we be able to run the Course without her? Would people still want to come? How would we continue our own professional development?

What Lisa had begun with Laban in 1942 had its own momentum, its own drawing power and she had passed this on to us and our team and we were able to proceed and develop and our delegates still kept coming. They travelled far to come to us –

Australia, USA, Norway, Iceland and many European countries – they came from Eire and Scotland.

"interesting what a mixed bunch of people we are, from all across the world." (I W).

In July of this year it actually came to us what L.in.C. does. In our publicity we had written: *Liberates Individuality and Nurtures Creativity*. This has been our aim and our quest. We believe that the study and mastery of Laban Fundamentals, which we call Laban Studies, allows for the development of inner as well as external harmony in the dance. The practical experience of both space and effort shows us the polarities and the harmony: gathering, scattering, rising, sinking, directness, flexibility, lability and stability.

"L.in.C. enabled me to grow in my spirit, expand ranges of thought and wonder and to gain a confidence I had never experienced before" (AN)

"It changed my life" (AW)



# 2008 was the 30th L.in.C Course.

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It was time for us to bring the Summer Course, as we had known it - for the last 10 years in Eastbourne, East Sussex - to a close. We had heavy hearts. L.in.C. had been our baby and we had nurtured it with love over the years. The rhythm was in us - planning starting in September, publicity prep in October, notification in January, attending to bookings, enquiries from May, all stations go July. Lowering numbers, rising costs, more available, shorter dance courses in regions, no funding for teachers and others finding the prices too high, were making it more and more difficult to offer the range of activities we had in the past. We had shrunk from 14 teachers some years ago to 5. Our own personal skills did not stretch to efficient marketing or fund raising and we were not reaching younger people. Those that were interested often could not afford to come although we have never turned anyone away, accepting what they could pay. We are not getting any younger and we were concerned that if a Course was arranged and one of us became incapacitated, the other would have found it very hard to maintain the responsibility and organisation. We were afraid to let people down. We wanted to celebrate with a Grand Finale - Carnivale and not a whimper. We had such a lot to celebrate: delegates who came year after year, wonderful cards and letters after a Course, memories of special events - anniversary days led by Carl Campbell, and this year his Recycled Teenagers sharing their 30th birthday with us, trips on a coach to be part of the Laban centenary, rituals by the Sea, processions through the Meads, creative writing, art work, Lisa's centenary day dancing her dances. Visitors were always

welcome to watch or join in.

"I find it uplifting to witness the shared experiences of the Course, a privilege to be with you" (HC)

We began this year with a 'Stand Alone' day beautifully led by Viv Bridson. She worked to prepare our bodies to be able to dance a simple 'Walking Study' choreographed by Lisa. It was a stimulating experience, so well handled by Viv. She had brought her pianist with her and what a joy it is to move to live music. Viv was patient and understanding and we all knew we would have needed a week to master this deceptively simple piece.

We arranged a special Day of Focus for the coming to a close of L.in.C as we have known it. How would Sam and I cope with this? How would the staff and delegates feel?

We divided the time in three ways: what are your memories? What do you grieve for? What are you taking away? The delegates were invited to choose a creative medium for each focus: draw and paint with Rosie, stitch and move with Wendy, role play, enact, sculpt with Mitch, do creative writing with Sam and move with memorabilia with Susi. There were smiles and tears, retreat into self and the need to be held, an opportunity to reflect and feel and know what this experience of dance community has meant to us all. We are not professional dancers, we are not leading people on a specific path of education, therapy, or research. We are people searching for a deeper meaning of life, aware that this search involves the whole of ourselves - body, mind, emotions and spirit. We are 'the laymen' that Laban knew were dancers, involving ourselves in what he considered to be the primary art. Dance began as worship and many of us feels our souls 'touched' at moments of our dancing together.

"my self discoveries are like a huge, colourful tapestry, hanging on my inner walls, enriching everything" (AN)

"I am so glad to have been a small part of L.in.C" (SL)
"I so much enjoyed the Course" (SS) "so many happy memories"
(AW)

This concept could not die out and in 2007 Kirsten Beier-Marchesi and Johannes Kamp let us know that they wanted to assist us to keep the Course going. They would shoulder the administrative responsibilities of the Course and leave us free to design the course, invite staff, remaining as artistic Directors. We agreed with delight at their offer. We knew things had to change and were very open to the concept of moving the Course to Europe. This will bring us to an earlier Course title, that of Laban Holiday Courses. It will enable the UK contingent to travel abroad and have a dancing holiday.

The venue for the 2009 Course is *Centro D'Ompio* in the Piedmont area, Northern Italy. Susi's feelings and thoughts are below:

From the terrace, up in the hills, we look down onto Lake Orta backed by high mountain ranges. I can see the Orta peninsula and the island which we shall visit on the free afternoon. We arrived on Saturday afternoon and are leaving this afternoon (Monday) and I feel more relaxed than I did on a two week summer holiday. This really will be a holiday course!

We had breakfast on the terrace yesterday, outside, under cover, this morning. Meals are beautifully offered for contrasts of flavour, colour and texture – healthy



vegetarian – in buffet style. You choose where to sit and can go back for more.

This is a place of freedom. We will be able to swim, dance, sing, drum whenever we want to. No restrictions. Everything is at measured pace. Tea and fruit offered all day long. We enjoyed talking to barman Michael who likes company.

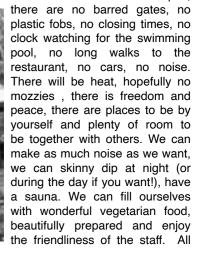
The elegant dancing spaces – octagonal pavilion, round dome and smaller square room, are ours completely. You can go in and dance at midnight, prepare work early morning or in the evening. The large hall is not as large as we would have liked but Rafal assured us that 60 '5 Rhythms' people had managed in the space. Because August is hot we shall work in the morning, have a long break after 1.30 lunch and restart late afternoon with evening meal from 7.30.

We will use the environment – woods, walking paths, bamboo thickets, small trickling waterfalls. We can circle dance and do our drama on a flat, shady open grass space. Our staff will be inspired, relaxed and the Course will open us all to the Creative Path. As Kirsten originally wrote "Laban would have loved this."

Centro is informal. The rooms are simple and communal, sparsely furnished but comfortable beds (without plastic covered mattresses.) Some are en suite or some very near showers and wc. Even though sharing will be the order of the day, there are so many places for personal retreat and personal refreshment.

Kirsten has familiarised herself with the Centro and its surrounding neighbourhoods, should delegates feel the need to explore beyond the estate of Centro. Centro is on its own. Without a car you will be gently cocooned in a natural environment with space to walk, meditate, stitch, paint, write poetry ... who can want more? However a taxi service is available to the small town about 10 minutes drive.

We hope you will feel motivated to try out its charms for yourselves. For those familiar with the Eastbourne campus,



we need is your wish to be part of this new venture. So please spread the word.

We are hoping still to be together at Eastbourne by arranging a Movement choir week-end at the end of July. Hopefully, with new members from Europe the scope of the Summer Course could allow for more than one Course in a year. We would like to hear from Guild members who have not yet come and danced with us whether a Course at Easter time would be an attractive option for you.

Our future mission is to offer a Course for refreshment, healing and creativity, through the experience of the art of movement. We want also to bring new people to an awareness of the art of movement. We want to be able to support the training of staff who can raise this awareness and further its development. We have had a lively meeting with members of the Guild Council to see how the visions of both groups can overlap and lead to cooperation and support.

We hope many of you will want to support this mission and join with us 'in the dance.' We shall keep you up to date when we have refreshed our web site.

Our present web address is: www.laban-courses.co.uk Look at www.ompio.org.

We can be contacted on our personal e-mail: susi@thorntonclan. com or by telephone: 01784 433480

# 'Strands of Time'

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Jenny Haycocks reflects on 'Laban: Then and Now' at Dartington

It was fantastic to be surrounded by so many enquiring minds – so eager to explore and challenge current theory in an environment where questioning was encouraged.

The organisation by Dartington Arts was quietly and efficiently taken care of; for me it really was the perfect end to a year of teaching. The food, the accommodation, the course information, course evaluation, email distribution list, everything was considered, leaving me able to focus on the learning opportunities that had been laid out before me like wrapped presents.

This four day intensive was packed with dance training sessions, creative dance workshops, choreutic meditations and evening activities with plenty of opportunities over breakfast, lunch, dinner and in the pub during the evening for discussion with fellow delegates and tutors. The course options I chose gave me a total of 32 hours of study.

# MORNING CLASS Anna Carlisle

It was invigorating to start the day with Anna's classes, which introduced and developed Laban's ideas on the dynamic body in space. Anna dropped gems of theory into our practice and encouraged us to research within our own dance training.

I am beginning to see that Laban's proposals were special in that he was finding ways in which we could work with the human body we have been given. He began to devise a series of exercises to train the body in a harmonious way by going with the organic geometrical forms built into our anatomy and the directions in which its connections will allow us to move. Anna led us through dance training sequences based on the dimensional cross, the planes, the cube and the A-Scale. I particularly enjoyed the way Anna taught us phrases, which we could then put into an improvisation and I became particularly interested in that moment where the taught meets the composed. Anna led us into some beautiful contact work in which we explored the concept of arc and axis and she overlaid contrasting effort qualities of press and glide, bound and free flow.

I also feel I am understanding how these geometrical forms give us a framework from which to devise our own dance training sequences; working with the creative tension that these boundaries offer to us. Amanda Banks had shown, in her sequence in the wheel plane, how we can pass peripherally and centrally through the points, then turn it, displace it and add accent and effort contrasts.

# CREATIVE DANCE WORKSHOPS Rosemary Lee

Rosemary nurtured, valued and invested time in us as she led us through a series of movement explorations before setting the material. She encouraged us to connect both physically and mentally to the space through which we would be moving. She guided us through structured improvisations where we were invited to envisage the floor and the space above it as a cushion, and to allow the floor to meet us (I have since allowed the notes on the piano keyboard to meet my fingers and this has helped my playing to become smoother ... as it had helped my dancing).

Rosemary selected her words carefully to bring

about subtle contrasts in movement quality: from pouring to yielding, from lifting to pushing then reaching. The penny finally dropped! This is how I can help my students to overcome their fear of descending into the floor ... by starting on the floor ... and then moving away in gradually increasing stages. In another exploration we were asked to become 'archaeologists of space': moving from the still place, following traces of movement in the air and in the layers beneath the earth, catching transient moments, listening with our whole body, imagining what had happened previously in the space, inspiring us to resist from doing the movement in favour of letting ourselves be moved. She chose simple themes that allowed for individual interpretation such as opening and closing in a hand-held ring of five dancers.

I loved the way she taught us a performance language with which to communicate the concepts of past, present and future through the interplay of set and improvised material. Stream of consciousness speaking was played against unison dialogue, trace forms picked up from the past were offered against 'everyday' preparation gestures. In these ways I felt the performance contrasted our subjective interpretation of the past with our expectations of the future and the uncapturable nature of the present. The creative imagination of the body and mind were able to lead and merge. For me, fact really did seem stranger than fiction.





The mood of the piece was expertly taken up and down through the use of contrasting efforts and spatial actions – sections in which we were gliding or river running or turning across the space were interwoven with more buoyant, skittery movements.

Rosemary kept control with a light hold. She would recap the work we had covered, giving time for note taking. She would revisit themes; using the same carefully chosen words and recalling the same sequence, thus short cutting the lengthy process that had initially taken us to a particular movement quality. In the later stages she would watch the piece all the way through and feed back at the end, thus allowing us to feel the flow of the piece. Although there was a lot of space for personal interpretation Rosemary would, in certain sections, ask for unity in precision e.g. 'all palms facing up', 'arms held loosely by your sides', 'energise the entire arm in that gesture not just the hand'. She gave me tips which helped relieve my eyes and advised me to stay with the structure of the piece when I was concerned that I would go out to the audience and lose myself.

I found authentic moments and ease ... I waited and trusted that it would come ... I tried hard, I worked diligently ... until the last moment and then I reduced the hold on myself and tried soft.

# CHOREUTIC MEDITATIONS Anna Carlisle and Valerie-Preston Dunlop

A pulse of unified form ... I feel strength. Rising and falling around my partner ... I see her ... we are diametrically opposed ... and we plait the air between us. Sharing a common orientation ... I am alone. Turning our orientation ... I overlap, I am passed by, we reach out in a web of relation and diversity.

# **EVENING ACTIVITIES**

The evening activities included film, talks, lecture demonstration and performance. It was during the film screening: 'The Makers of Modern Dance in Germany' that I was particularly taken by Marion North's comment of Rudolf Laban 'People just liked being around him' saying 'he was illuminating'. This resonated with a memory I have, of a teacher who illuminated my path for a time and how I felt lost in the darkness when that light was first extinguished.

# LIVING ARCHITECTURE - LECTURE DEMONSTRATION Anna Carlisle and Valerie Preston-Dunlop with Amanda Banks, Fumiaki Tanaka, Dawn Turner and Janine Harrington

It was a visual gift to watch members of the Phoenix Project as they led us through a repertoire of pieces devised around the geometrical forms of the dimensional cross, the planes, and a number of scales in the icosahedron. With help I finally understood the connection between the 12 semitones in a musical octave and the twelve spatial locations of the icosahedron and from there the similarity between the seven intervals in a major scale and the points in a 7-ring. As I sit here now at a piano I reflect on the benefits that scales practice brings to my playing. I see myself making small adjustments to the travelling hand to achieve a chain of evenly spaced notes; there is an efficiency of hand and body position, transferences of weight and sensitivity to pressure, which gives the notes an even stress with smooth transitions

Scales practice highlights the benefits of starting slowly to find an even rhythm, playing each hand separately before putting them together. In short, working on accuracy before speed.

As in music, so in movement. When we have mastered smooth transitions we can contrast with disjointed links; when we can perform a chain of uniformly stressed movements we can

utilise dynamic contrasts giving accent to a phrase; we can link movements of an uneven duration and magnitude as we experiment with the rhythm and climax in the piece. Our honed accuracy allows us to move between positions that hadn't previously followed one another but our repeated practice has built control, strength, flexibility, a kinaesthetic sensitivity and movement memory into our muscles.

# 'F C LAWRENCE & MOVEMENT STUDY' - TALK Warren Lamb

Warren Lamb's talk was delivered with a lively use of movement and boyish charm. It was so funny to see Warren demonstrate how a wave could start in the hand, move into the arm and then be carried further so the wave motion comes into the whole body. On another occasion he switched so quickly between movements that were at first light and playful, then vigorous and sweeping and closely followed by shrinking body postures. It was as if we were watching different people inhabiting the same space and reminded me of James Nesbitt's television performance in 'Jekyll'! I am clearer now about 'Posture Gesture Merging' and learnt about the concept of flow in relation to space, from growing to shrinking.

# TRANSITIONS DANCE COMPANY Performance with Post Show Discussion

What a treat to see *Transitions Dance Company* performing a programme of works with post-show discussion. I was really impressed with Taylor Benjamin's portrayal of 'Marotte' who's obsessive and compulsive behaviours were disturbingly convincing. Such intensity and that manic laughter for which there wasn't even a nano-second of forewarning. I enjoyed the contrasting formations which were clearly depicted in 'The Green Clowns': the precise, linear, repetitive movement of the Machine which rippled laterally and diagonally across the stage in comparison to the quirky gait and language of the 'Club of the Eccentrics' ... a pure innocence in silliness.

How interesting to hear these young dancers speak in the postshow discussion. Karolina Kraczkowska spoke with clarity about those aspects of Laban's classification on which they had drawn, of the suite of works choreographed by Rudolf Laban in 1924 and Emily Katsuno told us how she had applied what she had learnt from her Laban studies to help her overcome a difficulty she was having in another piece.

# **GROUND SWELL OF INTEREST**

The delegates at the course exemplified the potential for Laban's legacy to be applied across many fields of activity. I spoke with people who use Laban's framework within education, therapy, research, performance, youth work and the literary arts.

Events of this year have joined individuals together to propel a ground swell of interest. I left Dartington feeling that Laban's legacy had a dynamic and positive future here in the UK as long as this interest continues to be fed.

My sincere thanks go to our treasured tutors, my fellow delegates, Dartington Arts, William Elmhirst and the generous support of the Dorothy Whitney Elmhirst Trust. I am very grateful to The College of West Anglia who funded my place on this course and return to my students shining bright with inspiration.

Please tell me there will be further courses like this at

Jenny Haycocks



# Motus Humanus Advanced Seminar

Laptop computers lined the tables of the conference room as fifteen Laban-based movement professionals from across the United States participated in the Motus Humanus advanced seminar, "Research, Writing, and Publishing." The seminar took place at a lovely resort hotel in Boulder, Colorado, over the extended weekend of July 10-13, 2008. Despite the enticements of tennis courts, swimming pools, and bike paths, participants concentrated on developing article ideas, launching first drafts, supporting fellow writers, learning the protocols for drafting research proposals, and exploring the mechanics of identifying publication outlets and submitting articles and book proposals for review.

The seminar was co-taught by two members of the Motus Humanus Board, Drs. David Bauer and Kaoru Yamamoto, along with Dr. Beverly Hardcastle Stanford, who developed a highly successful Faculty Writers' Retreat program

for Azusa Pacific University. Collectively, Drs. Bauer, Stanford, and Yamamoto have written and published over 160 articles and a dozen books. They have guided hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students though the labyrinth of conceiving and conducting research. And they have served as editors and editorial board members for professional journals.

The three tutors applied this expertise to tailor the seminar for the particular needs of movement professionals. David Bauer led a user-friendly session on conceiving research and drafting a research proposal that incorporated small group reviews of Motus Humanus seed grant proposals that have been funded. Beverly Stanford helped participants launch writing projects, while tutors along with fellow students provided feedback on partial first drafts. Kaoru Yamamoto took participants through the process of getting published step by step, providing a rich resource booklet of refereed journals in fields related to human movement.



The seminar curriculum aimed to provide a balanced introduction to help movement professionals break into print and create greater public awareness of the way in which Laban theory enhances professional practice and inquiry. As one participant noted in her evaluation, "Everything was helpful. The sessions worked wonderfully together to create a whole." Another commented, "Great conference. My mind is still reeling." Other comments highlighted inspiration of different sorts: "The publishing process is much clearer and I am aware of a wide array of writing possibilities"; "I never thought I'd be writing, but I will now"; and "I loved the teaching and it got me started on a real research project."

All participants finished the weekend with a commitment to keep going with

a research or writing idea. Many hope to complete and publish "expertise" articles based upon their professional practices as Laban-based fitness trainers, martial artists, dance/movement therapists, or university dance faculty. Others plan to launch research projects in diverse areas such as movement curriculum for architecture students, movement therapy for those with progressive neuromuscular disorders, or ergonomics. Drs. Bauer and Stanford are exploring ways to provide additional post-seminar support to help bring these ideas to fruition.

Nearly all participants expressed a desire for "more time to write" during the seminar, and Motus Humanus is considerating ways to incorporate this in future seminars. As Madeleine Scott, professor of dance at Ohio University, concluded, "How fun it would be to do a five day seminar at a beach resort. It's a nice dream and I do think this seminar could be repeated."

# Motus Humanus Celebrates Laban

A festive event to "Celebrate Laban" was held in downtown Chicago on June 28, 2008. Jointly sponsored by Motus Humanus and the Dance/Movement Therapy Department of Columbia College Chicago, the celebratory occasion included panel presentations, performances and a gala reception, all held

in the roof garden of art patron Henry Latt. Invited guests included Motus Humanus members; faculty, students, and alumni of the Columbia College Graduate Laban Certificate in Movement Analysis (GLCMA) program, and members of the Illinois Chapter of the American Dance Therapy Association.

This celebration provided a way for the current GLCMA students to learn more about how graduates of the program are applying Laban theory in their various professional

practices. GLCMA alumni Carrie Hansen, Alison Henderson, and Kimberly Rothwell discussed how they have been applying movement analysis in their respective fields of choreography and dance education, theatre production, and dance/movement therapy. The panelists' presentations were followed by dance and theatre selections performed by GLCMA alumni and Columbia College faculty members Lisa Goldman, Kris Larsen, Shannon Lengerich, and Jessica Young from SLING Dance company

and Paul Holmquist from Lifeline Theatre Ensemble and Griffin Theatre Company. Cate Deicher and Chris Johnson manned the Motus Humanus membership table, encouraging all present to keep growing through engagement with this professional organization for Laban-based movement specialists.



Current GLCMA students enjoyed the opportunity to mix and mingle with more experienced members of the growing Laban Movement Analysis community in Chicago. The Columbia College Department of Dance/ Movement Therapy has been sponsoring this intensive graduate level study of Laban theory since 2001. The GLCMA program is offered in conjunction with a Masters degree program in Dance/Movement Therapy and draws many MA students, along with dance faculty from Columbia College and movement

professionals from the greater Chicago area. Over 60 young professionals will have completed the GLCMA program when the current 12 students graduate in October, making Chicago a growing center for the development of Laban's work in the U.S.

Kudos to Cate Deicher and Chris Johnson (Motus Humanus) and Paul Holmquist and Susan Imus (Columbia College) for coordinating this lovely celebration.

# Motus Humanus Seed Grant

Madeleine Scott, professor of dance at Ohio University, received the 2008 seed money grant for research from Motus Humanus. The proposed research uses motion capture technology along with video recording to study the prototypic spatial sequences identified by Rudolf Laban as choreutic trace-forms, rings, and scales. Under the direction of co-principal researchers Professor Scott and Dr. Carol-Lynne Moore, the Laban Prototypes Research Project aims to examine Laban's claim that fragments of choreutic prototypes compose a fundamental alphabet of spatial forms.

This examination has two parts. First, the researchers set out to duplicate some of the choreutic forms that Laban represented as geometrical line drawings. Motion capture technology is able to produce a similar kind of record, for it captures the dancer's movement as a tracery of light, allowing one to see the trace-forms of the dance without the dancer. Secondly, dance class sequences, spontaneously improvised dance passages, and excerpts of a choreographed work were also recorded using motion capture technology. These recordings will be compared with the MOCAP recordings of prototypic forms, to see if "fragments" of these highly regular spatial models can be identified in composed and spontaneously generated "natural" movement sequences.

The Motus Humanus seed money program is a service to members of the organization. The grants are quite modest and are meant to launch pilot studies or "prime the pump" for additional funding. In this case, the seed money served its purpose. Professor Scott subsequently applied for and received the Ohio University College of Fine Arts Creative Research Award, along with a small private donation and additional funding from the University's Office of the Vice President for Research.

These funds allowed the data collection phase of the project to be launched at Ohio University in late June. During this initial stage, three members of the Ohio University dance faculty participated

in the study. Through an intensive period of rehearsal, Travis Gatling, Marina Walchi, and Tresa Randall learned the dimensional, diagonal, axis, girdle, primary, and transverse A and B scales, along with the polar triangles. These rehearsals were followed by half-day motion capture and video recording sessions with each faculty member performing several of the choreutic prototypes as well as other composed or improvised material in a motion capture suit. In addition, undergraduate dance major Kady Jankord participated in the study, performing a section of "Passage," choreographed by Jean Erdman and set on the Ohio University student by Dance Notation Bureau staff member and OU alumni, Nancy Allison.

Motion capture recording was facilitated through the Aesthetic Technology Lab at Ohio University, under the direction of Dr. Katherine Milton. Staff member Nathan Berger and graduate assistant Rakesh Kashyap worked patiently to fit and calibrate the MOCAP suit on each dancer and produce clean recordings, painstakingly recalibrating when needed.

The recording sessions were done in one of the campus television studios. Through the good offices of Professor Roger Good, students and staff from the School of Digital Media Arts and Studies program arranged for five-camera videotaping to be done at the same time the motion capture was being recorded. The video recordings, taken from front, back, both sides, and above, back up the MOCAP records, while providing additional data for analysis.

The video recordings have now been edited, anomalies in the MOCAP records are being corrected, and the recordings are being processed to produce the images needed by the researchers for analysis. It will be several months before preliminary results of this pilot study are known. This is one of the first studies to use new technology to test Laban theory against fresh sets of movement data, and it is hoped that this modest first step will yield valuable pointers for future research.

# Continuous flux in flow of effort and shape

Underlying concepts developed by Rudolf Laban and Warren Lamb is an understanding of body movement as an ongoing continuous flux; "... shapes assumed by living organisms, wax and wane uninterruptedly... [an] uninterrupted flux" (Laban, 1966, pp. 3): "Everything is in a state of flux ... varying as the process of movement goes on" (Lamb, 1993, p. 7).

This article aims to highlight differences between conceptions of body movement as states, conditions or positions as opposed to concepts of change, motion or flux. This contrast will be considered relative to perception, awareness, motor control, movement memory, as well as Laban analysis. The intention is to raise awareness of the distinction between conditions versus flux, to raise questions related to distinction, and to encourage the explicit identification of which type of analysis is used in all areas of movement study and practice.

# Cognitive Bias Toward Static Prototypes

While body movement may consist of continuous flux, human cognition manifests a tendency toward perceiving and remembering events and concepts as static prototypes.

Gestalt psychologists and cognitive research have revealed this as a process of abstraction whereby complex events are simplified and made as concise as possible during perception and memory, thus using less memory capacity and promoting quicker recall and shorter reaction times. This cognitive strategy brings ecological advantage to an organism, even at the risk of perceiving the world as over-simplified stereotypes.



Figure 1. A ladder of abstraction

A convenient way to visualise this process is with the "ladder of abstraction" (Hayakawa, 1972, pp. 176-198; Moore & Yamamoto, 1988, pp. 75-84) where cognitive processes can be seen as rungs of a ladder (Fig. 1). At the bottom of the ladder are raw sensory stimulations, pre-verbal, pure experience. Going up the ladder these raw bits are organised by grouping with other associated bits into clusters and higher-order categories. Further upward, the clusters are evaluated according to their significance within the immediate event, and higher up the ladder they are seen within ever larger contexts and circumstances. At the highest levels of

the ladder are formulated generalised conclusions about broad patterns and tendencies or universal 'truths'.

A process of bias toward regular static prototypes can be seen within this abstraction ladder. While real-world stimulations at the bottom of the ladder may be chaotic, irregular and in flux, the abstraction process moving up the ladder sorts and categorises the sensations, forming mental representations which are more regular, simple, symmetrical and static than the original raw sensations actually were. A variety of effects associated with this process can be identified.

Geographical directions (in neighborhoods, cities, countries, make-believe maps) are remembered as more dimensionally aligned (north/south, east/west), and their intersections ('change of direction') as closer to regular right-angles, than they are in reality (Byrne, 1979; Lynch, 1960; Moar, 1978; Moar & Bower, 1983; Tversky, 1981).

Body positions oriented along a dimension are recalled most

accurately while irregularly oriented positions tend to be recalled closer to regular sagittal or horizontal dimensions (Clark & Burgess, 1984; Wyke, 1965). Likewise, in travelling movements the angles of turning to a new directions are recalled closer to a right angles than they were in reality (Ross et. al., 1970).

The central primacy of regular, static, simplified prototypes may be explained in their use as "cognitive reference points" where irregular stimuli are not perceived or remembered independently but only "in relation to" regular prototypes. This is indicated by "linguistic hedges" where the irregular concepts are considered to be "essentially" or "almost" an almost identical regular concept. more often than a regular concept is considered to be "essentially" or "almost" an almost identical irregular concept (Rosch, 1975). Cognitive reference points are therefore used as perceptual / memory "heuristics" (rule of thumb) adopted to facilitate faster and economical cognition by categorising irregular stimuli as regular reference points which are simpler and more static than they actually were (Byrne, 1979; Tversky, 1981).

Heuristics reflect patterns of perceptual grouping identified by Gestalt psychologists with the organising principle "pragnanz" ('concise', 'terse') according to which perceptions and memories are organised into "regular", "simple", "stable" and therefore "good" patterns (Koffka, 1935, pp. 108-145; Wertheimer, 1923, pp. 79-83). For example, a brief views of acute or obtuse angles tend to be perceived as "pure" right angles (Wertheimer, 1923,

Using simple, regular, static, and symmetric prototypes for heuristics and cognitive reference points appears to be a beneficial strategy as it increases memory capacity (by remembering a large number of items relative to a small number of reference points) and speeds up perception-reaction times (since recognition only requires a small number of reference points to be searched) thus bringing ecological advantage, even at the risk of perceptions and memories which may be over-simplified and stereotyped compared to actuality.

# Continuous Flux and Steady States in Movement Study

Understanding cognitive bias toward prototypes gives a background for considering concepts of body movement as conditions, positions and steady states versus change, motion and continuous flux. Actual sensations and stimulations often correspond to continuous change while mental concepts are often regularized into more static conditions.

### Sensory Feedback; Receptor Discharge

12

Anatomy of sensory receptors creates greater response to motions and less or no response to steady conditions. This occurs in "adaptation" when, after a period of steady-state stimulation sensory receptors adapt, thus switching to a lower level or absence of discharge. Greater sensory response only returns with new, changed movements. This is typical for muscle spindle receptors (Matthews, 1933; McCloskey, 1978, p. 770), receptors in tendons (Jansen & Rudjord, 1964) and in joints (Grigg, 1975; Skoglund, 1956).

Accordingly, the longer a body position is held, the less well that position can later be duplicated (Paillard & Brouchon, 1968; 1974), presumably because adapting receptors reduce their level of discharge after a brief time with no movement. Likewise, it can often be observed in education settings that learning new positions is often accompanied by frequent adjusting motions. presumably an attempt to gather increased sensory feedback (induced by motion) relating to that position.

Similarly in the vestibular system, endolymph fluid in semi-circular canals and otolith organs pushes against receptor hairs (creating sensory response) only when there is a change of motion (either change of speed or change of direction). In contrast during steady states of speed and direction, endolymph fluid stabilises within the organs, receptor hairs are no longer stimulated, and there is no sensory response (Howard, 1986).

Accordingly questions for education arise as to whether positions are learned better by experiencing the position itself, or by movements surrounding the position and whether sensory information for improving ability for balance is gained more from positions of balance or from motions off balance.

### Habituation of Awareness

Similar to sensory adaptation, except at a higher level of perceptual systems, greater conscious awareness arises from changes of stimulation than to steady conditions. When external events maintain constancy perceptual systems become "habituated" whereby events and stimulations no longer enter into conscious awareness. For example constant smells, constant sounds or constant temperatures retreat out of consciousness and are no longer noticed. Awareness is often not reawakened until some change occurs in the stimulus array, such as a different smell or a habitual sound stopping. Habituation brings implications for all types of movement learning and communication as to what types of presentations induce awareness of the perceiver.

# **Position Memory**

Memory for body position also relies on movement as evidenced by better recall of positions which have been learned by active movement rather than passively positioned (placed in position by an external manipulator) (Jones, 1972; Kelso, 1977; Marteniuk, 1973; Paillard & Brouchon, 1968; 1974; Roy & Williams, 1979). This may arise because of greater peripheral sensory feedback from active muscles (versus passive) and also because of "efference", a kind of central feedback giving information about motor commands for movements used to produce the position. This indicates that memory for a body position is not as much based on the position itself, but on movements associated with that position.

# Motor Memory

Similarly, memory for body movements is shown not to be based on producing a series of positions but instead on the rhythm amongst a series of motions. Principles of "motor equivalence" and "equal simplicity" describe how body movements can be easily transformed by changing attributes such as size, location in space, orientation, speed, or body-parts used, without having to relearn the movement. Because the external form or "trace" of the movements can be transformed in various ways, while the transformed movements can be performed with "equal simplicity" as the original, it is posited that the memory code for all the different movements is the same (Bernstein, 1984 [1935], pp. 106-117) and the different movements are considered to be "equivalent" with a motor representation that is "largely independent of the specific sets of muscles involved in the actual performance" (Morasso, 1983, pp. 208-209; also Saltzman, 1979, pp. 94, 103).

For example, spatial forms in handwriting movements retain their particular style even if performed with physical variations

such as with the non-dominate hand, with the arm only (wrist immobilised), with the pen held in the teeth, or increased in size (Bernstein, 1984, p. 114; Merton, 1972, p. 32; Raibert, 1977; Schmidt, 1982, p. 305; Smyth & Wing, 1984, p. 12). "Shakiness" of the trajectory increases but the essential "style" of overall shapes and relative sizes of letters remains invariant. Similarly, a common example occurs in ballet classes when students rehearse movements of the feet by 'marking' or practising these movements with the hands.

When a movement is transformed, usually all of the positions in that movement are changed because the movement is smaller or larger, or moved to a new place, slightly deformed from changes in speed, or produced with different body parts. The essential memory code or "basic pattern" is defined as being the pattern which remains consistent throughout all the variations. This has been shown to be the rhythm (proportional timing) amongst the series of muscular impulses for each consecutive motion (Schmidt, 1975, p. 235). This became the dominant theory describing the rhythmic basis of motor programs and referred to as "phasing" (Keele & Summers, 1976; Schmidt, 1976; Shapiro & Schmidt, 1982, pp. 133-136; Wing, 1978, 1980), Hence, motor memory and motor control appear to be based on timing amongst motions, rather than positions or body parts used.

# Biomechanics

(same as cgLftA,cgLftL)

**R** = Ground Reaction Force

**Rv** = Vertical component of R

**H** = Angular momentum

(same as HcgLftA, HcgLftL

W = Weight

Mechanical analysis of bodily forces is also based on motions. Analyses of forces within a body position can identify some information (potential energy contained in the position, tensile force required to maintain the position), however even in static cases there appear dynamic forces (muscular adjustments and re-initiations of small motions) which attempt to keep a position stable. In other words, static shapes do not exist and all equilibrium positions are maintained by continuously adjusting

Therefore, biomechanics focuses on analyses of motions and resultant forces which are measured as vectors (direction & distance) and speed of the body's center of gravity and centers of gravity of individual limbs or body segments. Analyses are represented in "free body diagrams" with arrows to represent the magnitude and direction of forces relative to centers of gravity (Fig. 2). Understanding physical requirements involved in any body pattern relies on analyses of motions and associated forces with positions considered as moments within the overall movement stream.

**cg** = Center of gravity of entire body cgRtA= Center of gravity of right arm **ΣF** = Net Force exerted by kinetic chain **Rh** = Horizontal component of R (friction) HcgRtA = Angular momentum of Right Arm relative to cg of entire body

Figure 2. Motions and Forces in Biomechanical Analysis (derived from McGinnis, 1999, p. 180; Watkins, 1983, p. 57)

# **NonverbalCommunication**

The contrast between positions versus motions occurs in analyses of nonverbal communication as analysis of meaning in states (positions, eg. folded arms, crossed legs, puffed up chest) and also as changes (motions, eg. folding / unfolding, crossing / uncrossing, expanding / condensing). To highlight the contrast, one example is given here from non-verbal expert Kate Jobe (2007) regarding a description of walking along busy streets in large cities with a common experience of people bumping into you because of the crowds. Personal experiments revealed that by "getting wider" when someone approaches (on a potential collision course) that the person will respond to this nonverbal signal and deviate to avoid collision. However just "being wide" will not produce the same effect and people will not deviate, instead "you have to do the motion" which creates the nonverbal signal that is received and responded to.

This example puts emphasis on the role of motion in nonverbal communication. Similar to sensory response and habituation, a steady state ("being wide") receives little or no response, the static condition is not noticed, whereas motion ("getting wider") creates a change in stimulation, a signal that is registered and reacted to by the perceiver.

# Flow Lines; Notation of Flux

In order to look in detail at aspects of fluctuation changes versus steady states, it is useful to draw on a form of notation sometimes known as "flow lines" (Sossin & Kestenberg Amighi, 1999, p. 13). These probably provide the best visual depiction of patterns of flux and are used to represent continuous variation of some attribute through time (eg. muscle tension, movement speed, size of reach space). Generally, as the flow line goes up, the intensity or magnitude of the attribute increases, when the flow line goes down, the intensity or magnitude decreases (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. Prototype flow line diagram

Flow lines are often used in Laban analysis and also in many other areas of study. They are common in all types of physics studies to represent wave fluctuations (eg. frequency of sound waves or electromagnetic waves) and in body movement study are typical of EMG recordings of muscular activation. Similarly, they can also be drawn by hand (from visual observations) for example as "neuromuscular excitation patterns" (Fitt, 1979, p. 164) where fluctuating patterns of activity in agonist and antagonist muscles reveal particular characters or qualities (Fig 4). Flow lines can also be used to represent flux of spatial attributes, for example the continuous flux of spatial levels from lying to jumping in Doris Humphrey's *Water Study* (Rodiger, 1983, p. 28). Attributes of energy and space can also be combined in flow lines, for example to represent degrees of pressure exerted in particular directions with each pattern being correlated to particular emotional states in studies of "sentics" (Clynes, 1973, p. 66; Clynes & Nettheim, 1982, p. 55).

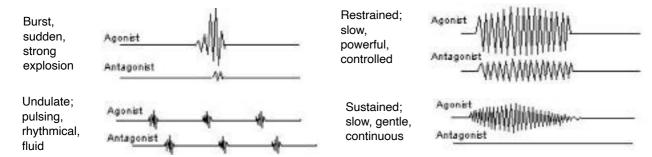


Figure 4. Flow lines representing neuromuscular excitation patterns (Fitt, 1979, p. 164).

# Shape Flow, Effort Flow

In Laban analyses flow lines have especially been used in methods developed by Lamb and Kestenberg where a distinction is made between flux in effort dynamics and flux in shape change (Fig. 5). Effort flow refers to tension or rhythm fluctuations between freeing and binding while shape flow refers to form or direction fluctuations between growing and shrinking (Merman, 1990, p. 86; Lamb & Watson, 1979, p. 51, Lamb & Turner, 1969, p. 58; Loman, 1990, p. 55).

Effort Flow; tension or rhythm of the flux exertion of energy, attunement Freeing; comfortable, at ease

Binding; caution, control

<u>Shape Flow;</u> form or direction of the flux adaptation to the environment, *adjustment* <u>Growing;</u> expanding, increase external contact



Shrinking; condensing, reduce external contact

Figure 5. Distinction between Effort Flow and Shape Flow

### Effort Flow Differentiation

Effort flow is further differentiated into characteristic rhythms of freeing and binding, sometimes known as "Kestenberg rhythms", represented with flow lines and developmentally associated with Laban efforts (Kestenberg, 1967, p. 45; Lewis, 1975, pp. 64-65; Lewis, 1986, p. 172; Sossin & Kestenberg Amighi, 1999, pp. 1–20, 27-55). The utility of expressing these with flow lines is that each rhythm can be literally 'read' from the increase / decrease progression of the line (Fig. 6).

Tension-flow Rhythms (id)		Tension-flow Attributes	Effort precursors (pre-efforts)	Efforts (ego)
ORAL			Space (focus)	
sucking, swaying	$\sim\sim$	flow adjustment	flexibility	indirect
biting, clapping	$\sim$	even flow	channelling	direct
ANAL			Weight (force)	
twisting, squirming	Mary Property of the	low intensity	gentleness	light
strain then release	$\overline{}$	high intensity	straining	strong
URETHRAL			Time (timing)	
drifting, wandering	~~~	gradual flow	hesitation	sustained
streaming then stopping	Mary	abrupt flow	sudden	quick

Figure 6. Tension-flow-Effort system (developmental); flow lines showing rhythms of tension.

# Effort Flow / Shape Flow Correlation

Flow lines are also used to show correlations of effort and shape fluctuations in case studies. By 'reading' the flow lines it is possible to get a sense of the types and ranges of intensity of the movements which are used by this particular person (Fig. 7).

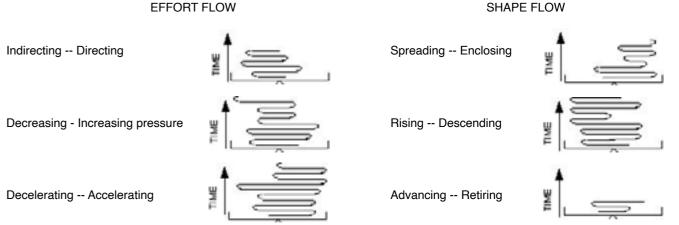


Figure 7. Correlating effort flow and shape flow (adapted from Lamb & Watson, 1979, p. 83).

### Issues of States versus Flux in Laban Analyses

Issues of states versus flux run throughout Laban analysis and Laban notation. Rudolf Laban and Warren Lamb have both commented on the ever-present tendency to perceive and categorise events as static conditions rather than continuous change:

"This illusion of a standstill is based on the snapshot-like perception of the mind which is able to receive only a single phase of the uninterrupted flux." (Laban, 1966, pp. 3)

"If we confuse nonverbal behavior observations based on fixed images with observations of movement, without making the distinction clear, we do a disservice" ... "It is always easier to look at the fixed position and fool ourselves that we are looking at movement." (Lamb, 1993, p. 8)

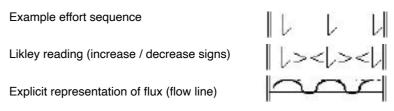


Figure 8. Flux implicit in effort to reinitiate consecutive conditions

### Effort, Dynamics

Effort concepts such as light, strong, guick, sustained, bound, free, direct, indirect, float, punch, glide, slash, dab, wring, flick and press tend to indicate qualitative status or conditions. In addition, effort modifiers such as plus (+) or minus (-) also tend toward seeing the concepts as a status or condition of magnitude or intensity.

Similar effort concepts described as accelerating, decelerating, increasing or decreasing pressure, freeing, binding, or the act of "becoming" tend to indicate a character of flux or modulation. Sometimes fluctuations are made more explicit by highlighting continuous changes amongst efforts such as "Effort used in actions and that used in recovery serve and help each other in alternating with one another in a definite rhythm." (Laban, 1971) or that movement "decelerates in order to accelerate, and vice versa" (Lamb, 1993). In these descriptions contrasting efforts are not seen as opposing conditions, but in a single process of fluctuation.

In effort notation a single effort sign is usually interpreted as indicating a condition or degree of intensity. This conception of effort as a status is reinforced by including the plus (+) or minus (-), giving further details as to which condition is indicated. When several effort signs are written in sequence, this is usually read as changes, but these are changes from one condition to another (thus, each effort sign still indicating a status to be achieved, rather than change itself).

However, in some cases, such as when the same effort sign is written several times in a sequence, there is revealed an implied flux within the effort system. This flux can be made explicit by notating the same sequence using increase (<) and decrease (>) signs or with a flow line. As shown in the notation (Fig. 8), the most likely reading of the same effort sign repeated in a sequence is to include a modulation or flux toward and away from the state defined by the sign. The effort sign itself still represents a specific condition or status, however the aspect of flux reveals itself as an implicit function of effort, giving modulations in order to continuously reinitiate each consecutive status.

# Shape, Shaping

Example shape sequence

While some concepts of 'shape' tend to indicate static conditions (eg. concave, convex, pin, wall, ball, screw) the majority of shape concepts indicate processes of change (eg. growing, shrinking, widening, narrowing, lengthening, shortening, bulging, hollowing, spreading, enclosing, ascending, descending, advancing, retreating) and this concept of ongoing shape fluctuations is reinforced by defining shaping actions as those which "accommodate to the plastic character of objects ... to mold space into plastic forms" (Dell, 1970).

Likely reading (as motion) (increase / decrease signs) Explicit representation of flux (flow line) Figure 9. Shape sequence as continuous increase Example shape sequence Likely reading (as motion) (increase / decrease signs) Explicit representation of flux (flow line)

Figure 10. Shape sequence with fluctuations.

Accordingly, when a single shape sign is written it is likely to be read as a constant process of change (rather than a state to be achieved as in effort notation). Likewise, if a single shape sign is written several times in a sequence, the likely reading will be a continuous increase in that shape quality. This process of change can be made explicit by using increase (<) and decrease (>) signs or with a flow line (Fig. 9).

Right arm position: right-forward-high Left arm position: left-backward-middle Left leg position: backward-middle

Figure 11. Space notation with Labanotation direction signs indicating locations or points.

Right arm motion: upward-right-backward ('steep' vertical deflection) Left arm motion: upward-left-backward) ('flat' lateral deflection) Left leg motion: upward-left-backward ('suspended' sagittal deflection)

Figure 12. Space as motion of limb centers of gravity.

If modulating fluctuations are desired, then contrasting shape signs need to be written showing opposite directions of shaping, or this might be indicated with decrease signs, or shown with a modulating flow line (Fig. 10).

# Space, Choreutics, Directions

A predominance of space concepts tend toward representing space as static conditions (eg. locations, points, high, deep, left, right, back, vertical, horizontal, sagittal, dimension, plane). While there is also another tradition of concepts which conceptualise space as processes of change (eg. upward, downward, sideward, forward, backward, deflection) and this view of space as motion is reinforced with descriptions such as "the path consists of an infinite number of appearances and disappearances, which we called the flux of time" and "certain natural standard scales, at first described as going from point to point, are in reality built up from rays or inclinations" (Laban, 1966, pp. 28, 132).

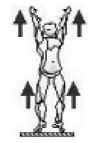
The dominate type of space notation using Labanotation direction signs represents space as positions or points to be achieved, with motion implied as the transition from one location to the next (Fig. 11).

A different notation representing space as motion was experimented with during the early development of Labanotation (Laban, 1926; Longstaff, 2005) but was not included in the first publication of kinetography in 1928, which was a "painful compromise" since "Laban wanted at all costs to defend that he was writing motion, not positions" (Preston-Dunlop, 1998, pp. 131-132). Laban returned to a modification of the concept in the 1930s, describing "free space lines" as "an old dream" left for the "future development of kinetography" (Laban, 1966, pp. 125-130). A similar concept (but without deflecting directions) was also devised as "direction of the progression" (Hutchinson-Guest, 1983, p. 261).

The early space 'vector' signs indicate direction of motion, or orientation of a pathway, without stating the beginning or end position, thus representing space as continuous flux (Fig. 12).

### **Affinities**

A unique aspect of Laban analysis are the combinations of effort and space (or effort and shape) which are "more naturally performed" (Laban, 1963, pp. 38-39) or "most easily take place" together (North, 1972, p. 260) and so are considered to be "affinities" (Lamb, 1965, p. 63). When considering concepts of body movement as either motions or conditions, the obvious question emerges as to whether affinities relate to motions (change, flux) or to conditions (positions, states).





Upward motion in a high

Downward motion in a high zone

Figure 13. A high zone with either upward or downward motion

For example, is lightness an affinity with motion rising upwards or with the condition of being high? Is strong effort an affinity with motion descending downward or with the condition of being deep?

Moving upwards and being high do not always occur together (Fig. 13). If there is downwards motion entirely within a high zone, is the most easily performed effort (affinity) strength or lightness? Likewise, downwards movement and being low do not always go together (Fig. 14). If there is upwards movement within a low / deep zone, is the most easily performed effort (affinity) strength or lightness?





Downward motion in a low / deep zone

Upward motion in a low / deep zone

Figure 14. A low / deep zone with either upward or downward

### Conclusion

The intention here is not to give answers, but to highlight contrasts between considering body movement as conditions or motions and to identify questions arising from this contrast. Both of these types of analyses are used in many areas of body movement study. While motion plays crucial roles in many areas of body perception, awareness and memory, the service of cognitive economy seems to favor mental representations as static states. Particular contrasts of motion versus flux can be seen in areas of Laban analyses.

This issue became important to me initially out of my dissatisfaction with practice of choreutics based on "reaching to the points". No matter how much emphasis is placed on involving the entire body, this conception always seems to create movement with distal tracing of external forms. Related to this was my dissatisfaction with particular locations of the "points" and my observation that spontaneous, organic body movement often does not conform to these particular locations. Human body movement is much more variable than the five regular polyhedra.

Quite accidentally I stumbled upon Laban's early system in Choreographie (1926), translated the notation (called them "vector signs" as Laban gave them no name) (Longstaff, 2001a, 2001b), and realized that these signs (which pre-dated kinetography, choreutics, and effort) offered a conception based on deflecting motions rather than positions. As I experimented with the signs I was surprised that choreutic forms started to become more obvious and actually simpler since the requirement to conform to the externally imposed rigid scaffolding was removed.

My enthusiasm for Laban's early motion signs was further encouraged after I reviewed how Laban's reaction to their exclusion from kinetography in 1928 was for him a "painful compromise" and how later he referred back to these concepts as an "old dream". Eighty years later I have heard Laban's dream when the meaning of these signs had been completely lost and their concept of motions as "deflections" has mostly become an obscure side-note of choreutics, rather than the fundamental concept upon which the entire system is built.

Finally, I have come to realize how the issue of motions versus positions spreads to many other fields. The vector signs themselves are virtually identical to biomechanical analysis (compare figures 2 & 12 above) providing a correspondence between choreutics and scientific fields. The issue reaches even farther into human social perceptions of personality, culture, race, age, etc. Just like positions and motions, it is always easier to perceive events and people according to static categories and stereotypes, while the reality is that everything and everyone is in a continuous process of change. As the body and mind are connected, my experience that understanding continuous flux in the body corresponds to also understanding flux in human society.

# Jeffrey Scott Longstaff

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18

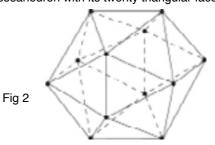
# The Laban Scales and Rings

- a practical aspect of dance technique and training in the art of movement Part 3

# "5 Ring" Movement Shapes, Locations and Relationships.

Whereas all "2", "3", "4" and "6" Ring shapes and locations can easily be shown to be related to the eight Laban Standard Scales (R & L "A", R & L "B", and 1st – 4th Primary Scales), the "5 Rings" have no direct numerical relationship to these Scales. They relate more to the dodecahedron with its twelve pentagonal faces than to the icosahedron with its twenty triangular faces.





Dodecahedron

Fig 1

Icosahedron

There are three different types of "5 Rings"

i) Peripheral – (Series A & B) ii) Mixed - ('Baskets') iii) Transversal – (Pentagrammon mystikon (star of David).

There are twelve "5" Rings of each type. They can be described diagramatically using the icosahedral scaffold.

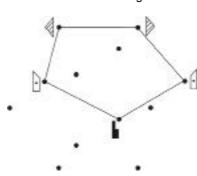
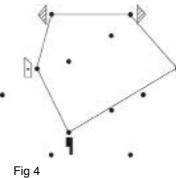
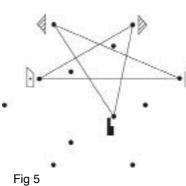


Fig 3

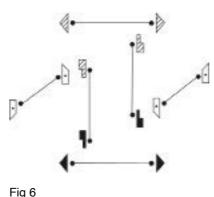


A Mixed "5 Ring"



A Peripheral "5 Ring" A Mixed "5 Ring" A Transversal "5 Ring"

In Laban's book "Choreutics" it says ".... interesting as a movement experience are the five rings, in which we meet for the first time an inclusion of the dimensional, in harmonic relations."



1

Fig 8

Fig 7

**The Diametral Cross** 

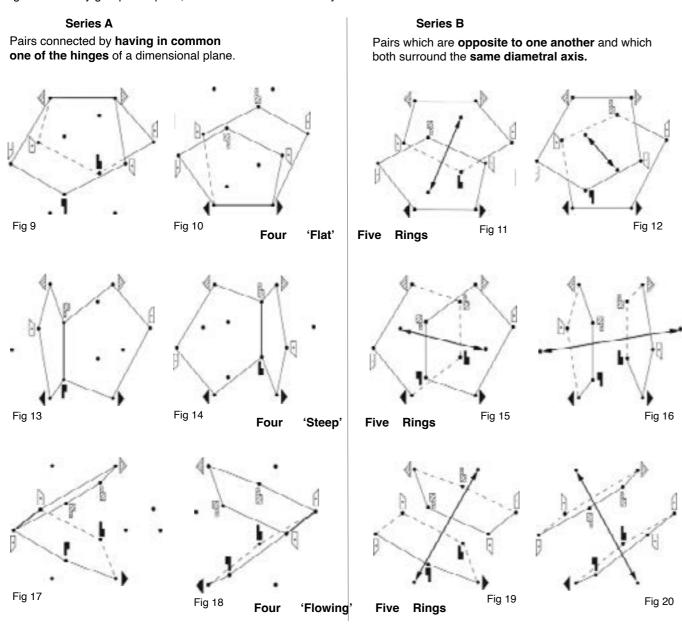
**Dimensional Transversals** 

# The Peripheral "5 Rings"

**Dimensional Peripherals** 

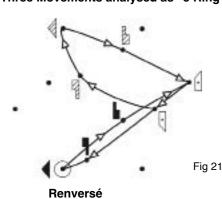
These "5 Rings" are large sweeping circular movements encouraging expansion and fluency. They are associated with pairs of dynamic, spatial, rhythmic opposites, e.g. 'gathering and scattering', swings, 'figure-of-eight' trace forms, zones of the kinesphere, clockwise and anti-clockwise rotations.

Each ring consists of five peripheral movement links, **one of which is a dimensional peripheral**. Each ring is thought of as having a **'base**' and an **'apex**'. The base is its dimensional peripheral and this gives each ring its character, either 'flat', 'steep' or 'flowing'. Dimensional peripherals are also known as '**hinges**' According to characters, locations and relationships, the twelve peripheral "5 Rings" are usually grouped in pairs, in either of two different ways:

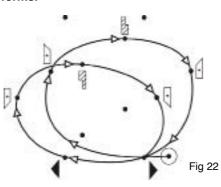


Five Ring forms are useful for developing initial confidence to enlarge one's movements and link them rhythmically together with kinaesthetic appreciation. Later they also have an important part to play in developing the use of gravity and momentum, swing, impulse, and centrifugal force necessary for the performance of advanced dance skills.

# Three Movements analysed as "5 Ring" trace forms.

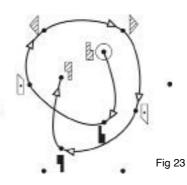


Turn to R on L. Support led by simultaneous clockwise circular movements of R.Arm and R.Leg.



R.Leg Figure-of-8 Swing

With outward and inward rotation of leg and outward and inward succession of the limb.



'Apex Swing' of two flat "5" Rings" Example taken from "Choreutics" Fig.86, p185

\_"5 Rings" are a mixture of labile and stabilising elements. The excitement of the encouragement to extend and release the flow of movement is balanced in their form by the dimensional, stabilising elements contained in their structure.

# Tensions providing a stabilising element within "5 Rings". (See Chor.ch.l I.)

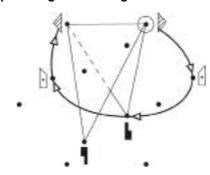


Fig 24 Gathering movt from R-L led by palm surface of R.Arm

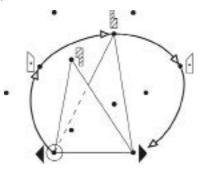


Fig 25 Scattering movt from L-R led by front surface of R.Leg

# Symmetrical tensions within flat "5 Rings"

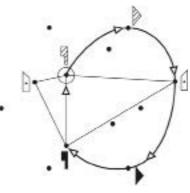


Fig 26 Scooping movt from H-D led by inner surface of R.Arm

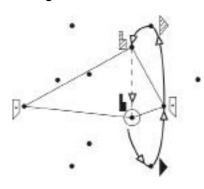


Fig 27 Scattering movt from L-R led by front surface of R.Leg

# Symmetrical tensions within steep " 5 Rings"

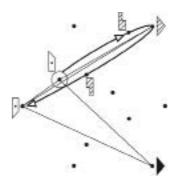


Fig 28 Gathering movt from B-F led by palm surface of R.Arm

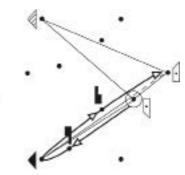


Fig 29 Scattering swing from B-F led by front of L.Leg

# Symmetrical tensions within flowing "5 Rings"

# The Mixed "5 Rings"

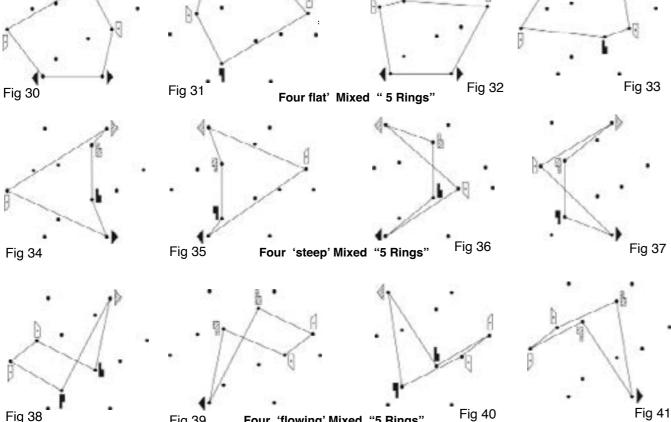
Whereas each peripheral "5 Ring" lies on a plane, the Mixed "5 Rings" are plastic forms. They consist of three peripheral movement links and **two transversal links**.

Their shape is known as a 'basket'. The three peripheral links enclose the containing part of the basket shape, and from its widest point the two transversal links switch direction and converge to meet and form the 'handle'.

These rings share many features with the peripheral "5 Rings", e.g, Each ring is situated in a particular dimensional kinespheric zone; their axes are diametral; they can be identified as 'flat', 'steep' or 'flowing'; the stability of the dimensional symmetry of their surface locations; their 2/3 space/time rhythm. But it is the **switch of direction and convergence and divergence of their two transversal links** which gives the Mixed "5 Rings" their unique identity of release versus containment, exposure versus protection.

Interestingly, each mixed five ring uses the surface locations not used by a Mixed "7 Ring". I will speak about "7 Rings" in Part V.

# Twelve Mixed "5 Rings".



# On Transversal 5 Rings

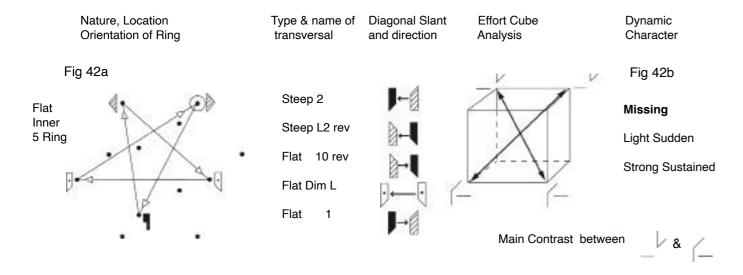
I will only speak briefly about Transversal 5 Rings as Laban does not mention these in "Choreutics" as 'harmonised' forms. However, some readers might be interested in a small piece of analysis of the so called 'pentagrammon mystikon' I began some

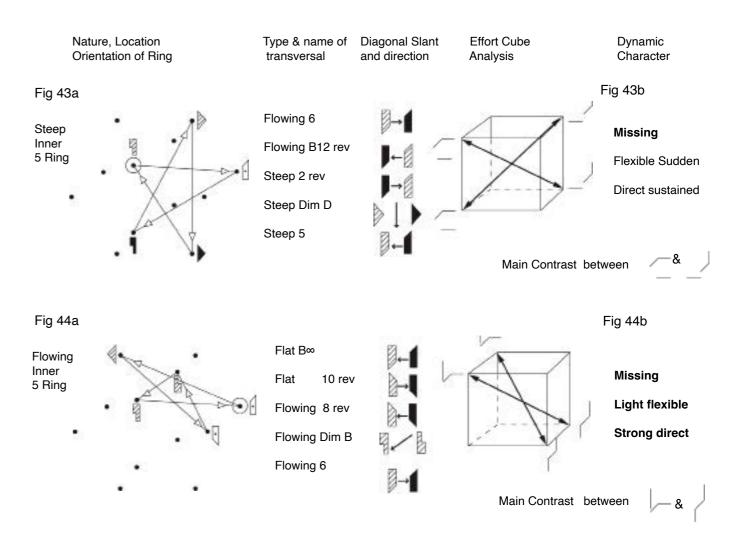
Four 'flowing' Mixed "5 Rings"

Their form suggests inward focus and emphasis on movements of the torso rather than the limbs. Their movements involve constant changes between two different diagonals, quite different from the Standard Axis Scales in which all the movements lie on one diagonal. Effort cube analysis is interesting. They do not follow the 'sequential laws' of Laban's 'harmonised forms', and each contains two 'inverted' transversals. (See Chor.p.152, 'Sequential Laws', and p.165)

# An Analysis of three Transversal 5 Rings

Fig 39





A professional Laban trained dancer can be recognised immediately by possessing, in addition to the assumed level and range of bodily skills, a fluency and knowledge of how to integrate movement into a whole and imbue it with life and significance.

Laban himself had deeper and wider concerns than merely the development of a Laban based professional dance training system, but one definitely exists and contains movements and particular uses of the body unique to it, as well as those which it has in common with other western dance techniques, alongside which it can stand unashamedly with pride.

The study of Choreutics and the Laban rings can only be a useful part of movement and dance study, if like technique (in the words of Valerie Preston-Dunlop), "it is there to serve the art and not overwhelm it".

My next article will be about "2 Rings" and "4 Rings" which again have a clear numerical relationship with the Standard Scales.

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# Critical Debate

In our last issue we launched a debate as to whether the claim that 'between harmonic components of music and those of dance there is not only an outward resemblance, but a structural congruity'. Our contributors were: Dr Jeffrey Scott Longstaff, Dr Betty Redfern and the Editor. We concluded by saying that we hoped to enlist a contribution from Dr Carol-Lynne Moore, whose Laban Lecture on the Theory of Movement Harmony in our Summer 2007 issue will be remembered.

Dr Moore has responded with the following challenging piece – to which our Editor has added his comments. Dr Longstaff also promised to provide further examples of the analogies between choreutic and musical harmony; we begin our discussion with these. (See also Dr Valerie Preston-Dunlop's answer to Question 3c on 'Harmony' in 'Questions for the Experts' in this issue and our concluding remarks).

Abbreviations: **CLM** (Dr Carol-Lynne Moore); **GC** (Editor); **JL** (Dr Jeffrey Longstaff).

JL: Analogies of Choreutics and Music: Rather than forcing choreutics to fit with music, the intricacy of choreutic harmony needs to be deciphered in its own terms and then consider any analogies with music. Speculations on features of choreutic harmony and possible musical analogies are given here:

Scales: Probably the closest analogy, scales in choreutics and music both systematically guide the performer through a range of sequences through the medium in a systematic ordered way. They are valuable for training and warm-ups, but not typically used for composition because they are too regular and symmetrical. Axes of Scales: Choreutic scales are built around "axes" which have no clear counterpart in music but might be analogous to the "tonic" of a musical scale. The tonic is different since it always appears in a musical scale whereas the axis usually does not appear in a choreutic scale but is in the background like a shadow. Sometimes the 1st point or line in a choreutic scale is taken as analogous to the tonic, but these are not similar since, except for tradition, there are not any reasons for particular positions or motions to be the definite beginning or conclusion of a choreutic scale. Unlike musical scales, choreutic scales can begin and end anywhere. The closest analogy for the root-tone or "tonic" of a choreutic scale is probably its axis.

Chords: Another close analogy, chords in choreutics and music include at least 3 simultaneous tones or directions with a kind of equidistant balance amongst them. Music is 1-dimensional so tones are spaced along the progression of increasing/decreasing tonal frequency, while choreutics is 3-dimensional so combined directions attempt equal components of vertical, sagittal and lateral in order to achieve body equilibrium.

Central, Peripheral: Transverse. Any line can be transposed to occur either central, peripheral, or transverse, for example dimensional lines can be central in an octahedral net, or can be either transverse or peripheral in an icosahedral net. There is no clear analogy for "center" in music (the tonic?) but a very general analogy might include "transposing" where tones are shifted to a new place while keeping the relationship amongst themselves. Effort/Space Affinities: The use of affinities and counteraffinities plays a role in choreutic harmony. Perhaps the analogy in music would be using dynamics such as tempo (adagio, allegro), loudness (piano, forte), quality (staccato, legato).

**CLM:** In responding to Gordon Curl's invitation to contribute to the "critical debate" on Laban's harmonic theories, I hope to shift this discussion in several ways. First, I propose to alter the attitude with which Laban's notion of harmony has been

approached. Secondly, I reframe what is to be considered in the name of harmony. Thirdly, I present arguments in favor of continued contemporary attention to Laban's use of harmony as an analogic metaphor for deepening our understanding of the psychophysical phenomenon of human movement. I conclude with an appeal for action.

# Shifting the Approach.

I agree with the editor's motivation for launching this debate; discussions in the long-term interests of development of Laban's work are indeed welcome and there is no reason to shy away from an exchange of views that may prove controversial. Nevertheless, I regret seeing the term "critical" inevitably connected to such examinations and debates. "Critical" in the first instance means "tending to find fault." I feel in particular that Laban's notion of harmony deserves to be examined, not only to reveal its faults and shortcomings, but also to reflect on what it might contribute to our theoretical understanding of movement. Consequently, I hope to see Laban's ideas approached with an attitude of curiosity and an open state of mind, one in which notions are neither accepted unthinkingly nor rejected out of hand.

### Opening up the Discussion.

In the interest of opening minds and arousing curiosity, I propose to shift this discussion from a consideration of "choreutic" harmony to the broader concept of "movement harmony." My reason for advocating this shift is as follows. Laban conceived of human movement as a psychophysical phenomenon. His taxonomy identifies two distinctive domains: the outer domain of space, that is, the choreutic domain, and the inner domain of effort, that is, the eukinetic domain. While each domain has its own set of descriptive categories, Laban insisted that this is an artificial division, for "a definite movement with a definite traceform is always connected with inner happenings such as feelings, reflections, determinations of the will, and other emotional impulses." 1 In other words, the choreutic and eukinetic domains interpenetrate and are unified whenever we move, and this unification of space and energy, body and mind, is the essence of the movement experience.

Irmgard Bartenieff puts it this way: "All of Rudolf Laban's life — whether as a dancer/choreographer, teacher/theoretician, or philosopher/humanist — was an intensive, constant involvement with all facets of movement. It was an unending process of defining inner and outer manifestations of movement phenomena in increasingly subtle shades and complex interrelationships." <sup>2</sup> As Bartenieff notes, the development of a system of analytic description/notation was only part of Laban's research enterprise — he was also searching for key linkages between classes of elements. Because harmony brings things that are different into relationship, it became Laban's guiding metaphor, the "grounded key" for theorizing movement as a unified field of human experience.<sup>3</sup>

# Why the Theory of Movement Harmony Matters.

Laban's notion of movement harmony matters because it is his attempt to get at what is most essential about human movement − its flowing indivisibility. In recognizing this indivisibility as the essence of movement, Laban was obviously taking a page from the observations of the French philosopher, Henri Bergson. Bergson calls this kinetic essence, "flux, the continuity of change" and writes that "it is change itself that is real." We experience this flowing continuity whenever we move. But when we think about movement, we tend to replace the dynamic with the static. According to Bergson, our minds work much like a motion picture camera, taking what is an indivisible whole and breaking it into a series of snapshots.

Bergson provides two illustrations of how the static is substituted for the dynamic.

First, he proposes to move his hand from point A to point B, noting, "my consciousness gives me the inward feeling of a single fact, for in A was rest, in B there is again rest, and between A and B is placed an indivisible or at least an undivided act, the passage from rest to rest, which is movement itself."

On the other hand, as the movement traverses space, it inscribes a line AB "and this line, like all space, may be indefinitely divided," Bergson admits.<sup>6</sup> However, if the movement along this line is then represented as successive positions, a series of imaginary halts are substituted for a flowing and indivisible whole.

Similarly, when the mind is focused on temporal change, "the understanding breaks it up into successive and distinct states, supposed to be invariable."

This view "neglects the fact that these states are themselves changing and that each is related to its predecessor and its successor not as externally related things, but as interpenetrating linked experiences."

By now it should be apparent that Laban took advantage of Bergson's ideas to develop his taxonomy of movement and notation systems. These analytical schemes break up the mobile flux, representing it as points along lines in space and discrete dynamic states arranged in a sequence. As Dr. Longstaff pointed out in his comments in the summer issue of this magazine, Laban was never really happy with these modes of representation. He recognized that the "snapshot-like perception of the mind" is only able to receive "a single phase of the uninterrupted flux." But Laban went on to emphasize that "the sum of such snapshots is, however, not yet the flux itself." Laban's view reiterates Bergson's realization that if we had to do with the snapshots of movement alone, "however much one might look at them we should never see them animated: with immobility set beside immobility, even endlessly, we could never make movement."

As I see it, Laban recognized the limits of movement analysis. He was looking for a point of entry, a way to conceive movement that would not destroy its synthetic character. Harmony is the analogic metaphor he employed to try to explain the essence of movement. This led him to search for structural congruities between music and movement.

Based on my close study of writings and drawings from the final two decades of Laban's career, this search proved to be fruitful. As I explain in my forthcoming book by Mellen Press, Laban extended the analogic metaphor of harmony beyond the known musical correlations of tone and scale, incorporating additional notions of interval, transposition, phrasing, and modulation. He applied consistent procedures to develop models of harmonic eukinetic patterns analogous to his choreutic prototypes. This controlled modelling enabled Laban to extend his theory of the mutual influence of inner motivation and outer action, giving rise to a mature theory of harmonic affinities between form and energy, one that is both elegant and provocative.

### A Call for Action.

My forthcoming book presents Laban's notions of movement harmony as a grounded theory. Grounded theory, which comes out of the social sciences, is based upon a naturalistic mode of inquiry in which observations of behavior are taken in the field, analyzed, and preliminary explanations developed. Then the researcher goes back to field and collects more observations. These in turn are analyzed and the explanatory scheme is adjusted. Explanations remain open-ended until no new data appears that cannot be explained satisfactorily. Even then, a grounded theory is regarded as generating hypotheses, rather than proven facts.

In published and unpublished writings, Laban claims that his theories are based on observations taken in many situations and locations over the course of many years. Yet he never documents this empirical evidence, nor does he present it systematically in support of his theoretical formulations. Nevertheless, I believe that Laban employed a naturalistic mode of inquiry, albeit informally. That is, he observed in the field, analyzed the data, and developed some kind of explanatory scheme. Then he went back to field, took more observations, and adjusted his explanations as needed. Laban's periodic revisions of terms and concepts (which have given rise to so many feuds among his students and colleagues) suggest that this is how he developed his ideas.

When viewed in this way, Laban's theory of movement harmony is not the final explanation of the mysterious melding of mind and matter that occurs when we move. Rather, his notions should be regarded as a collection of hypotheses. I hope that my book will arouse curiosity about these hypotheses and provoke further study. Laban's explanatory schemes and analogic models are plausible, but they need to be tested against fresh sets of data. If the schemes provide sufficient explanation of new samples of movement behavior, fine. We have moved towards theoretical validation. If Laban's schemes do not hold up, we are in a position to develop new hypotheses that can in turn be tested. In either case, we are actively contributing to the development of a general theory of human movement, one that could be of value to the many disciplines that are obliged to deal with this elusive phenomena.

The disciplines of dance and movement study have come a long way since 1913, when a little known Hungarian painter named Laban set his heart on "the most despised profession in the world." Nevertheless, there is still much to be done. Movement penetrates every human endeavor; yet this omnipresent element of experience continues to be taken-for-granted. In daily life we move our bodies in fits and starts, sporadically responding to passing needs and whims. If there is any pattern or meaning to this nonverbal stuttering, it eludes us. Even dance, though more redundantly patterned than everyday movement, continues to be regarded as an insubstantial art – one condemned by its transitory nature to remain intrinsically insignificant.

But what if this were not the case? What if human movement were a highly patterned phenomenon, despite its ephemeral appearance? What if dance, like its sister art, music, were to reveal an underlying harmonic structure? What if understanding these harmonies were to unlock the unique power of movement to educate, to integrate, and to heal?

These are the kinds of "what ifs" that drove the theoretical explorations of Rudolf Laban and led him to dream that movement has an order and a meaningful coherence. If his assertion that movement has a harmonic structure analogous to music seems to critics to be merely a poetic fiction or the stuff of dreams, it is worth remembering that "we need a dream world in order to discover the features of the real world we think we inhabit." For as Bronowski points out, "every theory is an imaginative extension of our experience into realms which we have not experienced." 5

Laban dreamed, he imagined, and he provided theoretical tools for dealing with an extremely elusive phenomenon. Are we going to be content with finding fault with what Laban managed to accomplish, or are we curious enough to do what is necessary to grow the theory?

### Notes

- 1. Rudolf Laban, *The Language of Movement.* (Boston: Plays Inc., 1974), p. 100.
- 2. Irmgard Bartenieff, "Space, Effort and the Brain," Main

Currents in Modern Thought 31/1 (September-October 1974) p. 37

- 3. Leonard Schatzman and Anselm L. Strauss, *Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 111.
- 4. Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by Mabelle Andison. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946) p. 16.
- 5. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*. 1896. Translated by Nancy M. Paul and W. Scott Palmer. 1908. (Reprint, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), p. 246.
- 6. Ibid.
- 7. Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by Mabelle Andison. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 16.
- 8. Morton White. *The Age of Analysis* (New York: New American Library, 1955), p. 68.
- 9. Rudolf Laban, *The Language of Movement* (Boston: Plays Inc., 1974), p. 3.
- 10. Ibid.
- 11. Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*.1911. Translated by Arthur Mitchell. (Reprint, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), p. 395.
- 12. Rudolf Laban, *A Life for Dance* (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1975), p 63.
- 13. Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (New York: Verso, 1993), p. 22.
- 14. Jacob Bronowski, *The Visionary Eye* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), p. 29.

GC: Thank you Carol-Lynne; may I make a few comments?

# Critical Communication:

Dr Moore is absolutely right - the term 'critical' in everyday discourse is more often than not associated with 'fault-finding'! However, in our case, (i.e. discussion about 'harmony', 'music' 'choreutics' and the 'art of movement'), the term 'critical' has much more in common with 'criticism in the arts' - which I am sure she will appreciate is a critical-appreciative approach.

I am reminded of R P Blackmore's definition of 'criticism' when he says:

'Criticism lays out the terms and parallels of appreciation from the outside in order to commit itself of internal intimacy; it names and arranges what it knows and loves and searches endlessly with every fresh impulse or impression for better names and more orderly arrangements ...'.

Language as Gesture (1954) London

Clive Bell would go so far as to say that:

"... it matters hardly at all what words the critic employs provided they have the power of infecting his audience with his genuine enthusiasm for an authentic work of art ..."

Since Cezanne (1928) Chatto & Windus

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With these views in mind, perhaps we can escape the charge of 'fault-finding' – for *description, analysis, interpretation,* as well as *evaluation,* are all necessary aspects of criticism in the arts. But in the philosophical domain, critical thinking does of course tend towards provocation - of bringing all faiths into the open, challenging, provoking, raising doubts and the prevention of thoughtless acquiescence in current assumptions - for it can fashion new assumptions (which are) vital to progress. Such a process must necessarily apply to the assumptions underlying Laban's theory and practice – assumptions which Dr Moore examines in exemplary fashion.

# The shift from choreutics and dance to 'social science':

Could it be that in Dr Moore's shift from choreutics and dance harmony to 'movement harmony', we have moved from the 'art of movement' to the 'science of movement' – from 'aesthetic discourse' to her 'grounded theory which comes out of social science'? No-one would dispute that the methodology of these two approaches differs radically and that the 'testing' of the latter requires all the sophistication of scientific method with its empirical evidence - if it is to produce sound results; not so with the former which is prone to the extensive use of metaphor.

### The facilitating but hazardous nature of 'metaphor':

If there is one linguistic device, however, which bridges the gap between art and science, it would seem to be 'metaphor' - for not only is it rampant and indispensable in aesthetic discourse, it also plays a major role in science. Metaphors in science, mathematics and philosophy are entertained systematically for their theoretical and practical value - whether in the form of artificial constructs, counterfeit ideas, strategems, models or hypotheses. As Dr Moore indicates significantly: 'Laban's theory of movement harmony ... should be regarded as a collection of hypotheses (which) ... need to be tested against fresh sets of data'. The danger is, of course, that the hypothetical status of metaphor may be overlooked and the unwary researcher (not Dr Moore) attempts to pursue it as literal truth. The concept of 'harmony' is undoubtedly a case in point: its metaphorical status in movement research must ever remind us that its analogies with musical harmonies are but strategies for a deeper understanding of movement - rather than firm evidence or 'data' which provide scientific proof for the alleged categorical 'congruency' of harmony and music.

We are also indebted to Dr Valerie Preston-Dunlop for her views on Laban's concept of 'harmony' – expressed in her answer to **Q3c** in *Questions for the Experts* in this issue. The questions raised were:

a) 'Can Laban's concept of 'harmony' be given a precise meaning?' and b) Can its alleged 'congruency with musical harmony be convincingly substantiated?'

Dr Preston-Dunlop, in answer to the first question - far from providing a *precise* meaning to Laban's concept of 'harmony' – provides a cluster of possible meanings, variously: social, psychological, physiological, kinesiological, choreutical, eukinetical as well as cosmic and phenomenological. Such diversity militates against any 'precise' definition of harmony (even if such diversity were to share a notional quality of 'balance of opposites'). We are tempted rather to employ Wittgenstein's term 'family resemblance' to the different kinds of 'harmony', rather than search for a neat set of 'necessary and sufficient conditions' for its use.

On the question of whether an alleged 'congruency' with musical harmony can be substantiated, Dr Preton-Dunlop cites Laban's 'mixed 7-rings and their correlation with the major scale of music' as evidence of such congruency. However, as Dr Betty Redfern makes clear in our last issue, such a correlation is inadmissible, for whereas Laban's 'scales' are 'natural scales', scales in our Western Classical tradition of music are not 'natural scales' but are based on 'a quite arbitrary set of tonal relationships'.

The concept of 'harmony' will continue to engage those of us who take an interest in Laban's multi-dimensional pre-occupation with harmony in its many guises.

# News from your Council Correspondent

Since my last communication your Laban Guild Council has been joined by two inspiring new members, Darren Royston and Darrell Aldridge, who are bringing renewed energy to Guild Council work. Indeed Council agreed that the donation to the Guild made by Athalie Knowles should be awarded as a special bursary to Darrell Aldrige for his outstanding commitment to Laban's work and in anticipation of the significant contribution he is able to make to the work of the Guild. Council has asked Darrell to work with Bobbie Millar to re establish 'Laban in Places' and with the training committee in relation to their revised course. In addition he will be sending out questionnaires to ascertain membership needs and he will be taking over the Laban Guild website. Council is working with Darren on preparations for the 2009 AGM. It is anticipated that it will be held at RADA on Saturday 21st March 2009.

# Raising the Profile

Our new look e-flash has been developed to capitalise on its use as a marketing tool. The new design has engendered a very positive response and is currently received by 210 people. Website development is imminent and will include news, information and Laban based opportunities which are taking place nationally and internationally.

# 2008 Anniversary Celebrations 'Rudolf Laban: Then & Now'

The Guild has contributed financial assistance to the exhibition which was held in June at the Zion Arts Centre, Manchester and featured work from four Guild members, showing the range of applications Laban's framework continues to offer in the present day. There will be a chance to see this again as the materials are going to be re-exhibited at the 'International Conference' held in October at Laban, Creekside.

Council supported Phoenix dancers to attend the Dartington event and they took part in a very well received Lecture Demonstration entitled 'Living Architecture'. We presented bursaries which enabled Guild members to attend 'Laban: Then and Now' held in Dartington in July and the 30th Laban International Courses (LINC) Summer School held in Eastbourne in August. Our President and Chairwoman will be presenting findings from their research projects at The International Conference at LABAN in

October

### 'Movement and Dance' Magazine

We would like to thank Gordon Curl for his continuing editorship of our magazine. Council are actively seeking further support for this area of Guild work and we have had some success, nonetheless further help would always be welcome.

### Training

Our training sub-committee has work diligently to revise the syllabus, programmes of study and guidelines for our training courses. Our continued commitment to those members who wish to continue their studies has led to the development of a Continuing Professional Development module in Choreography. This three weekend course is taking place in Suffolk and began in September. The sub-committee is developing a close working relationship with the Foundation for Community Dance through collaboration on policies and procedures and attendance at meetings.

### Day of Dance & AGM

This year's event 'Laban: The Way Forward' was held at The University of Bedfordshire and featured a lecture demonstration led by Anna Carlisle with assistance from Walli Meier and the Phoenix Dancers. Your feedback from this event was drawn together into an evaluation report which was published in the autumn issue of this magazine and will inform next year's event. Partnership with LinC

Council have met with Sam and Susi Thornton to discuss the future of LInC. It was a useful meeting. As regards this summer, Darrell is working with Sam & Susi to promote the LInC event to take place in Lake Como. We understand that he has generated a lot of interest in the Summer School already. For those Guild members unable to attend this event Council are discussing with Sam and Susi the possibility of a Movement Choir in this country.



# MEMBERSHIP OF THE LABAN GUILD

is open to anyone interested in the work of Rudolf Laban. SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE FOR RENEWAL ON 1 JANUARY 2009

New members receive an information pack and everyone receives four copies of Movement and Dance a year, can register for our monthly e-flash service (contact Jo at knapek25@yahoo.co.uk) and be eligible for discounts on Guild courses and certain books.

# Rates:

Individual full membership	£25.00	Eurozone	€35.00
Groups/colleges/universities	£30.00	Eurozone	€45.00
Concessions: student, retired, unwaged	£15.00	Eurozone	€20.00

# Payment details

- Cheques in £ sterling or euros only made payable to the Laban Guild
- For bankers orders including an option for staged payments, or direct payments from abroad, please write for a form.

Membership Secretary: Janice Anderson, 7 Surridge, High Legh, Nr. Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6PU email: janice\_anderson@btinternet.com

# THE LABAN GUILD DANCE LEADERS COURSE

The next part time Laban Guild Dance Leaders Courses for Professional or Personal Development are planned for North Suffolk, commencing in Spring 2009, and Sussex, commencing Autumn 2009.

The 12 week ends of tuition by highly experienced tutors will lead to a National Governing Body Award, assuring those who successfully complete the course of eligibility for insurance.

The course is mainly practical, and the movement skills learned through the study of Laban Analysis and its application to preparing and presenting sessions and dance making can be applied in a wide range of settings, such as dance in education, in drama training and the theatre, community dance and dance and movement in health or social care settings.

For further details, please apply to: Ann Ward, Courses Officer for the Laban Guild Email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

# Report from the Courses Officer

Firstly, we would like to welcome Mel Horwood back to the Training Committee. With her background in both Community Dance and Education, her recent MA in Choreography and her experience of the Laban Guild courses, she will again become an invaluable member of the team.

Next we would like to welcome Darrell Aldridge, who is bringing all his experience in community dance and his enthusiasm for Laban's work to help us.

Further meetings over the summer have been very profitable:

- > The revision of the Dance Leaders Course, with accompanying documentation, is nearing completion.
- Plans for a course in North Suffolk, to start in May 2009, are taking shape and we have had a productive meeting with DanceEast.
- Negotiations for a course in Sussex, to start in September 2009 are proceeding to plan.
- Our new three week end module in choreography is being piloted in Suffolk.

Unfortunately we have not been able to start another course in Belfast, in spite of initial interest and commitment from a number of potential course members. We hope that we shall be able to accommodate those who were really keen to do the course at a later date, perhaps in the South rather than the North of Ireland.

Congratulations to Emma Pounch and Clair Louse Walsh from the Kildare course, and Sonya Jackson from the Welsh course, who have completed the requirements of our Dance Leaders Course by attending summer schools this year.

# WHAT IS COMMUNITY DANCE?

Core values: inclusion, access, quality, equality.

Very few practitioners run private classes, certainly not as their main source of income. They may

- deliver their work in their own workplace eg. school, care home, hospital
- > be employed to provide dance experiences for specific

- communities eg. after-school clubs, the elderly, the physically or mentally disabled, the socially disadvantaged, the socially excluded, people in prison or within the justice system
- be employed by Councils as Dance Development Officers
- be employed by Arts organisations to work on community dance projects.

Mel has suggested that although "A community dance leader needs to be able to run workshops with clear frameworks.", "Learning outcomes are not paramount in community dance as it is the more ongoing communication of the body and its expressive range that is being explored".

The Laban Guild is a development partner of the *Foundation for Community Dance*, working to establish professional standards and support professional development for practitioners. FCD has been successful in securing a significant grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to support this. We look forward to further collaboration and developments. For further information visit www.communitydance.org.uk.

If you have experience that could help others starting out in the field or that demonstrates how far you have gone in developing your work, do let us know. We shall shortly be sending out a simple email request for information to all those members who have completed our Dance Leaders Course. As we seek further accreditation, we would really appreciate it if you could take a few moments to return this.

With thanks to members of the Training Committee – Janet Lunn (chair), Sheila McGivering, Mel Horwood, Darrell Aldridge,

Ann Ward

Courses Officer

Email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

# Diary of Events

9 - 15 May 2009: Adult Learners' Week.

For information on how to take part and benefit both yourself and your classes, email alw@niace.org.uk

Laban Theatre Creekside – Winter 2008

Friday 14 November 1400hrs + 1930hrs Saturday 15 November 1930hrs Random Dance Company Entity Tickets £15 / £10 (concessions)

Two new works from the Royal Ballet's first Resident Choreographer in 16 years Wayne McGregor.

Fresh from his success at La Scala Milan, Paris Opera Ballet and Glastonbury and world-renowned for his fierce, frantic and yet tenderly unpredictable choreography, WAYNE McGREGOR RANDOM DANCE return to Laban with ENTITY.

Hyper-limber dancers move to the propulsive beats of a specially-commissioned electronic score by Coldplay and Massive Attack collaborator Jon Hopkins, alongside music for

strings from award-winning composer Joby Talbot (The Divine

# Friday 19 + Saturday 20 November

1930hrs

Comedy. Chroma).

Henri Oguike Dance Company Tickets £12 / £8 (concessions)

# Thursday 4 + Friday 5 December

1930hrs

BA3 Student Performances

Tickets £12 / £8 (concessions)

LABAN THEATRE CREEKSIDE LONDON SE8 3DZ BOX OFFICE 020 8469 9500

### Laban Guild Patrons:

Sir Walter Bodmer, William Elmhirst, William Forsythe, Bernard Hepton

President: Anna Carlisle MBE

Vice Presidents: Sheila McGivering, Dr Geraldine Stephenson,

Gordon Curl

# Laban Guild Council:

Maggie Killingbeck: - Chair; Gillian Hibbs: - Secretary; Andy Moir: - Treasurer; Janet Harrison; Jenny Moir; Jenny Haycocks; Joanne Knapek; Bobbie Millar; Darren Royston; Darrell Aldridge; Ann Ward: - Co-opted; Janice Anderson: - Co-opted; Consultants: Alysoun Tomkins - Trinity/LABAN liaison; Walli Meier: - Training; Susi Thornton: - Training.

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LinC's new venue for 2009 Centro D'Ompio, Piedmont, Northern Italy

