

Movement & Dance

Green Clowns (2008)

Directed by Ali Curtis-Jones

*original choreography
by Rudolf Laban.*

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Front Cover :
Green Clowns (2008) directed by Ali Curtis-Jones; original
choreography Rudolf Laban
Photos: Kyle Stephenson

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Front covers from the last five years' issues

Editorial

We wish our readers a Very Happy New Year - and with it a request for even more lively responses for news, feature articles and photographs in our 2009 Movement and Dance Magazine!

It may not be widely known that many Guild members contributed presentations to the Laban International Conference at Creekside last October, and we are indebted to them for contributing their revised papers for publication in this issue. They include stimulating pieces by Dr Dick McCaw on the 'Genius of Geraldine Stephenson', 'Laban as pathfinder through ancient cultures' by Dr Barbara Stuibler, a fascinating career account by Dr Jenny Elliott on 'Laban-based dance community in healthcare environments'. We keenly await the published Proceedings of that celebratory event. Also included is a vivid account of the recreation process of Laban's The Green Clowns - directed by Alison Curtis-Jones at LABAN and Dartington last year.

Sally Archbutt, with her many original diagrams, investigates with further acumen the 'Laban Scales and Rings'.

The names of the Guild's Patrons appear on our letter-heads and in our Magazines, but the ordinary member may well not know much about these distinguished Patrons - for they all have fascinating connections with Laban. We are therefore launching a series of 'Patrons' Questiontimes' in which we hope to become acquainted with some of their thoughts, associations, interests - and even aversions. We begin with an interview by Nigel Bance with William Elmhirst, whom many of us associate with Dartington days. It is a startling story of the dark deeds of William's half-brother Michael Straight - a story which if not told may well cast an undeserved shadow on the massive philanthropic work of William's parents Leonard and Dorothy at Dartington.

From editorial and financial points of view it would be true to say that our Magazine is in crisis and we have therefore sought the views of members in this issue on the role of the Magazine in relation to the Guild's Constitutional Objects. We welcome further views and suggestions in subsequent issues.

Members will wish to congratulate our Hon. Member Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest on her award with Ivor Forbes Guest on receiving lifetime achievement awards from the American Society for Aesthetics. We also send warmest wishes to Ann on her 90th birthday. Also, to be congratulated, is Veronica Jobbins who retires after 20 years as founder-member and Chair of the National Association of Teachers of Dance NDTA - with whom the Guild has many common members, connections and interests.

Gordon Curl

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The item in the magazine advertising Laban-based-classes has been printed year after year with the same few names, myself included. Where, I wonder, are all the prospective teachers who have progressed through the Guild's excellent training programmes?

Could it be that the New Year will stimulate many more prospective teachers to mount courses throughout the country?

Yours hopefully,

Maddy Tongue

The Actor - A Reluctant Mover: The Genius of Geraldine Stephenson

(Dr Dick McCaw co-founded the Actor's Touring Company (1978 - to date) and the Medieval Players (1981-1992) and was Artistic Director of the International Workshop Festival from 1993-2001. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Drama at Royal Holloway University of London and a qualified Feldenkrais Practitioner and is working on the Routledge Companion to Laban. The paper which follows is an expanded version of the paper given by Dr McCaw (who is a member of the Guild) at the Laban International Conference last October). Ed.

I first met Geraldine in August 1999 when I was Director of the *International Workshop Festival* on the search for inspiring teachers. After much persuasion she agreed to lead a workshop, but insisted that she have an assistant. There being no-one else in the room I found myself volunteering. So, in March 2001 I began my six years of training with her, every week for two to three hours. Before we met I had had no movement education whatsoever: it's not that I knew nothing of the world of movement, I didn't even know that I didn't know. This meant, in turn, that I didn't really know how to learn how to move. Geraldine instantly recognised my problem. In 1948 she had to replace Laban as movement teacher at the *Northern Theatre School* in Bradford, and her first job was to reassure unconfident actors that they could actually move - in their own way. She did this with countless actors on both stage, on television and on film, most famously on Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (1975) where she got Leonard Rossiter - not the most confident dancer - to dance. At Bradford, Geraldine taught many actors including Bernard Hepton and Edward Petherbridge, as well as the educationalist Dorothy Heathcote. Her career as a formal teacher was quite brief, starting in 1948 and lasting through until the early 1960s by which time her professional career as a solo dancer, choreographer and stage director for television and stage, was starting to take off.

In this article I want to share something of what I learned from this most generous and gifted of teachers. The first part deals some of the themes in her lessons; the second is a broader reflection upon pedagogy, starting with Geraldine and widening to include Laban's approach to, and claims for, the teaching and learning of movement.

Educating the Whole Body: from a Rigid to a Responsive, Articulate Whole

Geraldine described her lessons with me as being about 'Bend, Stretch and Twist'. Diana Jordan puts this into an historical context:

Prior to the gradual acceptance of Laban's work at Bedford all work was formal. Gymnastics were based practically entirely on anatomical foundations and consisted mainly of flexions and extensions and movements isolated to certain muscle groups. All movements were in a single plane. An interesting point is that when Mr. Laban and Lisa Ullmann first began their courses, they came in for a great deal of

criticism because they dwelt so much on twisting, wringing movements. This was their sustained effort to introduce some real flexibility into our vocabulary. Up to then we dealt almost entirely in direct movement.

Geraldine would add that Laban's ideas of dance and movement were also anathema to advocates of traditional Ballet - once again because of this emphasis upon twisting.

1. The Geraldine Flop and Body Parts

But it was neither for aesthetic nor pedagogical reasons that Geraldine chose to get me to twist: very simply, I was as flat as a board. Not only that, but I also moved as one, undifferentiated

lump - which explains why by flopping through the body, from top to bottom, and why in early lessons we would explore individual Body Parts (a phrase that Laban would intone in his thick accent, often reducing his students to giggles). Apart from being a simple exercise for developing bodily awareness it is also an invitation to explore how you move in space.

2. Chladek

Another staple exercise which I did for each of our 211 lessons together, was a sequence devised by Rosalia Chladek (1905 - 1995) who was a Dalcroze-trained educator, and in 1949 Geraldine went to a workshop with her, Wigman, Harald Kreuzberg, Sigurd Leeder and Kurt Jooss. These exercises in elevation (performed lying, sitting and at the barre) were swiftly adopted by Laban for the training sessions at the Studio. I needed these to strengthen and educate my legs. We did these exercises each lesson, and they helped me understand the function of my legs.

3. Successive Movement

Obviously, someone who is as stiff as a board, has no flow in their movement, no connection between the central trunk and the peripheral limbs. Geraldine proposed the 'Sideways Successive' which involves creating a flowing movement that initiates in the upper spine and then moves through the shoulder to the 'elbow, wrist, hand'. This is what François Delsarte (1811 - 1871) called a 'successive' movement, as it travels through joints successively from the centre to the periphery. Ted Shawn describes it in his book *Every Little Movement*:

Successions are defined as any movement passing through the entire body, or any part of the body, which move each muscle, bone and joint as it comes to it - that is the fluid, wavelike movement. This is the greatest order of movement for the expression of emotion - and the introduction into dance of this discovery by Delsarte was one of the major forces towards forming the type of dance called American Modern (and German Modern).

I mentioned earlier that Geraldine found that I held myself and moved as one block. While the 'body parts' exercise allowed me to move (and therefore to experience) different parts of myself independently, successive



The Hungry Plague: The Nurse



The Hungry Plague: The Old Woman

is vertical, like a dolphin's.⁵

What I find quite amazing about these four exercises is that they, or variations upon them, continued throughout our classes for the following six years. 'Body Parts' developed into more sustained improvisations in which, either seated or standing, I would explore the kinesphere with my wrist, or elbow, or knee. The exploration of successive movement was taken into my legs with developés. Exercises like Chladek movements and the Wave became layered with significance as I learned to develop an ever greater kinaesthetic understanding. Each time we did them Geraldine would find some new detail, some new quality, some new image to consider – thus they were always kept alive through this constant process of re-evaluation. I can imagine how many teachers might just use them for physical training, rather than for kinaesthetic education. I can honestly say that I was never bored for one minute in our hundreds of hours in the Studio together. To re-cast John. F. Kennedy's famous saying: Ask not what the exercise can do for you, but what you can do with the exercise. It is a heuristic device – means by which you can find out about yourself, by which you can fine-tune yourself - not some exercise to repeated mindlessly.

This really answers the question: What have these exercises to do with actor training? An actor has to be able to transform his or her body into that of a character. The training above is what the French and the Russians after them would call 'Plasticity': but this isn't simply flexibility in the joints and tendons; it is the connection between mind, brain and body. The actor is both sculptor and sculpture, or as Decroux would have it, both the subject and the object of art. An actor needs to be sensitive to every movement that they make. A lack of such sensitivity, such sensori-motor attunement, results in meaningless movement. Before joining the first intake in 1946 at the *Art of Movement Studio* in Manchester Geraldine had studied Physiology and Anatomy at *Bedford College of Physical Education*, and she was very alert to the intricate operation of the sensori-motor nervous system. I once remember doing a study and Geraldine simply said, Dick, your hands are meaningless. Even when doing a simple swing of the arms, she would ask me to 'Feel the air when you move your hands through it.' She would ask me to compare the sensation of raising my arms with the coarse skin and then the soft skin leading.

The Efforts

The other aspect of Geraldine's training was her teaching of the Efforts. In an article she describes how important these were to her:

I was taught by Laban and Lisa Ullmann, in Manchester, when amongst the other aspects of movement we all 'did the efforts' ... writing; slash; dab; flick etc ..press-glide-float ... float-glide-press ... and countless combinations of all these involving aspects of time/space/weight/flow. THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED ME. They alert my 'antennae'. They feed my creativity. THEY ARE THE TOOLS OF MY CRAFT.⁶

Note the accent she places on sensitivity and creativity: the Efforts are a means by which she can search things out. This sentiment is echoed by Dorothy Heathcote who ended an interview about learning from Laban in Bradford with these words:

What Laban gave me was entertainment for a lifetime: the ability to just watch people. I know that there are very few pure this or that. [...] Efforts are so useful in character work. So I have been entertained all my life by just watching people.

When Geraldine describes working with actors on a dance, she immediately points out that 'This is not a dance for the sake of a dance, but a dance about people interacting in a story.' Thus she enquires whether the man dances 'modestly, not exaggerating the gestures', or 'with elegance', or 'with clumsiness?' She describes how they 'talk about and experiment with how to step

confidently, arrogantly, flirtily' and 'discuss body carriage, angle of the head, eye contact ... is it eyeball to eyeball or do the eyes wander?' She recounts how 'Laban used to ask the acting students "how would your character never move?" Actors enjoy that!'

Apart from awakening me to movement and giving me a confidence, a curiosity and a delight in how I move, the other thing that Geraldine did for me was to give me a means of understanding the different possibilities of movement. The Efforts are a fantastic means by which an actor and a director can share the same vocabulary when describing the movement of a character – you can make extremely subtle changes by changing one of the movement elements: making a gesture more or less direct, lighter or stronger, more sudden or more sustained, more or less flowing. They work both as a means of analysis (when looking at the movement from the outside) and as a means of gauging the nature of ones movement (kinaesthetic feedback from performing the movement).

The celebrated Director Mike Alfreds explains how we came about the Efforts:

Very simply, I got my Laban via Phillip Hedley when we both taught at L.A.M.D.A in the 1960s. He probably got it from Margaret Barry and Joan Littlewood at East 15 where he taught. [...] I use the Efforts and have used them consistently for what must be about 30 thirty years, or more. I use them in practically every show, and I teach my idea of them. I try to be true to what I think they are. I just find them endlessly revealing and useful as a tool, as a mean for the actor to connect themselves up holistically. The basic eight efforts [...] seem to me to encompass the entire human experience. Anything you do or think can fit into one of those very neatly. Laban defined movement as the way you relate to the world. I thought that was lovely – think of the way that you move as your way of relating to life and to the world.⁸

Of course, the Efforts can be taught in a formulaic or schematic way. One hears of Laban teachers writing about characters being dabbers or floaters, limiting their movement expression to an impossibly small range. But this isn't how I found out about them: they were a means of opening up an understanding of how characters might move, a means of finding out about



The Angel of Prayer



Revolution

movement, a heuristic rather than prescriptive device.

Geraldine's Teacher, Rudolf Laban

Geraldine learned how to teach a middle-aged man with no movement experience how to move; how to learn how to move; and how to take joy from moving. She adapted her teaching to my needs. Diana Jordan noted how Laban adapting his ideas to the potentials and needs of each individual student: 'He always appreciated our different characteristics and saw that without the strengthening of our individual qualities the work of movement education would founder and dry up.' She then quotes a letter he wrote to her:

I think it is the manipulation of the media (and not the media themselves) which has a beneficial effect. I think the educative effect is the improvement of the capacity for experiencing or learning.⁹

By media I think he means the exercises or forms by means of which a student learns. He then goes on to distinguish learning from 'parrot like-repetition of steps of conventional dances, or of imitation of shown dance steps, or of any other copying activity orientated towards memorising'. When he writes that learning is about the 'manipulation of the media in the creation of works of art', he comes very close to the thinking of another movement educationalist, Moshe Feldenkrais, who also demanded that students do not simply memorise forms, but learn how to do things in different ways:

...the truly important learning is to be able to do the thing that you already know in another way. The more ways you have to do the things you know, the freer is your choice. And the freer your choice, the more you're a human being.¹⁰

Both men also agreed that 'physical education', was not something inferior to academic learning, and was an integral part of the development of the individual. Jordan makes this point clearly with reference to Laban:

His work enabled him to understand people and I know of no other person who has been able to demonstrate that the movement of the human body is so much a part of the total personality that it stands equally in need of experience and education as the mind and the spirit, in fact that some part of education must be dedicated to the exercising of the united personality fully and creatively.¹¹

This is elegantly expressed, and well before it became fashionable to talk about the body-mind relationship. Teacher pupil relationships are as strong and as life-changing as other close relationships, and no two are ever the same. It is therefore inevitable that 'those who knew Rudolf Laban personally' will have quite varying accounts of him – his effect changes according to how his followers adopt and adapt his ideas. Geraldine's Laban was above all a teacher – generous, sometimes imperious, and very often humorous. She continued his work in the theatre, in education – she was a much-loved teacher at The Studio - and in community dance (Space Harmony and Dance Notation were not her thing). Geraldine shared with Laban the ability to understand why a student might be experiencing some difficulty in learning movement: her imagination, perseverance and generosity meant that his ideas, after a few years of hard practice, started to translate into ways of moving, something that I could experience physically, rather than understand academically. Through Geraldine and Laban I have learned a new way of learning. I have learned a love of moving which has enriched my life immeasurably.

- 1 Goodrich in Thornton, 1971:131
- 2 Shawn, :34 - 5
- 3 Stanislavsky (1979) p.68
- 4 Barba (1993) p.285

Historical Recreation and Current Practice ... what is the relevance of Laban's work for today's dance artist?

(The Laban International Conference, which took place at LABAN, Creekside, London, in October 2008, included a recreation of Laban's work *Die Grünen Clowns* (1928), entitled *Green Clowns* (2008), and was made up of LABAN Undergraduate students and ex-members of Transitions Dance Company.

Alison Curtis Jones MA BA(Hons) PGCE, directed this recreation of *Green Clowns* with BA2 Undergraduate performers from LABAN, as part of their Historical Project performance at LABAN's Bonnie Bird Theatre in February 2008 - and also the recreations of *Green Clowns* by Transitions Dance Company in Manchester and Dartington in July 2008, to celebrate the 50 year anniversary of Laban's death. Ali is Lecturer at LABAN, London, teaching on the MA Dance Theatre, Professional Diploma and Undergraduate Programmes. She specialises in Choreological Studies, Choreographic Practice and Dance in Education. She graduated from LABAN with a BA(Hons) in Dance Theatre and later gained her MA in European Dance Theatre Practice. She has a PGCE in Dance and is an experienced practitioner in both teaching and performance contexts. Ali has taught internationally and also has extensive experience of teaching INSET and workshops for teachers and was Artistic Director of 'Conditioned Reflex' Dance Company' (2000-2003). Her choreography has been shown in Britain, France and Germany. She is a former AQA AS/A'Level Dance Examiner and External Examiner for The Royal Academy of Dance, London. She has recently worked closely with Dr. Valerie Preston-Dunlop to develop 'archeo-choreology'; a method by which work is discovered and recreated using Laban's principles of practice and choreological methodologies).

Following Janet Lunn's review of LABAN's BA2 Historical project (*Movement & Dance* Volume 27, No 2, Summer 2008) and Emily Claid's review of the performance of *Green Clowns* by Transitions Dance Company (*Dartington Celebrations 2008: Then and Now, Movement & Dance* Volume 27, No 3), I felt compelled to highlight the enormous impact of the recreation process and performance of this work, on the performers ... our

- 5 Lecoq, 2000:73
- 6 Stephenson, 1998
- 7 Heathcote, 2004
- 8 Alfreds, 2007
- 9 Jordan, 1969: 9 – 10
- 10 Feldenkrais, 1984:20
- 11 Jordan, 1969: 9 – 10

Dick McCaw

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vibrant, current dance artists in training.

Rudolf Laban's original work, *Die Grünen Clowns* (1928) was a response to The First World War and contained images of oppression, dehumanisation, hope and humour. Laban's radical and challenging approach to movement and dance theatre involved improvisation with an emphasis on corporeality of the dancers and their experience in the creative process.

Die Grünen Clowns (1928), is a suite of several sections, each dealing with a specific theme. *Maschine, Krieg (War)*, *Leichenzug (Dying Procession)*, *Romanz (Romantic Duet)* and *Club der Sonderlingen (Club of the Eccentric People)*. In the 1920s and 30s, sections of the suite *Die Grünen Clowns* (1928), appeared separately and with different numbers of performers and with more or less sections according to who was available and what the occasion was. It is a process piece not a product piece, which means that the processes by which it is made, including improvisation, are a more reliable statement of its identity than the form. It is important to state that *Green Clowns* (2008), is a re creation and not a reconstruction. The latter suggests a fixed form which can be repeated exactly, whereby the former is a reflection of Laban's approach to dance theatre, where the work is process-led and is developed using improvisation strategies and contributions by the performers which encourages a new surface form with each mounting.

The recreations drew on source material and processes originally researched by Dr. Valerie Preston-Dunlop. Discussions, close collaboration with and in-depth practical experience of working with Valerie formed the basis of the 2008 recreation of Laban's *Die Grünen Clowns* (1928). (1)

The performances of *Green Clowns* (2008) were met with enthusiastic responses with audience members referring to the raw physicality, spirit and energy with which the dancers engaged with the material. The performers involved in the first

recreation, however, were not so optimistic. Who was Laban the artist? What was his choreographic output? How could they benefit from experiencing this work? As their teacher and director of *Green Clowns*, there surfaced a new challenge - clearly, the most demanding issue at the start of this project was how to make Laban's historic work current and relevant for these aspiring dance artists.

Graham, Cunningham and Rainer were studied alongside Laban as part of the *BA2 Historical Project, 2008*, (2) Very little documentation regarding Laban's choreographic output exists, compared with our American counterparts identified above. The students were familiar with Laban the analyst and his much published work on Notation, but they were unfamiliar with *Green Clowns*, our European dance history, and Laban the Artist. Graham and Cunningham are icons in the professional world they are entering and both have a legacy in relation to creative work and technical training. Laban's dance theatre work, however, is unavailable because much of it was destroyed in the 1930s and there is no 'codified' technique to draw from. Laban's approach was *avant garde* in the 1920s particularly because he used behavioural movement as a vocabulary instead of 'dancing' (this was a pre-cursor to Jooss' *Green Table, 1932*) and yet the students had little knowledge of this. So why would these students want to study Laban's work, rather than Graham or Cunningham? How could they benefit from this approach? The students were apprehensive, they wanted to work on sustaining their technical levels, to feel challenged in rehearsal and performance. How could I encourage their commitment and enthusiasm for a work they little understood and felt no connection with in relation to their needs as training dance artists?

Issues in Laban's *Die Grünen Clowns* (1928) are still relevant today; domination by mechanisation and the electronic age, war, relationships, the possibility of tenderness, the fragility of relationships, eccentricities of individuals and what it means to belong. Students were surprised by how relevant these issues were, saying 'it's just the same today'.

'Is it possible to express all this through movement, through dance?' (Laban, 1975, p.137)

The performance challenges and skills they would need to perform *Green Clowns* became apparent to them very early in the recreation process. The challenge of using masks meant they had to work in a particular way to allow the body to 'speak' expressively. Their movement intention required greater sophistication than they had anticipated in order to communicate the themes and moods of the piece. *War* required acute physicality and the intensity of the section was developed by building momentum. They established it through increasing speed and force (attack) and alternating tension and release. The movement vocabulary in this section was impactive, bound, strong, sudden and moved from their personal space into the general space. This movement was not imposed on the dancers; they generated the material in response to a given framework which was directed using

choreutic and eukinetik principles. This type of improvisation framework differs from Cunningham's more abstract 'Chance' method because it is a response to feeling. The students had to feel the movement first, before giving it form that speaks to the audience. The students had to work to find the feeling in the movement 'from the inside out' (VPD, 2008). They also dealt with the grammar of proxemics; of nearness and distance and they investigated the kinesphere, or 'aura' and how this was invaded in *War*. We investigated the idea of physical presence and how this could be experienced in the space, of feeling threatened, of entering the performance space, creating spatial tension by responding to other performers and dealing with territory. It also challenged their vocal skills; they make sounds which gradually increase as the section builds by making 'guttural ejaculations from the pit of the stomach, not just noise' (VPD, 2008). They gasp and sigh in 'Dying Procession', and learn to use the breath to support the qualitative changes in the movement. In *Club of the Eccentric People* loud kisses, 'tut tutting', and use of the word 'no' counterpoints the rhythmic pattern of the feet, but the most difficult co-ordinated activity came at the end of the piece, where the performers executed complex rhythmic patterns involving a stepping pattern moving forward in unison in one rhythm, while gesturing using another rhythm and speaking simultaneously in another ... I asked them to speak out about the political climate and issues that felt really important to them. Their voices and gestures became animated and rhythmically complex because

they were so engaged ... this was challenging for even the most experienced of our performers and took hours of rehearsal to achieve the sense of group cohesion while maintaining their individuality.

What kind of technique training could help to support their understanding of the stylistic features of the work?



The Green Clowns

Photo: Kyle Stevenson During Historical Project, students

are taught technique classes in the style of the chosen choreographer to support their performances. In order to facilitate the movement vocabulary for *Green Clowns*, I led the students through a rigorous process involving technique classes informed by Laban philosophies and principles of choreutics and eukinetics. As there is no 'codified' 'Laban technique', I had to research the possibilities of establishing a movement base relevant to the work and to apply my knowledge of technique teaching and technical principles for professional training in order to challenge the students. I made it clear to the students that this process was not about them dancing like 1928 dancers ... they are 2008 dancers and we can't ignore this fact. VPD passed on movements from her own memories of working with Laban and from Sylvia Bodmer who was in Laban's group in 1921.(3) My approach also included distinct choreological perspectives and practical investigation of Laban's approach to movement. I developed a movement base using 'swings' in the vertical, horizontal and sagittal planes, working with and from 'centre', '... concern with the centre of energy resonates with the Rosicrucian practice of locating and sensitising centres both within and outside the body' (Preston Dunlop, V. p.11), gathering and scattering, use

of the figure of 8, the lemniscate, three dimensional cross and icosahedron. The technical base consisted of congruent body co-ordination, intense commitment to the movement, deeply felt performance, a high level of group sensitivity and adaptability. The torso and pelvis were involved in the movement, especially in following and supporting arm and leg movements, labile forms, isolations and gesture. Movement out of its usual context and unusual dynamic/spatial form combinations were deliberately included. During these classes, I established their understanding of what it means to occupy the space, to be present in the space and the notion of three dimensionality of the body in relation to Laban's choreutic theories. Students investigated in detail the idea of engaging with the body in space as well as space in the body, density of space, and the embodiment of *ChU/Mm*, not just as designs and shapes in space, but how it is to feel these choreutic choices. (4) We worked on the resonances of stillness and how they had to work physically and emotionally to keep stillness alive and to allow this to resonate ... essential in *War, War Memorial and Dying Procession*. We investigated Laban's *A Scale*; specific locations in space, and how William Forsythe has developed this approach to encourage acute understanding of spatial articulation. Forsythe's rupturing of Laban's choreutic laws, in 'superzoning' (first mentioned in Laban's *Choreutics*, 1966) crossing over the centre line of the body, and questioning where 'centre' is, or using a multiple of 'centres', has created a new living architecture. Forsythe's experimentation and questioning of Laban's structures highlights the responsibilities of an artist to adhere to or to rupture the traditions he/she inherits. We inherited *Green Clowns* and we had to decide what we were going to adhere to and to rupture - this gave the students a responsibility to contribute to the process and therefore to changing the form.

The students entered into the spirit of the work; its expressivity, freedom of movement, sometimes simply moving for the sheer pleasure of movement and not concerning themselves necessarily, with 'placement'. Musician Robert Coleridge played for my technique classes and commented how wonderful it was to see the dancers 'jumping for joy'. Laban's esoteric and spiritual concerns were referred to throughout as a background to his view of the world, which we needed to understand. The students experienced moving as a group, of experiencing togetherness and the complexity of moving in unison ... 'living in harmony with nature and the cosmos'; we connected with the outside by dancing outside, just as Laban did with his dancers. Writer Mary Ann Hushlak comments; *'What also really impressed me was how the students worked as an ensemble. It wasn't just that they put their hearts and souls into it, but all their energy and worked as a team. I remember being in Berlin after the Wall came down but before unification; we went to Bertolt Brecht's theatre to see the Berliner Ensemble do 'Mother Courage and her Children'. The sense of ensemble acting I saw there was palpable in the students work here. You felt as if they were united'* (February, 2008). Janet Lunn comments: *'there is a tangible connection and sensitivity between each and every dancer on the stage throughout the dance'* (*Movement and Dance Volume 27, No 2 Summer 2008*). During rehearsals I challenged them to keep the group sensitivity but to find their own experience of movement, *'... namely to enhance their own inner light.'* (Laban, 1975, p.137). It is interesting to note, that by shifting their focus, (their 'inner attitude'), they could transform how they engaged with their movement material and how this, along with their energy and enthusiasm was paramount in the success of recreating the work.

Did exploration of Laban principles facilitate their skills in performance, composition and appreciation?

This practical investigation resulted in an interrogation of the students' own choreographic and performance practice and contributed to the development of their analytical skills.

During my teaching of the above, it became clear that through the Laban approach, students were learning a different way to experience movement. The skills differed from other repertory pieces in Historical Project; these students were not just learning steps or positions, they were learning about the intrinsic structures of movement. This allowed students greater artistic freedom in relation to the composition of movement, as they could make informed choices regarding whether to obey the harmonic laws of movement or to rupture them. In *Maschine*, for example, organic movement material was not the focus of this particular section. The section deals with issues of anonymity, images of the production line, the power of the machine and the fear of it overtaking individuality. (5) The students were encouraged to make inorganic movement choices to reflect this, through rupturing the 'choreological order' of a given gestural phrase; (6) and making the movement feel uncomfortable in order to really experience the sense of being controlled and confined by the production line. Their movement ignored the laws of sequentiality and forced them to embody spatial locations not usually considered by them. Some of this movement was shaped using Laban's 3-ring principles and in using an established choreutic method to organise the material, students were further challenged spatially, in a way they had not considered before.

Laban's intention to remove music and a set vocabulary of steps to reveal the medium is well known. Much of *Green Clowns* is performed in silence and is not set to a specific time frame. As the work is largely structured improvisation and the surface form not entirely 'fixed', this encourages acute awareness and sensitivity to others in performance. The performer's responses were immediate in performance time and space and the work as a whole varied with each performance as a result. This takes courage and daring, the feeling of unpredictability keeps the phenomenal liveness and the creative nature of the work ongoing. It becomes a temporal event. *'They got me to pay attention every single minute. I wanted to know what happened next'*. (Mary Ann, February, 2008)

They learnt what 'performative' means in practice, how the movement 'speaks'; how it engages with the audience, not just how it is felt as a proprioceptive experience for the performer. They had *'to feel it and then give it form'* (VPD, 2008) a very different experience to just 'doing' the movement, they had to find a performance truth, an honesty in their engagement with the material. Expressivity was achieved through clarity of their performance intention; that is, understanding their movement choices both spatially and dynamically and developing the ability to make those choices visible to the audience. Their spatial accuracy was enhanced through their choreutic knowledge and rhythmic decisions requiring knowledge of effort qualities were also developed.

The students have been transformed by this process. They claim that as a result of this experience, they have developed as performers and have re-connected with dance as a performative art form. They have remembered why it is they chose to dance in the first place ... to communicate, to express, to engage and for the pleasure of moving. Each in turn identified the skills learned were transferable to all areas of their training; analysis, choreographic practice, technical training and performance. Is Laban's work relevant today? Absolutely – but it is the approach of Laban the artist/researcher, a spirit of enquiry, and an ability to adapt to the changing needs of our aspiring dancers, that is necessary in order to make the work accessible.

Green Clowns performer Megan Brock wrote: *'You really opened my eyes ... and I will never forget that feeling of energy and pushing myself to new areas that are amazing.'* (February, 2008)

Melanie Clarke, choreographer, performer, notator and lecturer

at *LABAN*, Creekside, experienced one of my classes before the performance of last year's *Green Clowns*, she wrote: *'It was great to experience how you have been working and how you got such a great response from your students. Well done for Green Clowns – I think through it everyone's perception of Laban as an Artist and innovator has shifted up, because we were so moved and engaged in this recreation.'* (February, 2008)

BA2 student Jamie Roberts was so inspired by the Laban work, he wrote to Anthony Bowne, Director and Joint Chief Executive of *LABAN*, to tell him of the success of the project and what it meant to him. *'I know now from experiencing this form of technique I have found the joy in dancing again and have learnt that this pioneer's works and theories can be used to enhance our other techniques and ways of thinking about dance'*. (February 2008). Anthony replied: *'I am thrilled that your Historical Project was so personally rewarding. As an audience member I felt that Green Clowns was an extraordinary piece of contemporary theatre and I pay tribute to all of you that contributed to its success.'* (February 2008).

I am about to embark on this year's Historical Project – a new mounting of *Green Clowns* 2009, with a new BA2 cohort. This year, however, students have requested the work and demanded that 'Laban based' technique become part of their training. I no longer have to prove Laban's stature as an artist – they already know.

(My deepest gratitude to Valerie Preston-Dunlop for her knowledge, guidance and insight, without which, this work would not have been possible).

Footnotes:

- (1) Further information regarding the research processes undertaken by Dr. Valerie Preston-Dunlop can be viewed on the DVD entitled *Recreating Laban's Die Grünen Clowns 1928*, directed by Dr. Leslie-Ann Sayers.
- (2) The BA2 Historical Project at *LABAN* is a perfect example of integration of theory and practice. The students experience the creative strategies

of a choreographer through learning repertoire, or developing work in the style of the choreographer. The stylistic features of the choreographer's movement vocabulary is investigated through supporting technique classes and wider contextual information given through supporting lectures. My colleagues historian Dr. Anne Daye and choreologist Rosemary Brandt made contributions.

(3) There is video footage of some of these exercises by Sylvia Bodmer entitled *'In the Laban Tradition'*.

(4) *ChU/Mm – Choreutic Unit and Manner of Materialisation* - creating actual and virtual lines and curves in the body and in space through body design, spatial progression, spatial projection and spatial tension. (VPD, 1998a)

(5) *'I saw with growing clarity how man will come under the domination of the machine. The soul-less steel-oz, the locomotive is only the beginning. Thrilling as the power of conquest over air and sea may be, man will surely have to pay dearly for it. The whirring and clanking of thousands of wheels and chains is infectious: soon man himself will become a whirring of wheels and chains; soon he will see in life, in the whole of nature, and in himself nothing but the machine, and the soul will be forgotten.'* (Laban, 1975, p.48)

(6) *A movement makes sense only if it progresses organically and this means that phases which follow each other in natural succession must be chosen. It is therefore essential to find the natural characteristics of the single phases which we wish to join together in order to create a sensible sequence.* (Laban, 1966, p.4).

We must try to find its (movement's) real structure and the choreological order within it through which movement becomes penetrable, meaningful and understandable. (ibid.p.viii).

Ali Curtis-Jones

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Archetypes of movements

- Laban as pathfinder through ancient cultures

(Dr Barbara Stuiber studied Mathematics, Pedagogics, History, Literature and trained in Ancient Dance forms, T'ai Chi and Dance Therapy and is the author of Der orientalische Tanz als Bewegungssystem nach der Lehre Rudolf Labans. She first attended Laban Courses in Zurich organised by Claude Perrotet – with whom she took private lessons and later attended LinC Courses). Ed.

All who know the theory of Laban and his all-embracing movement analysing system may be not surprised to learn about the possibility of its use even in ancient times. But in my research I discovered more than one astonishing parallel between his ideas and people of perished cultures, especially that of ancient Egypt.

As you know, there are four main parts in the Laban system, which are related and developed from each other: the body, the space, the efforts, and the notation. In specific, the body is a starting point, reference point, and – in a sense - a development of possibilities of movements – the aim.

Moving along from Laban, we come to the concept of the very well known psychoanalyst C.G. Jung, who took over the word *archetype* (organ of the psyche) from Greek philosophers. According to him the unconscious as part of the psyche consists of two levels, the personal and the collective unconscious. While

the contents of the personal unconscious are derived from present lifetime experience, the contents of the collective one are inherited and essentially universal within species in somewhat embryonic structure. It lies below the personal unconscious and consists of archetypes, and it is an undifferentiated and autonomous energy, too.

How did Jung discover the collective unconscious and the archetypes? The psychoanalyst began to develop the archetype concept during his early work in a hospital in Switzerland, where he observed that some of his patients experienced universal symbols, which he explained as unconscious material. He explored it through his method of *active imagination*, and he studied religious symbolism, mythology, tribal lore in a quest for evidence of universal motifs. So his conclusions can be said to rest on an extremely broad base of observational data, namely:

- The symbols experienced by his patients correspond to universal motifs.

- These motifs transcend culture, race, and time.

- They are revealed in awareness through dreams, fantasies, and *aesthetic creations*

Jung gave his patients the task of developing their dream pictures or ideas in a free and creative way. The results were paintings, dramas, but also some *kind of dance*, depending on the preference or talent of the patient. During the years, Jung noticed motifs and shapes coming again and again. Those are to be understood as visible or conscious archetypes. The most famous of them are such as "The Great Mother" or "The Hero's Journey", but there are *abstract* shapes, too. They are the motifs or elements of shapes defined by Jung, of which three are concerned with the theme of the research:

- A unit of four which Jung called a quaternity as squares or crosses
- The rotation, means circles or spheres
- The centering and radial order

These are the archetypes of movements, the later difference between symbol and archetypes by Jung is neglected, as well as concepts which claimed the development of movements as lying, sitting, standing, and crawling, because they follow a biological founded development.



Figure 1: signs of the Neolithic Age

The Jungian archetypes are found in many cultures and periods. The very rich scientific research of Marija Gimbutas (a professor of archeology who led five excavations in Eastern Europe, 1967 – 1980) shows a lot of variation in the Jungian archetypes. But her aim was to categorize signs, symbols, and images of pottery, painting, and figurines and to show that they represent a kind of (religious) language in the time of the Neolithic Age, focussing the period beginning with early agriculture back to 7000 to 3500 B.C. Most of the signs are expressive *n̄* as we know it from the early Egyptian hieroglyphs, but there are geometric signs too: *Zig-zags*, and *wavy* or *serpentine bands* representing the category *life giving* embrace the aquatic sphere. *Whirls*, *crosses*, and a variety of four-corner designs as symbols of the *dynamism in nature* are also to be found in other categories. And there are *spirals*, *horns*, *crescents*, and *circles* representing *energy* and *unfolding* (fig.1). Following the theory of Gimbutas, we are able to ascertain the energy of archetypal shapes, but it says nothing about the kind of movement and the part of the body.

For this purpose we have to study Egyptian sculptures and mural paintings. Human beings in paintings of ancient Egypt are presented in a very special way, independent of the position - which might be walking, standing, kneeling or sacrificing to the gods. Legs and the head are always in profile, the upper part of the body is in front view, and the joints are shown at special angles. This is not a question of not knowing how to depict a person perspectively. The meaning of experts in the arts is that there is a religious reason and for this, for one wasn't allowed to hide oneself from the gods. And we have other pictures, too, which demonstrate the abilities of ancient Egypt's artists. Finally, there is another really exciting explanation concerning the understanding of body work: The ancient Egyptians knew about the equilibrium of the balanced body and the important meaning of this.

This knowledge is the basic kind of bodywork or alternative

medicine called *structural integration*, developed by Dr. Ida P. Rolf, a biochemist turned physical therapist, from the 1930s. *Structural integration* is a deep tissue body work which aims to restore the human body to its natural state of alignment and balance by organizing it along the line of gravity. The effect on a person is not only physical but emotional and *energetical*, too.

Scientific research furthering the ideas of Dr. Rolf, by studying sculptures and wall paintings of ancient Egypt, show parallels of structural integration and the posture of the human beings in the ancient Egyptian arts of which the important one is that there is a geometry of joints.

Yet the important question is: Did the ancient Egyptians follow these geometric principles in moving in some situations? There are two possibilities in answering this question: experiences from *pharaonic yoga* and from ethnic dances and folklore. The *pharaonic yoga* is represented by Yogi Dr. Babacar Khane, who showed that the ancient Egyptians did know and exercise a lot of the main postures of the *hatha yoga* of India. The basis of the *pharaonic yoga* is the effect of the exercises on the spine and further parts of the body and the inner organs. Important is the *circulation of energy* in the body. The main effect of this posture as described – head, legs, and pelvis in profile, upper part of the body in frontal view – is in the rotation of the spine *activating important energy points* of the nervous system. Parallels of the presentation of the human body between that of the ancient Egyptians' and Laban's imagination are evident. So it is possible to overlap the two structures of the body (fig.2 and 3).



Figure 2: Sennefer, Valley of the Kings (i)

Figure 3: Laban's body imagination (ii)

There are three ideas: The first: two centres of the body, the second and the third are geometrical relations of the parts of the body and of angles.

It is very likely that the ancient Egyptians brought in these postures through movement sequences, but there is other evidence.

Researching ethnologic dances, like these of Egypt, there is a deep – presumably unknown - understanding of the meaning of the postures and movements done in a very clear way concerning the space and the efforts. So there are traces of the imagination

of body and movement of ancient Egypt which can be analysed.

The ethnic dance of ancient Egypt can be understood as a sequence of tableaux: the focus of the dance is on the single positions. In those positions, the dancer stops for a few seconds or parts of it to continue at last to the next position. You can imagine that as a series of photographs in a kind of "moving – click – moving – click" and so on. In these periods of stopping, the dancer chooses a position, which is intended to go out of the balanced position of the vertical axis – or *the life column* as Gimbutas would say – in gliding the pelvis to the right, chest to the left, for example.

Unfortunately, we do not know anything about the meaning of these postures or gestures. But the point is that the spine is activated as we learned from the *pharaonic yoga*. But on the contrary, the dance has a more playful artistic character, claiming no fixed sequence of postures. The focus and the effect are more in the artistic qualities of movements and their changing.

It is very important to shape the movements very clearly, otherwise there is no effect on the energy. You can only name movements as archetype if the shapes are done absolutely correctly – as we know from yoga or T'ai Chi. The idea of Laban being in an icosahedron helps to feel the different planes and to be sure of the different directions of parts of the body. Even small differences are meaningful. (ii)

The figure eight of the *classical Egyptian dance* illustrates this idea. In the concept of Gimbutas we find crescents and moons as energy signs. These are depicted on a vase (fig.4 and 5).

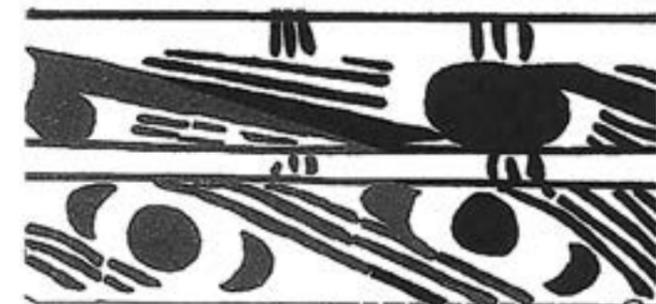


Figure 4: Detail of a vase, Rumania



Figure 5: lunar phases

Here we see the lunar phases – waxing, full, and waning - a typical time-measurement in ancient cultures.

Connecting both of the crescents we get the shape of the figure eight in the vertical plane (fig.6).

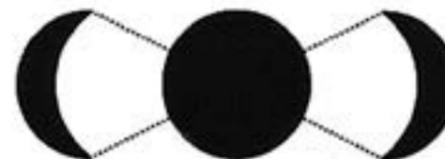


Figure 6: figure of eight, vertical plane

This is a rather well known figure in the Egyptian dance and folklore, too. This type of figure eight is only done by the pelvis.

If you summarize all these aspects: (women, movements of the pelvis, lunar phases), it is evident, that the movement, coming from observing nature, has the effect of a special energy, which is that of the female cycle.

These archetypes of movements can be seen through the principles of the Laban system in support of C.G. Jung and Gimbutas contributions. (A book containing a variety of examples and a map of archetypes is in preparation).

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- (i) Adapted from Valerie Preston-Dunlop, *Practical Kinetography Laban*, London, 1969, p.99

(ii) The types of energy depend on the quality of the movements, too, which can be analysed by the principles of the efforts.

Barbara Stuibler

Laban-based dance classes

Belfast, Crescent Arts Centre
Monday:
4.45pm - 5.45pm Crescent Youth Dance
5.45pm - 6.45pm Adult Movement and Dance
Contact: **Brenda McKee** 25 Malone Hill Park Belfast BT9 6RE email: brendagm@aol.com

Bromley
Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings
Community Dance classes for people with learning difficulties
Contact: **Avril Hitman** 020 8467 3331

Cambridge
Wednesday mornings Over 55s - open class
Contact: **Maddy Tongue** 01223 302030

Swindon
Saturday mornings. Three separate classes for 4-5 years, 6-8 years, 9-13 years
Contact: **Kathy Geddes** 02793 463210

Developing a Laban-based dance community within Healthcare Environments

(Dr Jenny Elliott traces her career from undergraduate days as a radiographer to a freelance Laban Contemporary dance teacher/choreographer and PhD Healthcare researcher in Belfast, N.I.). Ed.

Dance Background

Dance has been an integral part of my life and identity since a very early age and was accompanied by a strong desire to train formally in dance. My professional life however began in a very different direction and the lack of opportunities to avail myself of dance training in Northern Ireland, accompanied by lack of funding opportunities, meant that I made a decision to train as a radiographer. I subsequently did my post-graduate Teacher Training and became a lecturer in health education.

Prior to undertaking my dance training with Laban Guild, I undertook a Movement to Music Teaching Course with *Keep Fit Assoc. N.I.* This comprehensive course opened initial opportunities to teach movement classes in community settings. Participation in the first Laban's *Dance Leader's Course* in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1989 followed by completion of the *Advanced Laban's Dance Leader's Course*, provided a further opportunity to teach dance and chartered a course of events that was to steer my professional and personal life towards a passion for and a full-time practice in Laban-based dance.

Completion of my dance training through the Laban Guild brought me to the edge of indecision, questioning whether to remain in my safe employment as a radiographer or to risk free-lance work as a full time Laban dance practitioner. Building a freelance dance practice presented many challenges - mostly related to generating sufficient income. However, my growing knowledge of Rudolf Laban's work slowly unfolded a multi-dimensional dance life that up to the present continues to be both challenging and fulfilling in the fields of Education and Health.

My Dance Residency in Healthcare

My early training in Healthcare as a radiographer and lecturer, underpinned with the structures of Laban Movement, has offered me a sound knowledge base for the development of my community dance practice in healthcare. The settings and cultures of healthcare were familiar territories to me and when I was offered the opportunity to become the first dancer-in-residence at a residential and community-based psychiatric setting on the suburbs of Belfast with the charitable arts organisation Arts Care, I accepted the invitation without reservation. The post was originally for six months and thirteen years later I am still there delivering on a daily basis, Laban-based programmes of contemporary dance across a wide range of healthcare and education services such as Acute/Chronic Mental Health, Dementia Care, Early Psychosis Intervention Programmes for Young People, Brain Injury, Learning and Physical Disability - and more recently Hospice and Cancer Care.

My residency within the hospital is shared with a musician and visual artist and is located within a refurbished old building on the hospital site. The building known as the Arts Care Studios houses a fully equipped dance studio, arts and recording studio. This studio space functions on the basis of a cultural arts centre offering a wide range of Laban-based dance programmes for patients and staff throughout the Healthcare Trust. My work within the healthcare sector is not implemented as a dance therapy programme, but as a community model of dance practice. Patients and staff who attend my daily dance classes do so as students who come to learn the skills of Laban Dance.

My primary role is to facilitate and contribute to the development

of a vibrant cultural life within healthcare settings particularly focusing on the human rights perspective that all of us have a right to access and to benefit from the Arts whilst availing of healthcare. This is particularly pertinent for those individuals who are in long-term residential care with limited access to community life outside of their hospital setting.

Developing a Dance Company-in-residence within a Healthcare context

Just over ten-years ago *Orbit Dance Company* evolved out of my weekly Laban classes at the Arts Care Studios to become the resident dance company of the Healthcare Trust. The company comprises of healthcare staff and individuals with moderate to severe learning and physical disabilities who attend Day Care Services within the Belfast area. *Orbit Dance* has evolved as an integrated company that generates and promotes Laban-based partnership dance programmes with local and international groups and schools.

The Company has won numerous awards for their contribution to enhancing community well-being through their dance performances and project-based community/education work. They have created original integrated performance works, some of which have been staged in residencies in Belfast, Glasgow and Dusseldorf, working with amongst others, international choreographer, Royston Maldoom and in partnership with similar integrated Dance Companies from the U.K., such as *Independence*, Glasgow and *Amici*, London.

The dancers within *Orbit Dance* have achieved a high standard of Laban skills developed through a specific mentoring programme. This mentoring programme has led to some of the more skilled dancers, with learning and physical disability, to assist me in certain teaching situations, sharing democratically in the promotion and development of Laban's work within specific community locations.

Another Dance Company has also evolved over the years, comprising of residents with enduring brain injury of the *Neuro-Rehabilitation Unit* and the staff who care for them at the Healthcare Trust. Both *Company Maine* and *Orbit Dance* have established a formative community dialogue informing audiences through their dance performances about a new aesthetic in dance that promotes democracy through different narratives of being and understanding. The creation of *Company Maine* and how my experience of dancing with a group of men with brain injury led to a comprehensive research study will be the subject of an article in a later edition of the Laban Magazine. Developing a Dance Company identity within the Healthcare Trust has been integral to establishing a cultural life within the residential care environment of this particular psychiatric setting.



Company Maine in Rehearsal
Photo: Colin Cairns

An important element of my practice as a dancer-in-residence has been to facilitate and promote a collaborative, participative approach to staff and patients as they create dance together in the daily activities at the hospital site. The development of a dance relationship between patient and staff member has proved a crucial one in terms of generating models of creative healthcare practice that contribute to an enhanced understanding and new meaning within the care relationship (Elliott 2008).

Development of specifically Laban-based Dance Training Programmes for Healthcare Staff

Observation and feedback over my residency revealed a desire amongst some of the healthcare staff in 2000 to have the opportunity to access introductory training in Laban Dance in Health. As the only dancer-in-residence in a large Healthcare Trust it made sense to develop a network of staff who, on completion of a specifically designed basic Laban Dance Training Programme in Health, would be able to facilitate Laban-based dance workshops with their patients and clients at ward and unit level supported and overviewed by my residency.

Acknowledgement of the anecdotal evidence of the benefits of participation in Laban-based dance programmes offered by staff and patients, such as physical benefits and enhanced self-confidence, provided the necessary foundations for me to secure funding from the Health Promotion Department of the Healthcare Trust in 2001 as part of a wider community healthy living strategy across the province.

The funding permitted me to develop a specific Laban-based Dance Programme for healthcare professionals and professional carers. In 2005 the course known as "The Art of Creative Dance in Healthcare" was awarded accreditation certificate status by the *School of Nursing, University of Ulster, Faculty of Life and Health Sciences*. The course offers the students an opportunity to study the theory and practice involved in developing and sustaining a Laban-based Dance Programme specific to Health. Since 2001 forty-four healthcare staff to date have undertaken the course and since 2005 twenty-nine students have been awarded accreditation status for successfully completing the course. This has resulted in the generation of small "pods" of dance in healthcare facilities across the Belfast Healthcare Trust and in other Healthcare Trusts throughout Northern Ireland.



(Staff articulating connection and relationship through Laban Dance Training Programme)
Photo: Colin Cairns

The course has contributed to the acknowledgement of creative dance as a valuable activity within healthcare programmes across Northern Ireland and the establishment of a sustainable dance community with commitment to support "dancing staff"

radiating from all levels of healthcare management. In 2008 a development grant was awarded to the *The Art of Creative Dance* in Healthcare training programme by the Healthcare Trust to further develop the existing skills of the their staff who have successfully completed their dance training. This grant has enabled staff to platform their own dance work through performance with their patients and to further specific areas of dance training such as dance in dementia care and learning disability.

A weekly lunchtime dance programme in the Arts Care Studio focusing on dance for fitness is specifically designed as a de-stressing tool for administration staff in the middle of their working day and is well attended.

Laban Dance as an educational tool for Medical Students

In 2004 a committee was formed at *Queens University Medical School*, Belfast to develop a module of Arts in Health for young medical students. The success of this module has secured regular funding on a yearly basis. The medical students participate in a series of multi-disciplinary art workshops with patients at the Arts Care Studios. The physical connectiveness of the dance workshops underpinned by the safe structure of Laban's Principles of Dance offers both students and patients a creative and integrative exploration of what it is to care for another human being. The module has further developed into a creative-based educational tool that is now an integral part of my resident dance practice opening up fresh understandings of the role of dance in healthcare education. I have recently secured a grant with *Queen's University Belfast* to direct and facilitate an interdisciplinary arts project involving the *Schools of Medicine, Social Work and Media Studies*. The project is structured around a Laban-based dance programme. The students and patients with mental health issues will explore understandings of mental health as expressed through a shared interactive final dance performance and a film installation.

International Connections

Generating international connections is an integral part of developing dance in health. A recent invitation was extended to me that involved a short dance residency at *Lombardi Cancer Centre, Georgetown University, Washington D.C.* and as keynote speaker at their first *Dance in Health Symposium*. The residency practice and presentation aroused a keen interest amongst staff and patients in Laban's work as an expressive tool for individuals of all ages experiencing cancer-related diseases. It is anticipated that these connections established between Belfast and Washington D.C. will be further developed with potential collaborative projects on the horizon.

(The value and impact of Laban-dance programmes on well-being and the relevance and adaptation of Laban's Practice and Theory within healthcare environments will be discussed within the context of the findings of my PhD study in the next issue. The follow-up article will focus on how as dance practitioners we are best served to generate reliable research knowledge through experiential and performative critical reflection of our dance practice).

Jenny Elliott

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The Laban Scales and Rings

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

Part 4

“2 Rings” and “4 Rings.” Differences and similarities between them.

Both of these trace form shapes may be thought of as being rectangular, the “2 Rings” as **plane rectangles** and the “4 Rings” as **twisted rectangles**. They are both **Mixed Rings** consisting of **two transversal movement links** and **two peripheral links**. In a “2 Ring” the movement links are parallel and opposite to one another. Not so in a “4 Ring”. The transversal and peripheral links in both types of ring are all ‘inclinations’, with a diagonal slant, which is a characteristic of all the Laban icosahedral Scales and Rings. There are also ‘flat’, ‘steep’ and ‘flowing’ types of both “2 Rings” and “4 Rings”.

As both two and four rings have four links in their trace paths, why is one type called a “2 Ring” and the other a “4 Ring”? The numbering of the Rings is not **merely** a simple mathematical device for distinguishing between spatial forms. For Laban the significance of movement lies in its combination of many elements, not only spatial ones. The Scales and Rings are not movements forced into geometric forms, but attempts to describe the flow of movement shapes as actually seen and felt and what gives each trace form its different harmonic character, spatially and dynamically.

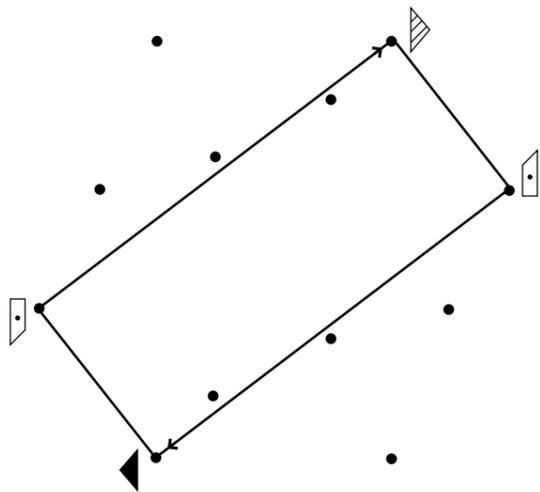


Fig 1 A Laban “2 Ring”

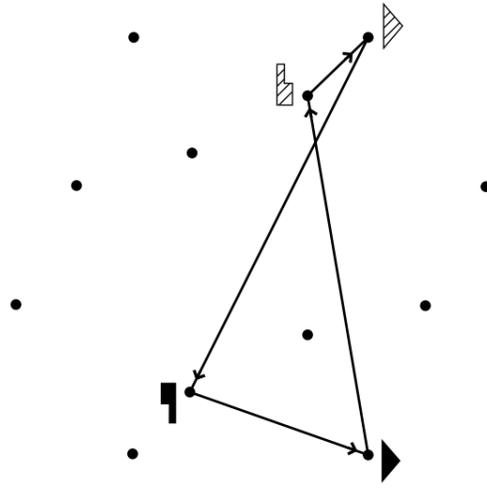


Fig 2 A Laban “4 Ring”

When repeated, the opposite directions of the transversal movements in a “2 Ring” create a **simple rhythm with two main stresses**, “going” and “returning”. This repetitive rhythm is satisfying and releasing and provides a stable space/time base which can be increased, decreased and varied dynamically and physically. The “2 Rings” are useful as dance and movement training exercises. (Figs. 3-8)

The “4 Ring” is a much more complex trace form created by using **four different twists and tilts of the body** to produce a very indirect pathway using **all four diagonal** directions, but only using a restricted area of kinespheric space. This form needs much more energy, control and thought and is much less free flowing than a “2 Ring”.

LABAN “TWO RINGS” USING THE PARALLEL OPPOSITE TRANSVERSAL OF THE R.A. SCALE

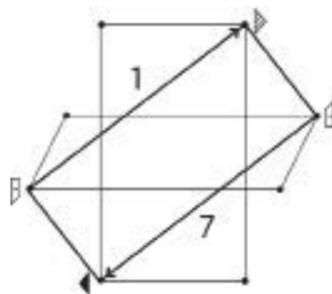


Fig 3

‘flat’ transversals
‘steep’ peripherals

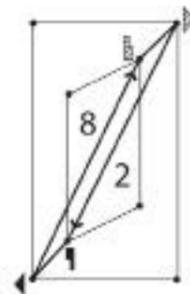


Fig 4

‘steep’ transversals
‘flowing’ peripherals

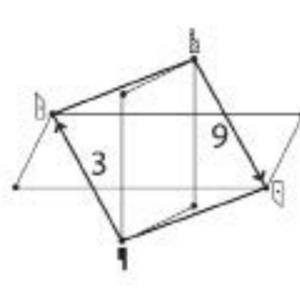


Fig 5

‘flowing’ transversals
‘flat’ peripherals

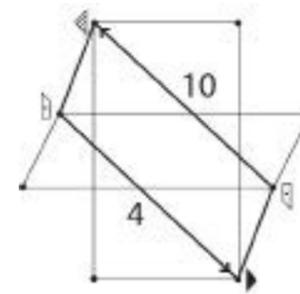


Fig 6
‘FLAT’ TWO RINGS

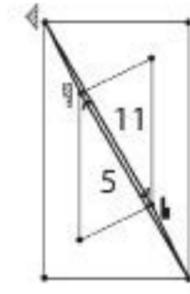


Fig 7
‘STEEP’ TWO RINGS

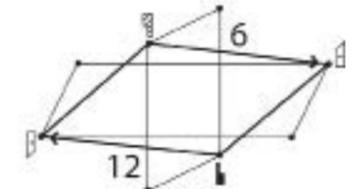


Fig 8
‘FLOWING’ TWO RINGS

LABAN “FOUR RINGS” USING THE FIRST SIX MOVEMENTS OF THE R.A. SCALE AND INVOLVING FOUR DIFFERENT TWISTS AND SWITCHES OF DIAGONAL DIRECTION

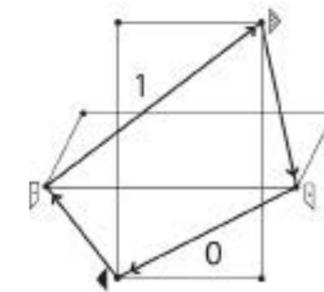


Fig 9
‘flat’ transversals
‘steep’ peripherals

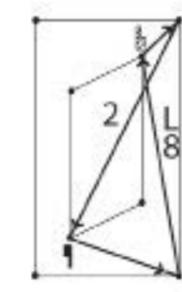


Fig 10
‘steep’ transversals
‘flowing’ peripherals

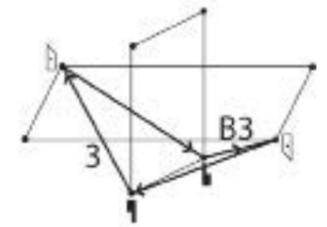


Fig 11
‘flowing’ transversals
‘flat’ peripherals

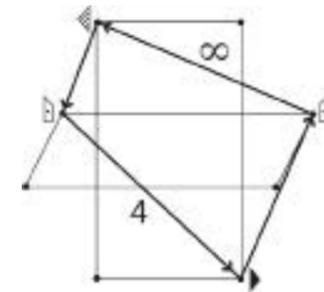


Fig 12
‘FLAT’ FOUR RINGS

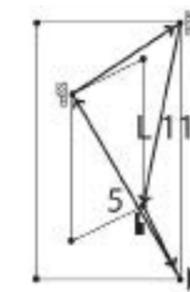


Fig 13
‘STEEP’ FOUR RINGS

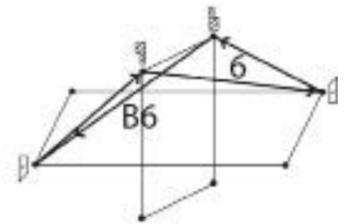


Fig 14
‘FLOWING’ FOUR RINGS

There are other groups of four movement links which can be performed as a unit but which Laban did not call a ‘4 Ring’. One of these groups he called “Shears”. “Shears” consist of **four transversal movement links** and always have a completely symmetrical structure. All the transversals have the same character, either ‘flat’, ‘steep’ or ‘flowing’ and each involves surface locations on two different planes. The transversals converge and diverge and may be thought of as **forming either two ‘volutes’ or two ‘steeples’**, depending on where one starts the movement (at one end of a dimensional transversal or at one end of a dimensional peripheral.) Both volutes and steeples share the same locations. **It depends on how the movement is characterised rhythmically.** The dimensional situations of the “Shears” can be most clearly visualised if they are shown in pairs. (See *Choreutics* p, 165-169.)

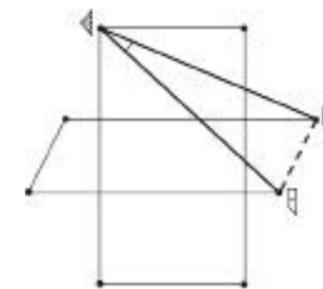


Fig 15
A dimensional steeple

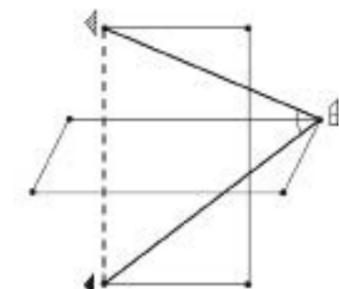


Fig 16
A dimensional volute

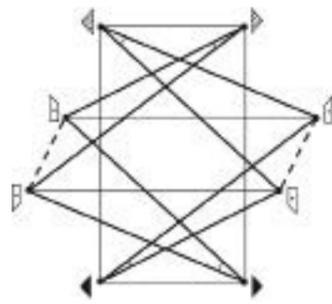


Fig 17
'Flat'

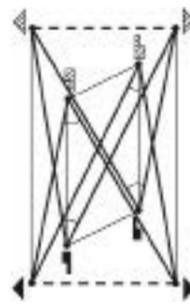


Fig 18
'Steep'

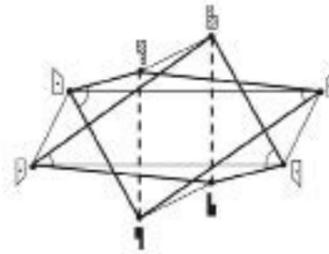


Fig 19
'Flowing'

Pairs of "Shears"

Each pair thought of as two dimensional steeples

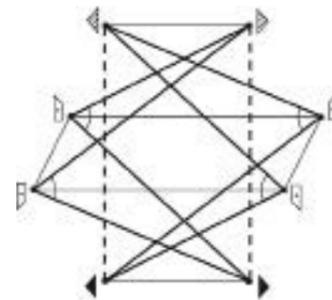


Fig 20



Fig 21

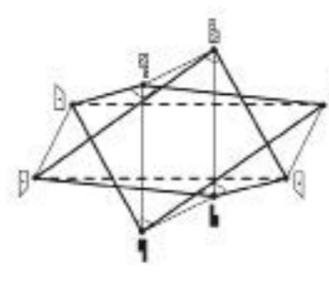


Fig 22

Pairs of "Shears"

Each pair thought of as two dimensional volutes

There is yet another group of 4 Rings the movements of which have another rhythm. I have not found it mentioned by Laban in *Choreutics*. It is another group consisting of **two transversal and two peripheral links**. Their form is again symmetrical, but not in the same way as the "Shears". I have named them the **"Crossed Swords"** or **"Crosses"**. Their two transversal movements cross each other and are both directed towards outer space beyond the same aspect of the kinesphere. They produce an emphatic, insistent rhythm and draw attention to different zones of space.

"Crosses" – Using pairs of A Scale transversal movements lying on the same plane in the same zone of space

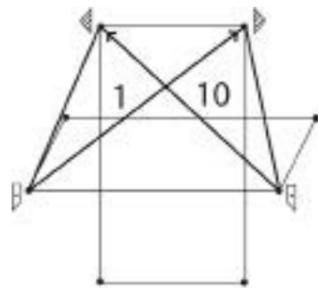


Fig 23
'Flat' Crosses

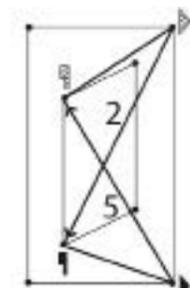


Fig 24
'Steep' Crosses

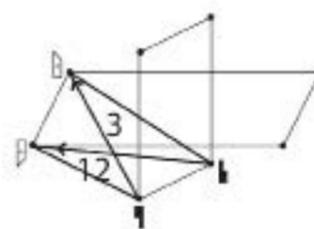


Fig 25
'Flowing' Crosses

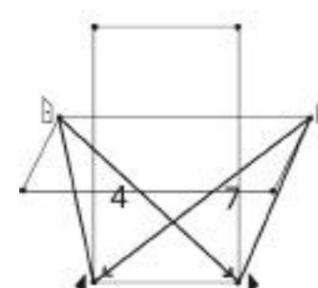


Fig 26

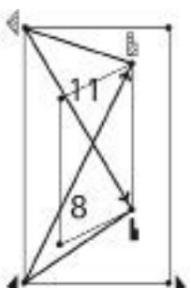


Fig 27

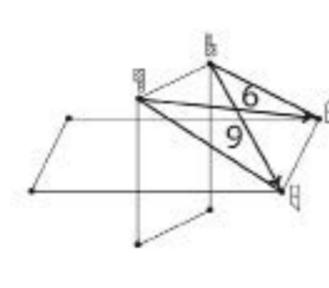


Fig 28

Summary of different types of 4 Rings

- a) The Laban "4 Rings". Stress on continually twisting from one diagonal to another as if striving to get free. Mixed ring. Symmetric. Mainly labile.
- b) "Shears". Stress on meeting or parting relationships, Transversal ring. Symmetric. Mainly stable.
- c) "Crossed". Emphatic rhythm of repeated striving towards a particular direction of outer space. Mixed ring. Symmetric. Mainly stable.

I will conclude this Chapter by considering what is meant by the terms 'Stability' and 'Lability' when applied to movement, and as used by Laban in his book *Choreutics*.

STABILITY is fairly easy to define if one is thinking about the structure and condition/state of **an object**. It refers to an aspect of its **USEFULNESS**, the capacity to retain its shape firmly connected and unchanged over a period of time and not fall apart, and the capacity to remain still under the pressure of external forces. 'Usefulness' refers to the object's structure and functioning, no matter whether it be a table, ladder, building, boat, kettle, or an ornament. In relation to an object, its stability depends upon the materials it is made of, the design of its construction, and whether its intended purpose is fulfilled, its suitability for the task. In relation to objects, the word used to refer to the opposite of 'stability' is 'instability'. In an object **"INSTABILITY"** may mean unsafe, shaky, liable to topple over, unreliable, unable to be trusted, rickety.

In relation to **the living world**, especially of people, similar words are often used when speaking about relationships, individual or group, health, physical or mental, skills, innate or acquired, soundness of structure (body and mind) and the ability to recognise, memorise, repeat and learn. Thoughts, sensations and emotions, purpose/motives and questions of suitability and responsibility may not be considered. In relation to **movement** one may think of 'Stability' as the ability to keep one's physical, mental and emotional balance in difficult and dangerous situations.

The word **"LABILITY"**, as used by Laban in *Choreutics* is less easy to define. **It is not used as the opposite of 'Stability'** and has a more positive, active connotation than instability. Its meaning is not judgemental. The word "LABILITY" is not used in describing objects, but only in referring to people and to movement. It is regarded as **an ABILITY** (which can be developed) and also as **a facet of movement structure**. The word "stability" is used in the same way. "Lability" may mean mobility, flexibility, adaptability, versatility. Thus we have St/ability and L/ability as **two complimentary human abilities**, attributes, tendencies, possessed by all people in different degrees, and as two components of movement structure present in all movements in different degrees. They may be thought of as two aspects of the 'flow and control' components of a movement ("bound" or "free"). In *Choreutics* the words 'stable' and 'labile' are used in detailed technical movement analysis and we read of predominantly stable and labile transversals and peripherals affecting the character of scales and rings and other movement units. These active concepts are important. They provide a distinction between ancient and modern tendencies, between the classical and modern in art, between security and living dangerously, between lifestyles and generations, progress and stagnation, between what facilitates change and what enables things to endure and be studied.

- "Lability" – "... a state which strongly promotes continuity and is charged with movement intensity, thus creating ever-new movements which do not find a conclusion in themselves."
 - "Stability" - "... That element which leads movement to quiescence and stillness, which causes a movement theme to fade out and find a conclusion in itself without anticipation of a new theme."
- (Lisa Ullmann. *Choreutics: Part II Section VI*)

Sally Archbutt

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SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE RENEWABLE ON 1 JANUARY EACH YEAR
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Patrons' Questiontime

(All of our Guild Patrons have strong connections with Laban's work – not least our first interviewee in this new series: William Elmhirst. Without doubt, the Elmhirsts are held in high esteem by members of the Guild - and indeed by arts enthusiasts throughout the world; their initiatives at Dartington Hall are regarded as jewels in the crown of educational practice and arts promotion.

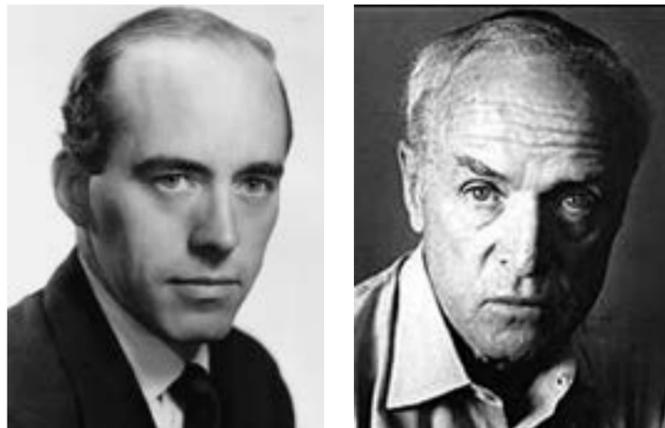
William Elmhirst continued his parents' (Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst) generous support for the arts (and in particular of movement and dance) by making a gift of the Art of Movement Studio at Addlestone in the 1950s. Most recently Lorraine Nicholas has named her book 'Dancing in Utopia - Dartington Hall and its Dancers' (2007).

As Part 1 of our questiontime with our Patron William Elmhirst (conducted by Nigel Bance), it may well come as a surprise for readers to learn that behind the incandescent image of Dartington Hall, there lies a less utopian aspect which William Elmhirst is most anxious that we should know about – for it led not only to a shadow falling on Dartington, but also on William's departure from his home there in the 1970s. Whilst focussing on the underlying reasons for this latter aspect in Part 1, we shall in Part 2, look at William's own career and close interest in dance and drama, as well as the inspired pioneer work of William's mother Dorothy Elmhirst, whose educational and artistic philosophy provided an enduring legacy for movement, dance and the arts.

A partial justification for reproducing, with permission, the following revelations by Nigel Bance and William Elmhirst, is that the espionage of Michael Straight, (Dorothy's son and William's elder half-brother) may in the future, unless exposed, compromise the massive philanthropic reputation of Dorothy Elmhirst – who gave sanctuary to Kurt Jooss, Sigurd Leeder, Lisa Ullmann and Rudolf Laban and numerous other distinguished artists at Dartington Hall.

Nigel Bance, a BA and MA of London University and an Honorary Professor of a Moscow intelligence academy, conducts our first interview with William Elmhirst (published in 'Fully Booked' Rare Books and Berry 2008 Tel: 01643 863255) Ed. Michael Berry & Jean Desebrock). Ed.

My Brother, the KGB Spy



William Elmhirst

Michael Straight

Nigel Bance writes:

Spying is a term that still excites the public imagination despite the ending of the Cold War. I have known William for a number of years, and have spent considerable time with him discussing his brother. William is a member of the Elmhirst family: his mother Dorothy married the Englishman Leonard Elmhirst after the death of the American Willard Straight. Dorothy was a member

of the prominent Whitney family; her father had been secretary of the Navy in the Cleveland Administration. Willard Straight had been a Journalist and diplomat, and, with Dorothy, had established The New Republic, a weekly political journal. With Leonard Elmhirst, Dorothy founded Dartington Hall in Devon, a progressive school that opened in 1926 with a curriculum that was quite unlike any other in the country. William was very close to Michael Straight. Another brother was Whitney Straight, the racing driver turned RAF pilot during World War II, who later enjoyed a successful business career with what was then BOAC, and with Rolls-Royce. Shortly after Michael Straight was denounced as a spy by the British press in 1981, the brotherly relationship between Michael and William was severed, to be rekindled just weeks before Straight's death. William was at one time in his life an actor and teacher of drama; today he studies the esoteric aspects of Christianity.

Nigel Bance questions William Elmhirst:

You, and your family, have lived with the stigma that Michael Straight as a Soviet spy. Describe how it has been.

I cannot speak for the rest of the family because in the early 1970s I became estranged from them all. Now I know that a great part of the reason for this estrangement concerned the suspicions I harboured about Michael. It was obviously vital for Michael that his dark secret could not be disclosed to members of the family. My then wife, Vera, tried to warn me in the early 1970s that Michael had been hiding something. From what I have read in Roland Perry's new book*, and gathered from other sources, Michael had been an important agent for the USSR despite his down-playing of his spying activities. The rest of the family had to my knowledge gone along with Michael's claim that he left off working for the KGB in 1942. They were in denial about the case that Perry has recently developed against that claim.

What were your reactions on first hearing that Michael Straight had been exposed?

I believed the story that was first put out by the Daily Mail in 1981 that an American had come forward, and was ready to stand up in court exposing Anthony Blunt as a long-term Soviet agent. Michael was extolled as a hero for doing this, as the 'whistle-blower' on the so-called 'Cambridge Ring'. It took many years for me to realise that Moscow was orchestrating the disinformation campaign to protect Michael especially, but also other members of that ring, and of other rings, some yet to be exposed.

Michael Straight was at Cambridge in the 1930s, the same time as Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt. They became notorious as Soviet spies. Do you think that Michael Straight was a spy of lesser influence, as he admitted to, or do you think that he should rank alongside his Cambridge compatriots?

I believe that Michael was certainly as important to Russia as any other member of the ring. When I first read Perry's account, I was shocked to the core. I cannot understand why Michael's treachery had not touched other members of my family in a similar way. Most of all, I feel even now a sense of outrage that he was from 1937 to 1977 on continuous assignment for the KGB. I have to say here that I have heard from another source, that has to remain confidential, that the scandal is even worse and that there are still other members of a second but connected ring that remain unexposed to this day.

How close were you with your half-brother, Michael Straight?

As a younger brother, I idolised him, I really did. I always thought that he and I had a warm and mutually supportive relationship. Only in my later years I found his surprising outbursts of anger inexplicable. I hope that one day other members of the family will find it possible to face up to his treachery. Of course one understands why he became a Communist in the thirties, but the tragedy is that he could not, like Whittaker Chambers, face up to the need to come clean. There is no contrition there, no heart-searching. I believe that Michael went to his grave as committed a Communist as he was when he chose to be recruited to the KGB.

You were not reconciled with Michael Straight until weeks before his death in America in 2004. Did you feel that reconciliation was important to you?

Yes. I was hoping, too, that he might want to offer an olive branch of some sort, or at least an apology for the pain he must have known he had caused us all, but none was forthcoming. He did agree to let bygones be bygones so perhaps this is as far as we were able to go. I had offered to fly over if he had wanted to share deeper exchanges but, as I say, he made no gesture. He maintained his position to the last, that he had nothing more to justify or even regret.

In Michael Straight's own book, in which he tried to justify his guilt, did you find it credible that his spying activities ceased in the early years of World War II when he was in America?

Yes, we all believed him. It is now very clear he was not telling the truth and that the book, 'After Long Silence,' was a smokescreen of disinformation. I was struck at the time by what he left out and also by his attempts to blame his mother for not giving him a secure upbringing. Most of the reviews were harsh in their condemnation of his efforts at self-justification.

Your late first wife, Vera, had long suspected that Michael Straight 'had dirty hands'; but didn't know why. Why did she suspect him?

She warned as early as the early 1970s that Michael was leading a double life. She had the 'second sight' and through the state of his hands was convinced that Michael was hiding a secret. Through her powers she had told me that Michael was 'far more dangerous than you are aware of'. At the time I could not see how this could be possible and it took a number of years before I realised that he was indeed a Soviet agent - an agent of influence, of a high order.

Vera was an extremely well-known medium in her day. A centre at Dartington was opened for her work. Could you explain?

Vera was a member of the Churches Fellowship for Spiritual and Psychic Research. The late Bishop of Crediton, Wilfred Westall, was an admirer of hers and agreed to open our new centre in Dartington in June 1972. Yet events conspired against us. At the time I had not realised that the KGB had a whole department of trained psychics used for 'distant viewing' and that they would have alerted Michael to the dangers that Vera's presence represented for him. Michael had by then already been working to discredit her, to undermine her work, especially with my father, who sided against our remaining with him at my home in Dartington Hall.

Air Marshal Lord Dowding was a strong believer in spiritualism. I know that you were a great admirer of Dowding. He based much of his beliefs on experiences in World War II. What were those experiences and why did you admire him?

He worked in a healing circle during the Battle of Britain to assist his airmen when they were killed in action to make their transition. He wrote books about his beliefs and experiences and these I read in the 1950s. I corresponded with him and he helped me to pursue my studies of the so called 'occult'. He was a wonderful teacher. His books now are sadly out of print.

The Elmhirsts and the Straights have long had considerable influence in many circles, both in Britain and America. Can you briefly describe the history of these families!

Dorothy Elmhirst was the youngest child of William C. Whitney, the American statesman and philanthropist. It was her lifelong commitment to supporting progressive causes that gave her a reputation in both countries and led in this country to the purchase of the Dartington Hall Estate in 1925. She and my father supported so many worthwhile causes and their influence has yet to be assessed. The Arts and Education were probably the areas they are most well known for.

Your parents founded Dartington Hall school in Devon before the war and it was unique in Britain until it closed as an educational establishment. Why was this school so different!

Each child was treated with love and respect, so an atmosphere of trust was created between staff and pupils. Most children prospered under this regime although some, like Clement Freud, found it lacking in challenges. The headmaster used to say that in his experience there were no problem children, only problem parents.

You, too were educated at Dartington Hall. Did you enjoy he experience?

Yes, particularly my last three years after I had returned from America, where my parents had left us, their children, just before the war started.

You spent this period in America before World War II, and during the war at the family home in Long Island, and saw Michael Straight and your sister Beatrice (an Oscar winner) entertain a number of Hollywood stars, including Orson Welles. Describe your days in Long Island as Young man.

They were good times, although we were all concerned about the conflicts going on in the Pacific, as well as in Europe. As editor of New Republic, Michael was in the forefront of political life and Beatrice was a leading actress on Broadway. We were too young to be included in much that went on, but the atmosphere was energetic and fun. It was a place of peace and replenishment, as well as a centre for political and cultural get-togethers.

As a Bevin Boy you worked down the mines. A recent government initiative has recognised the contribution made by Bevin Boys during the war and up to 1948. What was your experience!

When I reached my 18th birthday in 1947, I became a Bevin Boy instead of being called up for National Service. I worked down the mines for eighteen months in the Betteshanger Colliery near Deal, Kent. It was known, at that time, as the most radical mine in Britain. I was glad, in some measure, to be of service in this way to my country.

A FINAL NOTE

Straight's political and family connections were his contribution to the Russians. He was able to provide Moscow with key insights into US political opinion. I have tapes of interviews I

have conducted with KGB veterans who have confirmed that Straight's confessions were a pack of lies: he hadn't given up his contact with the Russians until well into the 1970s. Straight knew Jackie Kennedy well, especially at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. Whilst the GRU officer Oleg Penkovsky provided military intelligence to the Americans on the deployment of the Russian missiles - an act that would cost him his life - Russian agents in America were extremely active in gathering highly-secret information on US intentions. Straight, ever the

consummate manipulator, was one well-placed source, and through an unwitting Jackie Kennedy the Office of the President was compromised.

*Roland Perry, *Last of the Cold War Spies*, Da Capo Press, 2005

(Available from: *Rare Books and Berry* Tel: 01643255).

Critical Debate

(The Editor invites critical-constructive comments on the Guild's Magazine: *Movement & Dance*)

New Years and anniversaries inevitably bring with them the *Janus* habit of looking-back and looking-forward – of self-assessment and critical appraisal. Such occasions, as our recent 2008 celebratory year, would seem to provide a landmark for the Guild to look back at its past and forward to its future – a process already begun by: Sheila McGivering in her bird's eye view of '60 Years of the Laban Guild' and Maggie Killingbeck's summary of members' views on 'Laban: the Way Forward' in our last issue. We are now inviting comments to ascertain whether, in particular, the Guild Magazine *Movement & Dance* helps to fulfil the Guild's aims and objectives, and if not what initiatives might be taken in the future to ensure this.



Contributors:

AC: Anna Carlisle MBE (President Laban Guild);

AM: Andy Moir: Guild Treasurer;

AS: Dr Alan Salter (Author; Psychotherapist);

AW: Ann Ward (Courses Officer Laban Guild; Council Member);

CM: Dr Carol-Lynne Moore: (Author; President Motus Humanus);

DR: Darren Royston (Artistic Director: *Nonsuch History and Dance Company*; Council Member);

GB: Gerard Bagley: (founder Director: British Dance-Drama Theatre);

GC: The Editor (former Chair NATFHE Dance and Laban Guild Council);

JM: Jenny Moir: Council Member;

JN: Jean Newlove (Author: *Laban for Actors and Dancers*; co-author: *Laban for All*);

MW: Dr Margaret Whitehead (Former President PEAUK); Tutor: *British Ballet Organisation BBO*);

SA: Sally Archbutt (Former Head of Dance Nonington College and Director *Croydon Dance Theatre*);

VB: Vivien Bridson: (Artistic Director: *Dance Theatre Projects*);

VPD: Dr Valerie Preston Dunlop (Hon. Research Fellow LABAN; Hon. Member Laban Guild);

WL: Warren Lamb (Author; Hon. Member Laban Guild; former President Laban Guild).

WM: Walli Meier (Author; *Dance Movement Therapist*; Consultant *Dance East*; Hon. Member Laban Guild)

Before recording the views of members, perhaps we should look at the Constitutional Objects of the Guild, namely:

OBJECTS

The purpose of the Guild shall be the promotion and advancement of the study and practice of human movement particularly recognising the contribution made by the late Rudolf Laban ...

- To provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and the promulgation of knowledge of human movement and to foster awareness of the significance of movement particularly but not exclusively in the spheres of therapy, action profiling (now movement pattern analysis), personality assessment, ergonomics, social skills, drama, choreography and dance performance as recognised areas of Laban's work.
- To encourage and participate in research in the study of human movement and to publish the results of such research.
- To promote the development of movement as an art form.
- To hold lectures, courses, conferences and discussion groups to impart a wider understanding of the artistic, cultural, educational and therapeutic significance of the art of movement.
- To promote live demonstrations, festivals, recreative and community dance groups and other like expositions

Q1: The Guild's Objects:

GC: The following questions arise:

Does the Magazine adequately reflect and promote the Guild's Constitutional Objects in the specified areas? Could it do more in respect of:

a) 'the provision of opportunities for the exchange of ideas and the promotion and advancement of the study and practice of human movement' in the spheres cited in the Constitution?

CM: There has been consistent improvement in the magazine, both in format and content, over the last few years, and in this sense the publication is promoting the Guild's objectives.

AW: As usual the Editor has raised some very pertinent issues. The role of the magazine is not mentioned in the Constitution, but the magazine is undoubtedly a major force for "providing opportunities for the exchange of ideas ... for encouraging participation in research and publishing the results of such research and promoting "the development of movement as an art form", and is doing all of this exceptionally well.

AC: The Guild magazine appears as a singular consistent, professional and interesting flagship publication for the promotion of Laban's work.

WM: The Guild Magazine goes as far as it can to fulfil the Constitutional objectives of the association. However, in order to improve the range and quality of the contributions the Guild itself must offer more opportunities for stimulating discourse and activities to engage present members and attract new ones.

JN: The magazine does reflect accurately what is going on in the Guild but it appears that not much is going on. The post-bag is not generating enough feedback.

DR: '... the Guild should be an organisation where we can all share our interpretations and continue to learn from each other. The Guild should help practitioners connect back to the source of their own approach and ask people to question how they can develop the work in the future ... It must be the value of the Guild – both to record and support those who wish to acknowledge how the Laban approach has benefited their work, but also to find ways for Laban's ideas to be exposed to more practitioners, students, teachers, and groups, so that they can offer their own responses to working in this systematic and comprehensive way'.

SA: The objects of the Guild are being met in the Magazine, but in my view the Constitutional Objects need adjusting: they place too little emphasis on study, movement knowledge and practical experience and too much on listing fields of application. There is no mention of Education and only dance at the end of the list – although this is one of the main sources of interest in movement ideas, concepts and applications.

VB: As the Magazine is limited by the articles submitted for publication, and the commissioning of work by the editor, I think it does a pretty good job within its terms of reference. I feel, however, that there should be an attempt to compare Laban's work with that of other practitioners in the field of movement and dance, people both parallel in time with Laban and those researching at present.

b) 'the encouragement and the publication of research in the study of human movement and the publication of such research'?

VB: This requires that future editors understand the nature of research and have the facility to assess international work. It is also true that many of the students at Laban Creekside have little access to Laban's concepts and would therefore profit from access to a well-written and informative Magazine.

AW: Many individuals pursue their own research, based on the application of Laban Analysis to their own professional working lives, and the Magazine provides a valuable platform for disseminating their findings, offering food for thought to other members and asking them to engage in debate.

VPD: For research of any stature to flourish it needs a context of a scholarly community and you only find that in a higher education establishment or a quite exceptional dance company. You need to attract funding but grants can only be given in rigorous circumstances of institutional support. To date research takes place across the globe by people attached to HE or university study and that is probably right. The Guild was formed and its constitution first written before the *Art of Movement Studio* opened and as soon as it did some of the aims of the constitution *ipso facto* passed to where Laban and Lisa Ullmann were. By 1954 the Laban Centre was named alongside the *AMS* as Laban's own research base. The Guild has always focused on other things than research and that is probably how it has to remain.

CM: Valerie Preston-Dunlop refers to Laban as an "artist-researcher" in her biography. While Laban had two "research" organizations – the Choreographic Institute in Germany and later the *Laban Centre* as adjunct to the *Art of Movement Studio*, neither of these organizations were associated with institutions of higher education or received grant funding. Laban himself functioned as an independent scholar, and his research methods, while informal, were in many ways rigorous – for we are the beneficiaries of his ground-breaking studies. Although the Guild may not be in a position to sponsor funded research, it certainly can assist in publication. In this sense, an inclusive view of what constitutes research would be welcome. That is, research articles could encompass reports on research conducted as part of course work at the undergraduate and graduate levels, studies

by independent artist-researchers working in the field, as well as formally funded projects.

JN: I would disagree with the notion that a formal academic context is needed for this. Most rewarding research necessarily begins with research in the field - as witnessed by Laban himself.

GC: Looking back over 60 years of Guild Magazines, there is evidence of published articles on **individual** research which have come from members of the Guild (including Laban's own writings). Of course institutional backing is always a great asset, but there are many independent scholars who continue to write and draw upon their wide knowledge and experience. It would **not** be true to say, as does Valerie, that the Guild's constitutional responsibilities for research passed to the *Art of Movement Studio* and the *Laban Centre* - for when Lisa Ullmann Chaired the Guild **after** the formation of the *Art of Movement Studio*, research commitments continued to be embodied in the Guild's Constitution which she helped to formulate. Laban and Lisa were only too aware of the considerable number of scholars who were then – and still are – members of the Guild.

MW: There is **no doubt** that the Magazine is a scholarly document which is highly valued and engages and informs members, including myself. Research articles are **excellent** and the knowledge shared with readers is of a high level and is surely **unique**.

WL: The "context of scholarly community for research of any stature", as Valerie states, can be highly desirable, but Guild members know that "research takes place across the globe" and does not necessarily have any connection with institutions of higher education – including LABAN Creekside. Whether the degree of scholarly research which exists at any particular academic institution or dance company is superior to what exists elsewhere, is open to question. Many members are, or have been, engaged in highly scholarly Laban Studies research which takes place outside the institutions she defines. The world would be a poorer place without these discoveries, inventions, theories, and the many achievements of stature which result. The Guild has encouraged and published research in the past and is doing so again, and it is highly desirable that it should continue to encourage research over the whole gamut of Laban's work.

WM: Might it be an idea to point readers in the direction of some of the past published articles (of over half a century) in some of the early magazines, giving details of where they might be found. Not many have the inclination to delve into archival material in London.

c) 'the promotion and development of movement as an art form'?

AC: Whilst articles on Dance as Art Form are seldom in evidence, there are few Laban practitioners working in this field. There are, however, many interesting choreographers exploring and performing in areas that relate to Laban's theories. What is needed here is an informed contributor willing to run a quarterly column for the magazine.

JN: It does to some extent but is limited to dance; but the art of movement with regard to other art forms is lacking - particularly drama.

GC: With the exception of the annual review of *Suffolk Youth Theatre* by the editor, there are few if any contributions on drama by members engaged in this work.

WM: Apart from a small handful of specialists within the Guild, the promotion and development as an art suffers badly. As teaching practitioners, we are not sufficiently demanding of technique, clarity in space and dynamics of our students on dance courses apart from some higher educational dance establishments.

VB: the majority of Guild personnel have little or no knowledge of theatre and professional dance. It perhaps means that not only must the editor fulfil the research projects but he/she should be able to commission work from a wide variety of theatre experts.

d) 'the reporting of lectures, conferences and discussion

groups to impart a wider understanding of the artistic, cultural, educational and therapeutic significance of movement’?

AC: The annual AGM day serves to bring members together and works to maintain and publicise evidence of current practice, projects and research. It continues to function in high profile venues and I believe can be viewed as a successful event. However, it is not significantly well attended by Guild members and the costs of running this event are rising annually.

JN: It doesn't go as far as it should in this respect. What seems to be the problem is where does the amateur and the professional status begin and end – both are important.

WM: The reporting of Guild activities is adequate. Perhaps some critical appraisal, applying an understanding of Laban's principles, of some current professional performances might be of interest. The Guild does not offer enough opportunities for attending lectures or discussion groups. Some years ago there was an excellent discussion on eukinetics, but there has not been once since that I am aware of.

GC: The recent *International Conference at LABAN* with its 86 speakers may well have begun to meet WM's concern above. Many members of the Guild provided papers on Laban-related topics for this event and we keenly await the published Proceedings and edited versions for the Magazine.

e) the reporting of live demonstrations, festivals and recreative and community dance?

GC: The reporting of Guild and LinC initiated community dance events has been the staple diet of Guild Magazines in the past.

JN: The magazine can only reflect what is going on in the Guild; what is needed is a programme with far more lively classes throughout the country, similar to the children of Theatre Train.

GC: And the willingness of those so engaged to submit articles for the Magazine!

f) other aspects of movement and dance which the Magazine might represent?

SA: The focus of the Guild, and therefore the Magazine, should now be: **Reaching out:** to other related organisations, artistic, scientific, sharing our interest in the practice and study of movement; making **Connections:** building bridges, creating new partnerships, emphasising links, national and international; ensuring **Objectivity:** equality of access and exposure; **Acknowledgement of diversity:** of practice, theory and application; enhancing **Languages and communication:** verbal, notational, practical, academic, stylistic.

Q2: The Guild's Membership:

GC: In addition to our membership in the UK, we have members and library recipients of our Magazine in Eire, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Norway, USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

a) What measures would you recommend for increasing our membership/readers: ie students in training; newly graduated students; dance and drama teachers; movement therapists; movement pattern analysts; professional dancers; choreographers; actors; dance theorists; dance theatre critics etc.? What specific innovations in the Magazine would attract new members/readers? (ie on content and format?)

b) Might we reasonably expect recruitment from LABAN (Creekside) students and graduates – (whom we must assume have already studied Laban's ideas) - and other institutions concerned with movement and dance?

AC: As stated some years ago in the Editor's Questions to the Experts, and reiterated here, the impact of Laban's work in the UK has much diminished, the Guild membership is top heavy with retirement members and volunteers for Officers on Council

are difficult to find.

MW: I have some concern that the Guild does not seem, at the moment, to be attracting many new young members/students. (As far as I am aware – I could be wrong).

WM: Reading the Magazine, however good, is not going to produce new members. The Guild has to try to provide a more stimulating and contemporary programme of courses and activities to entice new and particularly, younger people, to increase its membership.

MW: Do all PGCE Dance students know of/join the Guild? Do PE students who specialise in Dance know of/join the Guild? I am doing some work with the *British Ballet Organisation* – mentoring a few students. They could certainly benefit for Laban's work. (They do not only do ballet, but also other forms of dance). There are also a great many dance students in institutions around the country. When I last saw one of my BBO students she was teaching a group of Gifted and Talented students under the Government/Arts Council scheme. These students would also be prospective Guild members.

AW: It would surely benefit students on specific, highly focussed full-time courses to realise that there are many applications of Laban's work and that there is a support network available through Guild membership. The diversity of topics covered in the magazine over a year already seems to cater for a wide range of readers and could possibly attract more members if we had the means to market it to a wider audience.

JN: I don't think you can just read about events. The Guild needs to promote sessions that would generate interest and critical discussion. There is too much lecturing and not enough doing.

VPD: Students can read the Guild's magazine without becoming a member and that publication is the main output of the Guild at present. I cannot see that a weekend course in community dance leadership such as that offered by the Guild currently would attract *LABAN* students who are studying community dance leadership full-time for a year with a Diploma qualification at the end of it. What could the Guild with its present programme offer undergraduate and graduate students? I would need convincing that membership would be to their benefit, as things are, but in the future, who knows?

WL: I note Valerie's recognition that 'students can read the Guild magazine (at *LABAN*) without becoming a member' of the Guild. This raises two questions:

1) Does Valerie (as an Honorary Member of the Guild) encourage the perusal of the single library copy of the magazine and encourage students to read it or buy a copy? 2) Does she recommend that students and ex-students become members of the Guild if her opinion is asked? There is clear evidence that the many students at *LABAN* get little or no teaching about Laban's wide-ranging movement research and some might want to become associated with the community of Guild members which includes scholars of high stature as well as others who have pursued divergent paths, all inspired by some aspect of Laban's work. Now is a good time for young people to join the Guild - just as a new generation is promoting development and becoming associated with the aims and vision which Laban himself endowed to the only organisation to which he gave his name in the U.K.

AW: As a former membership secretary, I do think that increasing the membership should be a primary aim: if you want to subscribe to *Animated*, you have to join the *Foundation for Community Dance*. Realistically, I still see *Movement and Dance* as an "in house" magazine, though thanks to the current editor it has widened its appeal and the content has been lifted to a much higher academic level. On a more practical note, students, members and potential members may be attracted by the offer of advice on teaching and occasional sample lesson plans or ideas for dance. There are, however, obvious constraints on the size of the magazine imposed by financial considerations and the size of the editorial team.

Q3: The distribution of the Guild's Magazine Movement &

Dance:

GC: Our world-wide readership to some extent influences the content of our Magazine – instance the recent contributions from *Motus Humanus* in America. What are your views on the following:

a) Is the Magazine too parochial - too 'in-house' to justify general distribution - or should it widen its appeal ie: b) Would the Magazine have wider appeal if it allocated more space to: therapy, MPA, drama, dance criticism, professional dance, personality assessment, social skills, notation, film and video, theatre?

CM: The question has been raised as to whether the magazine is "parochial" and that could be defined in several ways, as being too narrowly aimed at Laban insiders or as not covering a sufficiently broad spectrum of movement disciplines. As a general theory of human movement, Laban's work can, and should, provide a central focus for the magazine. Application of theory in a broad variety of fields would increase the appeal. It would be particularly valuable for there to be more coverage of how Laban theory in being developed outside the U.K. The inclusion of contributions from *Motus Humanus* makes a start in this direction. But there is much going on in Europe (Germany and France) as well as Latin America and Asia. It would be extremely valuable to have one publication that reports on international developments. The Guild magazine is in the best position to assume this kind of leadership, assuming cooperation with sister organizations and adequate resources can be secured.

JN: Yes I think it would after all, the art of movement embraces a very wide range of activities.

GB: Movement and Dance is worthy of a much larger organisation – over the years the Guild Magazine has travelled the full spectrum from the merely parochial to real appeal. How to economise – suggestion: Let *Movement & Dance* be a bumper annual + 3 news-sheets. Investigate the possibility of Laban Blog Centre.

VB: If general distribution is an aim then the content should be much broader. It should be a Magazine for everyone interested in movement and dance - not specifically Laban insiders.

c) Should the Magazine be available to non-members (students in movement and dance training, post-graduates, dance leaders, professional dancers and movement specialists?)

AS: The idea that the Magazine is not available to non-members is surely odd. The standard to justify wider interest in the Laban perspective offered has been met in recent issues and should be maintained. The Guild is perhaps too humble and self-restrictive, but then it has always seemed subordinate to the aims of Studio and Centre.

JN: The Magazine has become much more professional and should be available to all prepared to pay for it.

WM: If financially possible the magazine should be available to non-members.

MW: If we want to attract new members perhaps we should think about what type of content the Magazine might include which would inform, educate and support these young people in their different settings as dancers and teachers. Laban work has **so much** to offer, if we can find a way to reach people. There is **so much expertise** in the Guild that could be shared with others new to this approach to dance. Here I am not only talking about scholarly work, but practitioner skills such as motivating and teaching classes, etc. (? Michael Platt and many others)

Q4: Publications of other organisations:

GC: In reviewing the role of the Guild's Magazine we might acknowledge the publications of other organisations concerned with movement, dance and theatre - for example:

Animated – published by the *Foundation for Community Dance (FCD)* to which the Laban Guild is affiliated;

Dance Matters – published by the *National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA)* with whom the Guild has a few members in common;

Physical Education Matters: published by *afPE* of which there are members in common with the Guild (including a former President of *PEAUK*).

Dance Theatre Journal: published by *LABAN* Creekside. This publication usually devotes one back page to news of *LABAN* activities.

The Association of Dance Movement Psychotherapy (ADMT) publishes its magazine **e-motion** quarterly.

a) Bearing in mind the above publications, what distinctive orientation (if any) do you consider the Guild's Movement and Dance Magazine should have in the future?

JN: I believe there should be at least one major professional Laban magazine to inform the public about Laban's work and its present day application. One would normally look to *LABAN*. But relegation of Laban issues to a back page sadly reflects the priorities of an institution bearing Laban's name.

WM: We do need input on a wider understanding of the educational and therapeutic significance of the art of movement. The primary school sector of education needs reaffirmation of Laban fundamentals and how to apply them. There is a need to highlight movement observation towards personality assessment as opposed to only hearing about MPA. More emphasis and clarification should be given to the role of applying Laban fundamentals to Drama in general and characterisation in particular. I feel the Guild could offer some help in critical appraisal. Dance criticism based on an understanding of Laban analysis would help writers to illuminate their observations with much more excitement and clarity. Above all I feel strongly that not sufficient help is given to students studying Laban analysis on how to apply their understanding in whatever sphere of movement and dance in which they are specialising.

GB: If there is to be a future for Laban one must confront the many contradictions in his theories to which I have discretely referred to in my earlier essays in *Movement & Dance*.

AW: From experience, I am aware that the magazine is still the only contact many of our geographically wide spread members have with the Guild and I would like to see a more personal approach sustained in one section. Members who have completed our *Dance Leaders Course* form a high proportion of our membership at the moment and are always interested in and inspired by the achievements of their fellows. I would like to see a regular, designated slot for an article from ex-students in each issue, but of course this depends on willing contributors. Do members offer to submit articles? Do members send details of your classes? Do members send diary dates? Do member put information onto the e-flash service? If members would welcome a more personal touch, it is up to them to provide the information for it.

GC: Jenny Elliott's article in the current issue is a good example of this.

JN: All new members should have a real chance to voice their concerns in the magazine - which is their mouthpiece. Even though the magazine has improved, no-one should be able to control criticism and distort Laban's ideals. I have been waiting for the opportunity to say this for a long time.

AC: I believe any critical debate needs to address the fragile state of this organisation and search for new perspectives and procedures. If the survival of Laban's work is deemed to be of value to the intelligence of cultural life and the growth of consciousness, Guild members need urgently to address how this might be currently achieved.

JM: Before actually leaving the Council, I would like to suggest again, as I did in 2006, that Council consider joining forces with another organisation in order to survive into the future. ie the *Exercise, Movement & Dance Partnership* is a newly-formed organisation comprising the *Keep Fit Association, the Fitness*

League and the Medau Society, all of whom decided they'd be stronger together and better able to rise to the new challenges which all such organisations (including the *Laban Guild*) are facing.

Q5: Editorial implications:

GC: Whilst the Editor (a voluntary time-consuming role) writes articles, reviews and endeavours to generate contributions by means of question and answer features, he relies upon members themselves to provide *regular* copy on a wide range of topics; he also relies upon established 'Correspondents' to supply regular material well before copy-date – not least in the following roles: Council Correspondent, Courses and Conference Correspondent, Laban-based Classes Correspondent, Academic Matters Correspondent, Theatre Listing Correspondent, Professional Dance Critics Correspondent, Drama Correspondents, Photographers, Sub-editors, Proof-readers, Advertising Manager, Secretarial support. **(Many of these appointments do not exist and state of crisis exists at the moment).** To be effective, all of these appointees need to have internet and broadband facilities so that communication with the Editor and page-setter/designer can be swift and electronic.

What measures can be taken to enhance the editorial process?

GB: God Bless past and present Editorial Team – they will always have to depend upon volunteers ...unless?

Q6: Financial Implications:

SA: We need a fund-raising Manager or Team (professional if the Guild can afford it).

JN: More committed members will generate more funds, whilst I hope still to have friends in the Guild my honest opinion is that it needs shaking up to meet the demands of the 21st C.

VB: If the publication is to succeed it needs more finance but how this can be realised is hard to envisage in present times unless the Guild can solicit some kind of bequest.

AM: (Guild Treasurer) In 2008, similarly to 2007, the Guild spent more money than it received in income and money had to be transferred from the CAF Savings Account to the current account to cover day-to-day expenses ... If we continue as we are within about 6 to 7 years the Guild will be insolvent. The Guild must look to increase our income by:

- Increasing the membership
- Organising events that will both raise funds and attract new members
- Organising more training courses which spread the knowledge of Laban's ideas
- Recruit new members and raise funds.

GC: Magazine in Crisis:

If the present standard of the Magazine is to be maintained (let alone improved) and its circulation increased, then a major allocation of funds and immediate editorial help will be required. The Editor welcomes further contributions to this debate.

Tribute to Veronica Jobbins

sent by Gordon Curl to the NDTA AGM as a tribute to Veronica Jobbins after 20 years as Chair
- with appreciation from the Laban Guild

May I pay tribute to:-

**a lady of great charm and ebullience -
a meticulous administrator -
a skilful negotiator -**

a person of vision and passion for the place of dance in education

(and if I may add a domestic post-script) - a most courageous and committed NDTA Chair (and a most caring mother).

I mention this last domestic tribute because I vividly remember when for 20 years I was the Chair of *NATFHE Dance* and regularly attended meetings of the *Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET)*, and there of course (regularly), was Veronica as Chair of *NDTA* – sitting around a Board Room table with an august gathering of well-known dance organisations (*RAD, RB, RFB, ISTD, LSCD, LCMD, CNA, ILEA, DES*), and many other representatives. But Veronica did not sit by herself on these occasions, she brought along an extra member (her first-born child – I think it was Amy), and she cradled Amy against the background hum of animated voices - including those of Dame Beryl Grey, Dame Ninette de Valois, Professor Allen, James Ranger, Peter Brinson, Peter Cox, Doreen Bird, Nicholas Dromgoole, Bridget Espinosa, Fergus Early, Mollie Abbott, Margaret Dunn, Dr Mollie Davies, Dr Marion North - and many other distinguished dance people. But the baby was a perfect contributor to those meetings – she gurgled her approval at the relevant proposals and voted on all the right occasions – so much so that both Amy and Veronica received commendation from the Chairman for their adroit contributions to the proceedings. No one could have had a better training in committee protocol than Veronica's own child-in-arms. All were taken aback with admiration!

The other tribute, which I must highlight, was her skill in negotiating, for I recall I was Chairman of a Consortium of *NDTA, NATFHE Dance, SCHODE, CDET* which was invited in the 80s to attend the *DES* to make a case for *Dance in the National Curriculum*. We went armed with all the most powerful justifications for our place in the school timetable. But it became abundantly clear right from the start of this meeting with Government officials (who were not HMIs), that they did not seem to know the difference between St Vitus's Dance and the Art of Dance. They mumbled on about 'PT' and 'Rock and Roll' and could not seem to see what *Dance in the National Curriculum* was all about – until Veronica came to the rescue. She skilfully and passionately laid on it on the line that *Dance in the National Curriculum* had 'a quite distinct identity' – not to be confused with recreation, sport and therapy (as valuable as those things were). She hammered home the essential *artistic* nature of dance and that it *would not just do* to have Hockey specialists (unless of course they were trained dance specialists as well) teaching dance. Veronica's passion was a sight to behold, and the Government officials were open-mouthed in amazement at her eloquence. I think that dance in the curriculum owes a great deal to NDTA's retiring Chair!

Veronica – you are a National Treasure, admired throughout the land! Our warmest greetings and thanks!

Gordon Curl Hon. Vice President Laban Guild
(The Guild sent a floral tribute to Veronica)



Laban International Conference (24 - 26 October 2008) at LABAN Creekside London

seasoned and inspired teaching of Laban influenced Gisela Peters-Rohse in Cologne

Laban International Conference posed the question: How relevant are Rudolf Laban's ideas today and how are they being developed in the performing arts internationally? Conference presenters and delegates from 26 countries addressed this question through papers, workshops, performances, films and lecture demonstrations in a lively exchange, making clear that the answer to the question is: indeed they are relevant today and their development by scholars, teachers and artists is enthusiastically continuing.

The conference provided over 76 presentations drawn from theory and practice through workshops, lecture demonstration and academic papers. These included:

- A live performance of Rudolf Laban's 1928 dance theatre work *Green Clowns* re-staged and directed by Alison Curtis-Jones and Valerie Preston-Dunlop, as well as the launch of a documentary film on the sources, framework and processes involved in recreating the work at Laban in 2008
- A practical session on the work of William Forsythe, led by former Ballett Frankfurt dancer, Ana Catalina Roman
- The launch of Valerie Preston-Dunlop's research project, "Developing a method for mapping the creative processes of multimedia performance works using choreological perspectives, with William Forsythe's *The Loss of Small Detail* as the exemplar," supported by grant from the *Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)*
- A demonstration of *Living Architecture: Rudolf Laban and the Geometry of Dance*, launching the film by Valerie Preston-Dunlop and Anna Carlisle on the spiritual content of space harmony
- A connection between Space harmony locations and musical pitch were shown in a duo by Johan Stjernholm while *Living Architecture* of the Creekside building was presented by architect Sarah Burkhalter, and Julia Gleich's dancers demonstrated spatial vectors in ballet
- Penelope Best's workshop represented Laban's ideas in Dance Movement Therapy
- Rosemary Brandt demonstrated her sophisticated application of choreological principles to the teaching of ballet
- Vanessa Ewan and an actor from *Central School of Speech of Drama* illustrated Laban concepts in the training of articulation of the actor. Further presentation relating to actor training were given by Tracy Collier and Dick McCaw.
- Diane Dulicae and Marion North addressed the question: Do babies have personality evident in their movement behaviour? James McBride presented the posture/gesture merger theory of Warren Lamb.
- Dance documentation was addressed by Catherine Foley on the role of the archive for archeochoreology, by Jean Jarrell on the layers of symbology in notation and performance of Sonia Rafferty's *Shoal*, by Melanie Clarke on reconstructing from the score of Rainer's Trio A, Katya Savrami on her innovative development of notation for the film director and by Chris Clow on archiving choreographic process on film
- Discussions of the loss of Laban's work in dance in UK schools by Veronica Jobbins and Lorna Sanders was balanced by a vision for the future by Maggie Killingbeck and Michael Platt's current practice in dance drama and a film presentation of children dancing under the

The spread of Laban's work was shown in presentations on dance in Australia and Canada, Anita Donaldson on Laban in the Conservatoire in Hong Kong, Milca Leon on creative dance in Israel, Monique Kroepfli on contemporary dance in Switzerland, Miriam Huberman and Isabelle Marques on dance education in Mexico and Brazil, Karen Bradley movement profiling in the United States, Claudine Swann on a choreological approach to dance teaching in Belgium. Laban Movement Analysis for conductors was explored by Charles Gambetta and for her professional practice by choreographer Loretta Livingstone. Academic papers included presentations by Linda Ashley on dance education in New Zealand, Ramsay Burt on Laban and 21st century European theatre, Jane Carr on the problems of significance, Gordon Curl on virtualities in dance and the arts and Michael Huxley on movement and the whole man.

Overall the conference brought together a community of professionals, established and new, with a common interest enabling them to make plans for future development and for future networking to set up collaborative research and support for isolated practitioners who are introducing Laban's ideas in their own place of work.

Conference proceedings

The organisers of the *Laban International Conference* are working towards publication of the Conference Proceedings by the end of 2009. A panel will select from the presentations to ensure a viable publication size. The selection panel, drawn from delegates and chairpersons, is charged with reflecting the breadth of areas presented at the conference, as well as representing the global nature of the event, ensuring a mix of established and up and coming scholars and a balance between practice and papers.

Valerie Preston-Dunlop

Editor's Note:

The Laban International Conference at Creekside was the last of the celebratory events of 2008 - and the Guild is most grateful to *LABAN* and the Guild's Honorary Member Valerie Preston-Dunlop for having inspired all of these highly successful events. We are also grateful to members of the Guild for having cooperated in these initiatives – whether by advertising the events world-wide in its Magazine, giving conference presentations, helping to administer the programme at Dartington, or to Council itself for having provided funding and bursaries to support these events. We are also deeply indebted to the Guild's Patron William Elmhirst for having sponsored the Dartington celebration most generously and to our President Anna Carlisle MBE for her considerable involvement.



Congratulations to Hon. Member Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest with Ivor Forbes Guest on receiving lifetime achievement awards from the American Society for Aesthetics

Report from the Courses Officer

THE LABAN GUILD DANCE LEADERS COURSE IS BACK!

Following a break within which we have completed a major revision of the course and its administration, we are delighted to announce our NEXT COURSE starting in SUFFOLK in May 2009.

The venue will be the Seagull Theatre in Lowestoft, a centre for community activities with a large dance studio with sprung floor and lots of ancillary space and facilities. A practical information day will be held on 28 March. Full details are available from the Courses Officer, Ann Ward, as below. Our thanks go to committee member Mel Horwood, local to the area, for playing a major part in setting this up.

We also hope to start a course on the S Coast at Bexhill in the Autumn and have enquiries about another two possible courses for 2010, one in the Wirral and another in S Wales. The popularity of this course and the value placed on it by both agencies and students is very heartening for the Training Committee and makes all the work that goes into it worth while. Do read Jenny Elliott's article to see what the course can lead to.

The essential nature and content of the course are unchanged, but every aspect has been reviewed and tightened, with greater emphasis on the application of Laban Analysis to every aspect of the course and on teaching practice for the student, plus the introduction of regular tutorials. Systems of recording and evaluating have been thoroughly overhauled and will result,

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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Format: email or scanner-ready copy only

unfortunately but inevitably, in more administrative work for tutors, but our aim has been to present the course in such a way as to make it appropriate for wider accreditation.

Our next task is to institute of system of regular tutor training to make sure that all our tutors understand the new requirements and have the opportunity to advance their own studies.

The pilot of our new 3 weekend module in choreography in Suffolk was completed in November. Those taking part all welcomed the experience and felt that they had learned a lot. This course will be refined in the light of student and tutor evaluations before it is presented again. We hope that this will be the first of several such modules – another task for the future!

And we still have members who regularly use our Foundation Course and Certificated Courses for Children. Teachers in particular find these invaluable in motivating students and, in the case of the Foundation Course and the top level Certificate Course, providing an alternative to GCSE for less academic students who want to keep dancing.

For details of all these courses, please contact the Courses officer:

Ann Ward

email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

LABAN GUILD DANCE LEADERS COURSES

Seagull Theatre, Lowestoft, Suffolk - May 2009
Bexhill, Sussex - Autumn 2009

The 12 weekends of tuition by highly experienced tutors will lead to a National Governing Body Award. 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. For further details, please apply to:
Ann Ward, Courses Officer for the Laban Guild
Email: awardglenkeen@bigfoot.com

Distribution:

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Diary of Events

LABAN GUILD AGM:

Rudolf Laban: An Inspiration for Current Theatre Practice

Saturday 21ST MARCH 2009: 10.45 – 18.00

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART

Nicholas Cooper House, 18-22 Chenies Street, London, WC1E 7PA

Contact: Bobbie Millar : email: b.j.millar@btinternet.com

February 28th: A day of community dance in Cambridge. The tutor is Wendy Hermelin and the theme will be *Transitions – Winter into Spring*. We will be dancing creatively in 2's, 3's and larger groups and we will develop a movement choir by the end of the day. The session is open to dancers of all ages and experience and costs £25 for Guild members, £20 for students and the unwaged, and £30 for non members. Any profits go to the Laban Guild.
E-mail: hfrancomb@hrsfc.ac.uk, or write to Hazel Francomb, Hills Road Sixth Form College, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8PE

March 28th: Dance Leaders practical information day - Suffolk (see Courses Officer's report)

Theatre Listings:

Information : www.laban.org

LABAN Theatre Creekside London SE8 3DZ
Box Office 020 8469 9500 **Spring 09**

Thursday 5 + Friday 6 February 1430hrs + 1930hrs
LABAN STUDENTS HISTORICAL PROJECTS

MIXED BILL £6 / £3 (concessions)

Second year degree students perform works by pioneering choreographers representing key periods in the history of contemporary dance. The evening includes 4 contrasting works that span the period 1928 - 1998: Green Clowns - Rudolf Laban, Primitive Mysteries – Martha Graham, A Cunningham Based Event and Scan – Rosemary Butcher.

Tuesday 17 – Thursday 19 February

IN THE MOMENT FESTIVAL OF IMPROVISED DANCE AND MUSIC

Various Prices for individual performances – Festival pass £25

This is the first major collaboration between Trinity College of Music and Laban. Directed by Douglas Finch and Lizzi Kew-Ross, and produced by Nick Green.

Tuesday 17 February

Spontaneous Convention

1.05pm - Old Royal Naval College Chapel

A brief introduction to traditions of musical improvisation with vocal and instrumental music from medieval Spain led by Belinda Sykes, the art of organ extemporisation featuring Trinity College of Music students, Earl Brown's graphic scores, and Barry Guy's *Bird Gong Game* for ensemble and improvising soloist. Mark Lockheart guests as the saxophone soloist with Ian Mitchell conducting. **Admission Free**

Tuesday 17 February

In the MOMENT Open from 6.00pm

Movement and sound fill the extraordinary architectural spaces of the award winning landmark building of Laban, with an *en masse* realisation of Yvonne Rainer's *Trio A* and intimate site-specific and theatrical performances, culminating in a grand opera devised and improvised by the entire cast including the Contemporary Music Group, Chamber Orchestra, soloists, chorus, dancers, lighting technicians and stage crew (Directed by Douglas Finch, Linda Hirst, Lizzi Kew-Ross, Natasha Lohan and Dominic Murcott).
Special guest artists include dancer and choreographer Eva Karczag, with artwork and music by Chris Crickmay and Sylvia Hallett. **£10 / £8 (concessions)**

Wednesday 18 February

Route 88 7.00pm – Laban, Creekside.

Jazz meets the classics through the art of the piano. The groundbreaking American pianist Uri Caine performs as the improvising soloist in his jazz transcription of the *Brahms/Handel Variations* with Trinity College of Music Chamber Orchestra conducted by Nic Pendlebury. The evening will also feature the remarkable classical improviser Douglas Finch, with professors and students from Trinity's Jazz and Keyboard Faculties. There will be fresh takes on jazz standards, Debussy Preludes and tunes

suggested by the audience....

£10 / £8 (concessions)

Wednesday 18 February

Beats in the Bar – Special Edition 9.30pm – Up the Creek, Greenwich.

An informal session with professors from Trinity's Jazz Faculty who will be joined by Uri Caine. **£5 / £2(concessions). Tickets only available on the door.**

Thursday 19 February

Moving Gallery – The Mysterium

7.00pm with final performance at 9.30pm - Trinity College of Music, King Charles Court

Members of the audience are asked to enter the show any time between 7.00pm and 7.30pm. Butlers Bar will be open from 6.30pm

Using all the spaces of Sir Christopher Wren's great baroque building, TrinityLaban students and guest artists create an interpretation of Scriabin's strange artistic prophecy:

£10 / £8 (concessions)

Institute of Movement Pattern Analysis
presents

Introduction to Movement Pattern Analysis

a three-day seminar with

James McBride
Carol-Lynne Moore

and special guest
Warren Lamb

May 2-4, 2009

The Old Vicarage
East Dean, West Sussex

Movement Pattern Analysis (MPA) uses observation and analysis of human movement to assess action orientation, revealing an individual's unique decision-making style.

This rare opportunity to work with three experts in the field gives each participant the opportunity to explore what embodied action reveals about decision making as a process and to apply this knowledge to enhanced self-management, career development, and productive collaboration.

For more information: www.iompa.com



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