

Movement, Dance & Drama



Geraldine Stephenson
1925 - 2017

Laban Guild Annual Conference

at

The Place, Euston, London

on

29th April 2018

Organised by the Guild, the event will include:

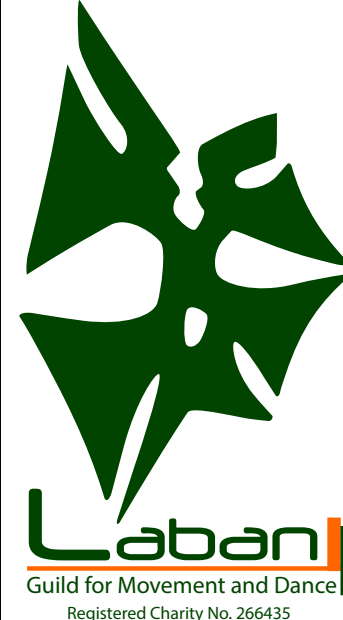
Laban lecture by Alison Curtis-Jones: *Re-imagining Laban: Traditions and Inventions. Re-staging as creative contemporary practice.*

Workshops to be led by Alison Curtis-Jones and Adrian Look

In honour of Geraldine Stephenson, an evening performance of *Drumstick* by Alison's *Summit Dance Theatre* - a piece originally choreographed by Rudolf Laban. This has met with outstanding acclaim for performances at the TrinityLABAN theatre and in July 2017 in Quebec.

There will be an opportunity for networking and to meet dancers and choreographer over a glass of wine

Photo © Alison Curtis-Jones



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Editorial

I did not know Geraldine Stephenson but it is clear from the tributes presented in this edition of the magazine that she is remembered with immense warmth and admiration; she was clearly a great teacher – leaving her students with ideas and memories which have stayed with them through their own teaching careers – and a sought after choreographer in the worlds of theatre and TV. As evidenced here she will be much missed by all who knew her.

Elsewhere in the magazine there are examples of how Laban's ideas and influence are still at work in education both in the UK and in Europe, and a report of the celebration of Ann Hutchinson Guest's 99th birthday (and 50th birthday of the Language of Dance Centre).

Labanotation, I realise, gives me a link to Geraldine Stephenson for she was a founding member of the Lisa Ullmann Traveling Scholarship Fund committee and I was a recipient of the first awards which enabled me to attend the Labanotation Teachers Training course at Roehampton in 1987; Labanotation got me a job at Bedford College of Higher Education where I met Maggie Killingbeck who, twenty five years later, invited me to edit this magazine. What an interesting world we live in where paths - direct and indirect - interweave, collide and pass by without us knowing how or where they may lead.

Celebrations - Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest and LODC

Anna Carlisle, Lisa Marucci and Maggie Killingbeck

As many Guild members will know, Dr Ann Hutchinson Guest, a world-renowned expert in dance notation, dance author, researcher and founder of the Language of Dance Centre (LODC), celebrated her 99th birthday in November 2017. The LODC UK also celebrated its 50th year since the organisation was first established in London.

To mark these momentous milestones the Royal Academy of Dance hosted a special event at the end of October. The event comprised an afternoon workshop, presentations from international colleagues and a gala dinner in the evening. Following a technical warm up led by Valerie Farrant the workshop facilitated creative dance/movement through use of movement alphabet symbols. Participants responded with enthusiasm sharing their outcomes at the end of the class. This was followed by colleagues from the United States of America, Mexico and Japan sharing the impact of Ann's work on their movement/dance communities. It was clear that Ann Hutchinson Guest had been an inspiration in all of the countries that she had visited and that the language of dance approach is continuing to develop very successfully as a result.



Ann Hutchinson-Guest rehearsing Zenaïda Yanovsky and Carlos Acosta in Nijinsky's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* for the Royal Ballet

Diary Dates

Memorial Service for Geraldine Stephenson

Date: 26th April

Venue: St John's, Covent Garden

Laban Guild AGM 2018

Date: 29th April

Venue: The Place, Euston (see p.2)

Laban Guild Creative Dance Leaders Course

Dates: from April 2018 until April 2019

Venue: Ware, nr Hertford

Full details from coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk

Dance in a Day - Struggle of the Suffragettes

Egham/Virginia Water - 14th April

Hitchin 15th April

Contact Susi Thornton email: susi@thorntonclan.com

Laban Guild Summer School 2018

Date: 17th - 19th August

Venue: University of Bedfordshire, Bedford Campus

Full details from coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk

fields - all eager to line up to meet with Ann and offer their Birthday greetings.

It was an elegant and festive evening with the room full of warmth and generosity of spirit. There were heartfelt tributes from her staff, from colleagues from Japan and the USA; a biography with film of Ann's life and career; and an excellent, instructive live performance by her young students. Animated and interesting exchanges of conversation crisscrossed the room; together with the flow of champagne and a delicious buffet, this was an evening which was truly memorable - a very fine tribute to her life-long work and career. And wearing a spectacular skirt, embroidered with notation symbols, Ann was on radiant form for her own address to the assembled guests.

As we travelled home, there was much discussion of this wonderful celebratory evening but our singular topic was of course, Ann: her indomitable energy, the length of her extraordinary life and her lightness and buoyancy of spirit, truly an inspiration. We look forward to celebrating her next birthday at 100 years.

And Also

In celebration and to continue to move Ann's vision forward, the LODC is offering 50 bursaries for teachers who would like to get the necessary training to deliver the NCFE accredited Level 1 Award in Language of Dance Movement Exploration, specifically designed to be accessible to young people with special educational needs but also applicable in community, primary and secondary school settings. From 2018, the Centre will be hosting free introductory workshops open to teachers who may be interested in delivering the award for their students. To sign up to a free Language of Dance workshop, visit the www.lodc.org

The Guild sends its heartiest congratulations to Ann for her outstanding achievements and looks forward with interest to what next!

Lisa Marucci is General Manager of the Language of Dance Centre

The 'Laban Tool-box' in the Music Classroom

Angelika Wolf

Introduction

The beginning of the 20th century, a time of yearning for the discovery of individual expression, brought forth pioneers whose visions about artistic and pedagogical awakening were similar. During my research about the common ideas and principles of Rudolf Laban and Carl Orff, a German composer and founder of "Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy" (Orff-Approach), I have found an interesting link through Mary Wigman, the German Expressionist dancer. Being one of Laban's students dancing to his drumbeat in Ascona, she impressed Orff deeply when watching her performance of *Witch Dance*: "The art of Mary Wigman was very significant for me and my later work. All her dances were animated by musicality, even the music-less *Witch Dance*. She could make music with her body and transform music into corporeality. I felt that her dancing was elemental. I, too, was searching for the elemental, for elemental music" (Carl Orff: *Schulwerk - Elemental Music*. Documentation Vol. 3, 1976).

Emphasising that music begins inside human beings by listening to one's own heartbeat and breath, Orff uses the term 'elemental' for a force near the earth, natural and physical, that evokes spontaneous, personal expression in the combination of music, language and dance. Orff's recognition that elemental energy evolves from the inside of the individual to outside expression, links with Laban's thoughts about movement as an inward and outward going flow. He stresses the feeling of being in one's own body when movements emerge from an inner life, a life energy he calls effort, comparable to Orff's idea of the elemental. Both approaches, eliciting creativity from the human being, are based on a sensitive, aware body enabling to be "inside" an experience in music and dance.

When North Whitehead states that "You will come to grief as soon as you forget that your pupils have bodies" (Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education*, London: Macmillan Co. 1929) there might be a hidden message:

The spontaneous physical response of children to music (in their hopping, jumping, bouncing, swinging ...) calls out for a teacher, who does not only appreciate the child's vitality, but feels responsible to keep it alive by awakening his/her own physical energy and by diving with the children together into movement adventures.

I am fascinated by the various possibilities of how movement can be integrated into the music classroom. The following I can recommend strongly from my own experience:

"The motor-quality of music" – "music has body": Knowing that the unborn child does not only hear, but can also tactile-kinesthetically feel the colourful "soundscape" around it, can make us understand the spontaneous bodily response of children as soon as they hear music. Let's get inspired by the fact that "music has body" to the child and offer it a wide range of styles to live its movement!

"The Body Orchestra": Carl Orff's use of the term "Body Instrument" and Rudolf Laban's appreciation of the "Body Orchestra" might follow the same idea: namely to sing, play and dance from a moving body and developing its colours of sound and movement like the tones and instruments of an orchestra.

Movement shapes the playing of an instrument: Based on the idea of the body instrument, there is a world of so many possibilities in a gesture that becomes sound (flicking, dabbing, punching, slashing ...), no matter if it is body sound or an instrument connected to the body.

Movement intensifies the musical expression: The intentionally exerted gesture (instead of any insensitive move) shapes the musical expression on the instrument.

Movement develops musical knowledge: Learning with the moving body (in action) is a precondition of understanding

music and acquiring a musical language allows further development in the performance of music.

Free Dance: Free dance opens to children a wide field for exploring individual movement possibilities, structured by the movement factors of space, time, energy and guiding them increasingly to the ability to shape and form the personal movement into dance. Free dance takes its initiation from the basic movement activates (walking, running, skipping, bouncing, jumping, turning, swinging) and nourishes the child’s creativity in a balance of freedom and structure.

Group Dance (Folk dance) and Social Learning: Imitating specific steps and gestures of traditional dances and imbuing them with individual expression enable positive movement and social experiences: A feeling of well-being in the body facilitates self-confidence and the need to enrich the group dance by putting effort into its successful exertion.

The Laban-Toolbox

In his book *Modern Educational Dance* Laban develops a guideline for the teacher who uses movement (in any subject) and dance as a means to meet his pupils from where they really are - embodied beings who express themselves without inhibition. With the Sixteen Basic Movement Themes Laban introduces a range of elements that describe endless possibilities about how to generate, develop and shape movement. I regard these elements/ themes as a big ‘toolbox’ which encourages the teacher to explore, choose, combine and vary those elements fitting his teaching ideas as a means to approach music or as a means to create dance. For the graph below I have chosen and simplified those elements that Laban terms as elementary for children up to eleven years and which are also suitable to relate to the following session:

A	BODY
1	Body parts
2	Basic body activities (locomotion, gesture, rotation, elevation, stillness)
B	SPACE
1	kinesphere - general space
2	dimensions (narrow-wide)
3	level (high-middle-low)
4	pathways (straight-curved-circular)
5	shapes (round-straight-angular)
C	WEIGHT
1	dynamic (light-strong)
D	TIME
1	dynamic (sudden-sustained)
2	rhythm/metre
3	tempo (slow-fast, accelerando-ritardando)
E	FLOW
1	dynamic (free-bound)
F	RELATIONSHIP
1	individuum to group
2	individuum to object/instrument
3	Touch
4	leading and following
G	PHRASING

1	dance form
2	musical form
3	motif/phrase
4	ostinato

“Celebrating the Colours of Rain with Rhythm, Rhyme and Dance” introduces the topic of rain using various movement ideas leading to dance, rhythm and rhyme; you meet your pupils in their endless joy in embodying nature events. Here I am presenting a choice of sequences from a session I have taught at the music school “Concert Canary” at Canary Wharf/London for KS1. Preparing this session, I was reaching deeply into my ‘Laban-toolbox’ choosing and combining different elements from there in order to integrate movement and dance into a music session.

Rain Dance (free dance)
Encourage the pupils to dive into the joy of movement flow in space, introduced with body shapes and structured with a listening task. A little story guides this journey of improvisation:

‘One raindrop is falling on the earth... (A1, B5)
(Introduce the children to partial body shapes with hands and arms and angular whole body shapes. With each tone of the xylophone they make a raindrop body shape)

‘More and more raindrops are falling ... (D3)
(The children change their shapes quicker and transfer them into space. The teacher leads the tempo on the xylophone)

‘Faster and faster they become ... (A2, B4)
(The children run into space on twisted pathways with circling arm movements. Accompany now on a drum to support the increasing intensity of the rain.)

‘Raindrops are gathering in one small puddle ... (F1, B2)
(Play a soft beat on the cymbal and guide the children into one circle gathering closely.)
‘The puddle is growing ... (B2)
(With a crescendo roll on your cymbal the circle is growing)

‘The water is spreading into all directions ... (E1, B4)
(again the children run into space creating streams on twisted pathways. Play the drum again)

‘The water is gathering in two puddles ... (E1, A2, C1)
(You repeat the change of gathering in puddles and water streams several times, encouraging the pupils to listen to the increasing cymbal beats that tell them how many puddles/circles they should create. Each repetition of streams becomes even more dynamic by including turns and jumps into running. After several rounds surprise the children with one cymbal beat which calls them into one circle. Let the rain calm down by playing some tones on the xylophone again. Do the children respond with raindrop body shapes?)

It rained on Ann (Rhyme)
After the free-movement-centered task above, the last raindrop shape creates a transition to the following rhyme by asking the pupils: How do raindrops sound falling down on a window, on a metal roof, into a water barrel ...? Brainstorm with the children where they have seen and heard the rain falling down in their everyday life.

It rained on Ann. -
It rained on Fran. -
It rained on Mary Jo. -
It didn’t rain on Annabella:
She had a huuuuuuuge umbrella!
(I learned this little poem from Christoph Maubach, a music and dance pedagogue living in Australia)

Engage the pupils by introducing this little poem with language and sounding gestures. Each one of the three girls (Ann, Fran and Mary Jo) receive their special ‘rain gift’ which sounds at the end of their line: soft, quick fingertips on the floor - slightly louder, quick fingers on the floor - hands patting loudly and quickly on the thighs (C1). For Annabella you open an imaginary umbrella, a gesture rising from the chest bone (“huuuuge”) and opening to both sides (“umbrella” - B5).

On a rainy day you can bring back this little poem and develop colourful variations. Let your pupils invent various possibilities (D3) about which rain the three girls receive (one pupil leading the whole group - F4). Develop different simple movement ideas embodying the opening umbrella of Annabella: a modern umbrella that shoots out when you press the button (D1), a slowly opening umbrella (D1), a rhythmical opening umbrella (D2), a broken umbrella, ... (engage the endless phantasy of your pupils). Transferring the different kinds of rain on various drums strengthens the impression of rain and gives the pupils even more the feeling that this is a real piece of music. (G2)
To end we can perform our little poem just once more, holding hands at the last line and opening our umbrella into a big circle (B5)

Folk dance: *Nonesuch*
The traditional dance *Nonesuch* is an old English Country Dance (17th century), which was originally performed with weaving walking and skipping movements related to the lightly flowing melody. With its clear structure of the two parts, A and B that are easily distinguishable, this dance can be adapted to different themes of the “school-everyday” in our case to the image of the opening and closing umbrella (of Annabella).

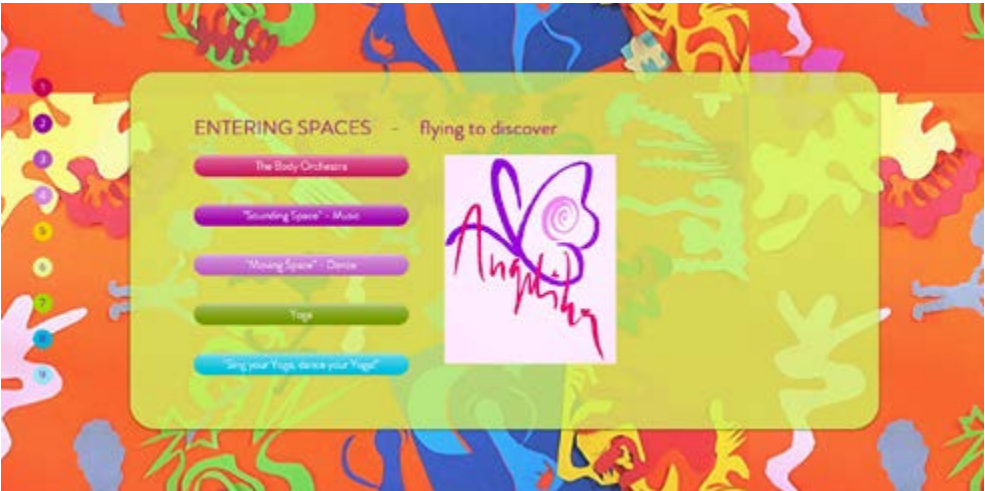
Introduce the dance while singing the melody (to learn the melody you can find some versions on iTunes and YouTube when you look for *Nonesuch* or *Specknerin*, another name for the dance (A2, G1)
AA The huuuuge umbrella is circling around (16 forward steps in a circle - B5)

BB the umbrella is closing and opening (4 steps forwards - 4 steps backwards - repeat - B2)

Now you bring in blue (or colourful) scarfs for the children in the circle (playing the umbrella) and one rain-stick for one child (playing Annabella), standing in the middle of the circle and ‘holding’ the umbrella. While singing the song, the rain-child in the middle is turning the rain-maker, and the children are circling around, moving the scarfs like raindrops falling down on the umbrella (F2). In Part B the umbrella closes, the rain-child ‘gets wet’ (as the raindrops are dancing on its head) and the umbrella opens again into the big circle (F1).The dance can start from the beginning. You can introduce a very good communication task to manage a change of roles - the rain-child makes eye-contact with a child from the circle and exchanges rain-stick with scarf. This must happen at the end of part B before the umbrella opens again. You can stay with singing the melody on raindrop voice sounds (like dip, blip, blop) or you can use the dance music of “Djingalla” (Ensemble Rossi: Djingalla 3. ISBN 978-3-3937337-38-8), that includes in its 9 repetitions dynamic changes, which encourage the children to adapt their dancing raindrops accordingly (C1).

At the end of the dance, gather the group in a lovely “umbrella-circle” and ask the children about their attitude towards raindrops after this session. Maybe you have one pupil saying at the end of the lesson: “I love rain more than sun!” as happened in my class?

Angelika Wolf has an MA from the Orff Institute and has taken specialist training in movement/dance and choir conducting. Studies in Hatha-Yoga and Laban Bartenieff Movement Analysis have deepened her experience in the holistic field of music and dance and her interest in the research of this aspect in Orff Schulwerk pedagogy. She is currently developing a concept introducing the versatile role of movement and dance to the music classroom teacher following Carl Orff’s principle of the Elemental. Mainly based in Austria she is working in various Pedagogic Universities, the University “Mozarteum” and Music Conservatoires in the field of Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy. Dedicated in spreading the Orff-Approach, she works internationally and has recently started to immerse teachers in creative approaches to music teaching in the UK. For more information contact her at www.openingspaces.org



Spiral Didactics - Revisiting *Modern Educational Dance*
Antja Kennedy

In the present time of modular programs, I find it important to revisit Laban’s seminal work,¹ and in turn, Preston-Dunlop’s *A Handbook for Modern Educational Dance*,² to re-interpret the didactical concept of the content they put forward. In this context, I define didactics as a way to organise the content or syllabus of the themes.

I am going to look at Laban’s and Preston-Dunlop’s organisation of the themes from the current perspective of the six categories that we teach in the EUROLAB certificate program of Laban/Bartenieff Movement Studies (LBMS) in Germany. These six stated categories—*body*, *effort*, *space*, *shape*, *phrasing* and *relationship* (see Fig.1)—incorporate all that Laban wrote about, even though he did not specifically address them in this way in the 1940s and 1950s. (For more detailed explanation regarding the categories, please see my article in the *Laban Guild*,³ 2016).

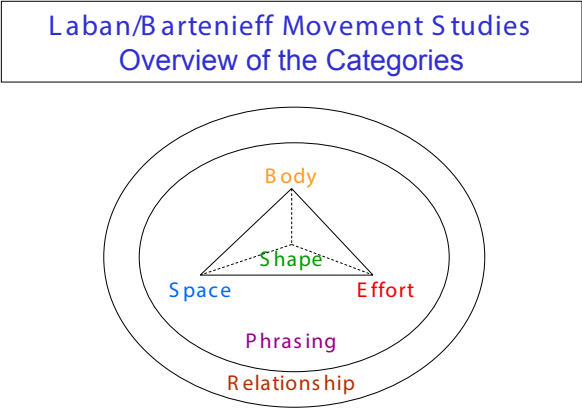


Fig.1: Diagram to show the six categories of Laban/Bartentieff Movement Studies

In his version of *Modern Educational Dance* (first published 1948), Rudolf Laban proposes 16 themes; eight of them he calls “Elementary Movement Themes”, and eight of them are named “Advanced Movement Themes”. Illustrated in the table below is my summary of Laban from an LBMS perspective:

Elementary Movement Themes of Laban, in *Modern Educational Dance*:

Nr.	<i>Body</i>	<i>Effort</i>	<i>Space</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Phrasing / Rhythm</i>
I.	body parts					
II.		weight and time factor				
III.			general space / kinesphere			
IV.		flow and space factor		still shapes		
V.					to a partner	
VI.	body actions		levels			
VII.		8 action drives				
VIII.						exertion and recuperation

Advanced Movement Themes of Laban, in *Modern Educational Dance*:

Nr.	<i>Body</i>	<i>Effort</i>	<i>Space</i>	<i>Shape</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Phrasing / Rhythm</i>
IX.			trace forms (with name)			

X.						of 8 action drive combos
XI.			central and peripheral in platonic models			
XII.		affinities & dis-affinities	affinities & dis-affinities	affinities & dis-affinities		body phrasing
XIII.	Elevation - body action: jumps		Elevation - level high			
XIV.				shape qualities	plastic feeling of group	
XV.			group in general space, on 3 levels	group shapes: symmetrical	group themes in space and shape	
XVI.	expression: as a synthesis	expression: as a synthesis	expression: as a synthesis	expression: as a synthesis		

As one can see, Laban offers an ordering of the themes in which he does not go from “A to Z” in one category, but keeps changing from one to the next. He even proposes that “one theme need not be fully assimilated (...) until the next one is started” (p.28). Laban uses this order “along a scale of increasing complexity” (p.28) and in line with child development. This order of the themes can also naturally be used for adults.

In 1963 Valerie Preston-Dunlop published *A Handbook for Modern Educational Dance*,⁴ in which she develops Laban’s 16 themes. Her elaborations presented two different perspectives. Firstly, she added aspects which Laban went on to clarify after the publishing of his book. For example, in the second theme (II) she went not only into the effort factors of *weight* and *time* separately, but also into the combinations of *rhythm state*—which are *weight* and *time* together. Secondly, she contributed her own aspects, or sub-themes, such as in the fourteenth theme (XIV) where she introduced the idea of *relationship* in a group with *space effort* which was then used by a group in different *formations* - with *weight effort* she calls it *consolidation*, with *flow effort* it is mainly about *communication*, with *time effort*, *synchronization*. These elaborations are wonderful, but I will not talk further about them in this article, since I want to focus on didactics.

Concerning the didactics — the order of the themes — she changes it only in a few places. Notably, she moves one theme to a later one, that is to say the theme *Shape: still shapes* changes from IV to VIII. Additionally, she adds themes, for example in the first theme (I) she combines the *relationship* between the body parts, or in sixth theme (VI) she goes into *phrasing* the body actions.

Ultimately, she shows the relationship between these 16 themes in her defined categories: Body (B), Space (S),

Dynamics/Effort (E) and Relationship (R). She advocates that in this approach the categories are “studied and trained together”, since “it is impossible to work thoroughly on one aspect irrespective of the others three” (p.190). This going back and forth between the themes facilitates this interwoven relationship. The didactical concept Preston-Dunlop uses is the same as Laban’s—the themes in a category are only introduced to a certain point then the teacher moves on to the next category, later returning to the same category with another perspective or further aspect. The path of progression through the themes can be illustrated as a spiral, which Preston-Dunlop shows in her book (see Fig.2).

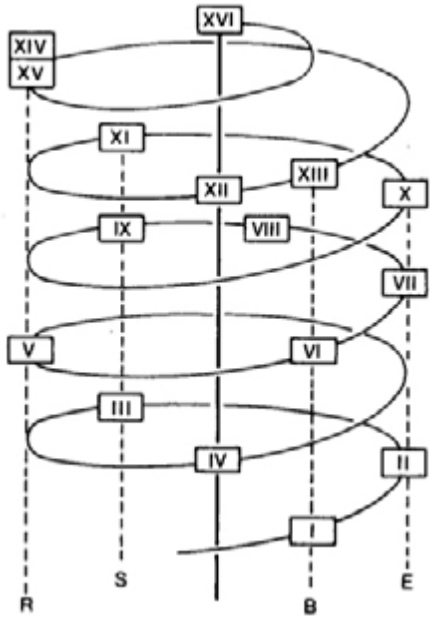


Fig.2: “Spiral development” of Laban’s 16 themes (p.190)

We use this spiral didactical approach (as I call it) in the EUROLAB program because it has several advantages

over the approach of going from “A to Z” in one category before going to the next. One advantage is that even though most students think that they have not assimilated the first round of themes before they come to the second round, they soon realize in the second round that they actually remember more than they thought. Another advantage is that the teacher can reference the interrelationships between the categories earlier and therefore achieve faster integration of the categories. A further advantage is that, since each person has preferences in one or two of these categories, with spiral didactics students do not have to “suffer through” a long period in one category—which they might not favour or which proves a particular challenge for them—before the teacher moves on to another category. Moreover, in this approach, the teacher can begin the second round by asking the students what they remember from the first (which is, by definition, at least one category away). In this way, the reviewed material has greater opportunity to become assimilated in the body and mind than if one would take the “A...Z” method, constantly moving forward through the material without much repetition and in a more linear way.

Concerning the exact order of the themes, I can understand Laban’s reasoning of how he starts and progresses through the themes. Still, I have explored various methods regarding this progression. I would argue there are different reasons for starting and progressing in different ways. For example, in a situation where groups do not know each other it might be best to work early on with the theme of *relationship*. On the other hand, with teenagers (who are unacquainted) this might be exactly the wrong place to start! And even if *body* seems the obvious place to start with young kids and adults who do not have much dance experience, again, with teenagers, this might not be the best category. With teenagers, I suggest beginning with *space*, since it is the least “personal”.

But then again, I find the most effective place to start is the category which the students show interest in, or which they naturally “do” when asked to move, since this will be where they feel most at ease. The teacher can enquire at the beginning and/or get the students moving to observe what they are doing. Of course, this can only be done if one does not have rigid constraints (such as in schools or educational programs, where there has to be a relationship between classes of different teachers). The choosing of the second category can be the one that proves the most

challenging and /or the choice of the theme least preferred by the group of students; the aim is to achieve a balance between the known and the unknown.

It is of primal importance that, in spiral didactics, the first “layer” of a category is taught before coming back to that category in the next “layer”. For example, Laban does this in the *space* category, going from the differentiation between general space/*kinesphere* (in theme III) to teaching the levels in *space* (in theme VI), to then introduce the ideas of *trace forms* (in theme IX) using one’s own name, and to then teach the different approaches to the *kinesphere* - central and peripheral (in theme XI), and so on. This development through the different layers, from bigger picture to the increasingly detailed, has a certain logic and one can follow this easily.

For all the reasons mentioned above, I find that Laban’s spiral didactic approach makes lots of sense and offers sound principles of guidance. Using this approach, the teacher can then find the appropriate order for the group she or he is specifically working with. In any case, spiral didactic is more holistic than the “A to Z” approach as this method naturally builds diverse interrelationships as the learning progresses.

(Endnotes)

1 Laban, Rudolf. (1948) *Modern Educational Dance*, London: Macdonald & Evans

2 Preston-Dunlop, Valerie (1963) *A Handbook for Modern Educational Dance*, London: Macdonald & Evans

3 Kennedy, A. (2016) *Laban Guild*, 35.2, p.28 and Kennedy, A. (2013). *Laban based analysis and notation of body movement* in Müller, Clenki, Fricke, Ladewig, McNiell, Teßendorf (eds.) *Body – Language – Communication*, Berlin: de Gruyter, pp. 937-954.

4 Citations and page numbers are from Preston-Dunlop, Valerie, 2nd edition, from 1980

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A Celebration of the Life of Geraldine Stephenson 1925 - 2017

Funeral Elegy by Dick McCaw



Tuesday January 16th 2018

Let’s begin with thanks. Thanks to a woman who has touched all our lives. While Geraldine asked that I remember her professional life in this service I am not sure you want me to name each of her 163 television credits, or the 200 or so theatre productions on which she worked. How would you classify her 28 consecutive Johann Strauss galas that were performed to packed audiences at the Royal Festival Hall and Fairfield Halls, Croydon between Christmas and New Year up until 2004? Mandy, her indefatigable assistant, will bear me out that no two galas were ever the same. So that adds another 28 credits to her already immense tally of stage credits. All this to say that within the span of ten minutes all I can do is give an impression of a career that spanned six decades.

Geraldine was born in Hull, birthplace of Marion North, principal of The Laban Centre, and of Maureen Lipman with whom she worked regularly. After attending Newlands Girls School she studied physiotherapy and physical education at Bedford College of Physical Education, where the regime was strict and convent like. I shall let her describe what happened next:

a shining light was switched on in college in the form of Joan Goodrich who taught Central European Dancing. It was different, new and based on the ideas of Rudolf Laban of whom few people had heard. I was very excited by

it all and lived for those classes which lit little beacons along the tough route of PT. One of those propelled my room-mate (Joan English) and me to attend a winter dance course at Sheffield (New Year, 1946).

This was the FIRST HAPPENING. An explosion of dynamic and extraordinary movement hit me like a hurricane. Never had I experienced anything like it. There were some hundred participants, teachers, housewives, psychologists, actors, dancers ... Joan English and me. The variety of movement expression, the meaningful nature of movement and the way one was so involved in the texture of movement were unforgettable.

All this was new experience for me. I was spellbound by [Lisa Ullman’s] voice and by the way that she extracted so much meaning from the simplest movement. This totally changed me and my perception of dance. It told me in my heart and body that what I wanted to do was MOVEMENT based on Laban’s ideas. Just how I was to do this or earn a living by it was a mystery.

She persuaded her father – who ran a building firm in Hull (they built the university) – to pay for the first year’s fees at the Art of Movement Studio that Lisa Ullmann was about to open in Manchester for Laban. Amongst the first sixteen students were Valerie Preston Dunlop and Warren Lamb.

Paying for her second year of study was more of problem, so she persuaded Laban and Lisa (neither of whom liked morning), to let her take morning warm-ups and to play piano during classes. She must have been quite adept musically, since ‘Listen and Move’ records published Thirteen Pieces of Music for Children and Five Group Dances by ‘Geraldine Stephenson the well known composer, choreographer, solo dancer and teacher of the art of movement’. The following year she would join Laban teaching at Esmée Church’s Northern Theatre School in Bradford. It was on the dreary train back from Bradford that she, complaining of exhaustion, was advised by Laban to create her own solo recital of dance pieces. On July 14th 1950 she gave her first recital, and to commemorate the event, Laban gave her a signed copy of his newly-published book, *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, it read ‘To Gerry from Laban at her first dance-recital’.

A year later and she was appointed Movement Director of the York Mystery Plays as part of the 1951 Festival of Britain.

I loved every minute of this great enterprise with the mixture of professional and amateur actors. It was so varied, challenging and dynamic. I knew that THIS was what I had been looking for.

Then there was her first taste of Television, what she describes as ‘an avant-garde eight minute number called *The Dream*, for which I had written the music and also created strange sounds.’ She continues, ‘Some forty years later I came across a dance critic’s comments on it.’

One would not perhaps like to see such

a thing too often nor for too long; but, as it stood, it was a very interesting and quite enjoyable piece of entertainment, and a solid paving stone in the path of teleballet.

Apart from my terror on the day the performance taught me much about the hazards and discipline of TV and the exceptional concentration it requires.

And that is how the 1950s were spent. Recitals with her friend and accompanist John Dalby throughout England (and even Paris), early television work, and religious pageants of various sorts in cathedrals ancient and modern.

When The Studio moved from Manchester to just outside Addlestone in Surrey, Geraldine realised that her days of teaching there were numbered.

This was what Laban and Lisa had longed for, the countryside peace and quiet, and green trees surrounding the Studio practice rooms. As soon as I saw Addlestone, I knew that it was not for me. I lasted there for just one year. Manchester, Bradford, York had given me a taste for different adventures, I was bursting to get into London, bed-sit land and city life!

She ends her autobiographical sketch with a snapshot of her future work:

Being in London, life gained a new dimension. Many strands of movement and experience came together - from Regent's Park Open Air Theatre to Girl Guide Pageants; from The History of Rochester Cathedral to Toad of Toad Hall; from The Duchess of Malfi to the Johann Strauss Galas; from Shakespeare to Tom Stoppard, and when colour television arrived and presented its first drama Vanity Fair, I was asked to choreograph the Ball scenes. The Director was David Giles, a former student from Bradford! Through him and this production I was launched into choreographing countless television dramas with countless different directors.

Amongst these directors was Jane Howell (*The Winter's Tale* (1982), *Henry VI* Parts 1 – 3 and *Richard III* (1983)) and John Glenister (*The Franklin's Tale* (1969), *Catherine of Aragon* (1970), *Casanova* (1971), *Emma* (1972)). In addition, she choreographed dance and movement for

Geraldine Stephenson - Choreographer: Laban's Influence on her work

Dr Janet Goodridge

(Dr Janet Goodridge, former Principal Lecturer at Middlesex University, pays tribute to Geraldine Stephenson on her 80th birthday.)

some of the BBC's landmark costume dramas like *War and Peace* (1972), and classic series like *The Pallisers* (1974), *The House of Elliot* (1991 – 1993) and *Poldark* (1995). Her film credits include Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (1975) and *Notting Hill* (1999).

The list of her works could go on, but I shall offer three snapshots to offer a flavour of Geraldine's way of working.

When Geraldine would say, 'go to where your students are'. To explain she referred to a rehearsal for the History of Rochester Cathedral. It was on a cold February Sunday in an unheated canteen – the volunteer performers were huddled in a corner, in their coats, mittens and hats. No question of asking them to shed their layers and warm up. Instead she went over and asked them to imagine swinging a tiny hammer, which they all grudgingly swung. And then the hammer got bigger as did the swings, and as the swing got larger, so scarves and then hats and finally coats were shed. Soon they were all enthusiastically building Rochester Cathedral and the rehearsal was underway.

Fast forward to 1975 when, much to her surprise, Geraldine was chosen by Stanley Kubrick to work on his film *Barry Lyndon*. The big set piece was a dance in a dewy meadow. The performers were exhausted so Geraldine gave them a break. Kubrick was astonished – 'I say when the performers break.' 'No, replied Geraldine. 'They are working for me, they are tired and they need a break.' Geraldine commanded such love and loyalty because she went to where the artists were. She knew our needs and possibilities, and got so much more out of us as a result.

Jump to October 2003 when Geraldine is being given an honorary PhD from De Montfort University. Nothing prepared me for her announcement that we were to get to our feet and follow the steps of an Apache war dance. Some thousand students, parents and even the be-gowned and bonneted academics all entered into dance with joy and enthusiasm. As the Vice Principal said afterwards, 'Degree ceremonies would never be the same.' She was a motivator, in the sense that she knew how to get people to move.

To end with thanks. To my tireless co-executor Rosie without whom this funeral wouldn't have happened, to Brian Loftus who has spent so much time contacted friends and colleagues of Geraldine, and to you all for being here.

"An explosion of dynamic and extraordinary movement hit me like a hurricane". This is how Geraldine Stephenson recently described her first experience of Laban training to me. She went on to emphasise that the subsequent teaching she had from Laban and his colleagues was "*the influence on my work*".

Although now celebrating and looking back on an amazing career in choreography for theatre, opera, TV and film, Geraldine did not set out to be a choreographer: "I had no notion of it". Her early background was war-time England in the 1930s and 1940s. Born in Hull, Yorkshire, she was taken to dancing class as a child to overcome

shyness. But she says she was too frightened to enjoy the experience!

She continued into her more confident teens, though described her dancing at that stage as "very stiff". On leaving school in 1943, she was encouraged to join the *Armed Forces*, but instead went to *Bedford Physical Training College*. This marked the beginning of Laban's influence, since something called *Central European Dancing* was on the timetable - relatively little known in England at that time. She described it as "the liberating of one's movement, with its emphasis on centrally generated body movement - so different from the ballet - full body use of the floor, bare feet, wide-ranging spatial directions, and the totally new experience of improvisation, partner and group work."

Geraldine has written of her experience three years later when she attended a week's course led by Laban himself: "The variety of movement expression, the meaningful nature of movement and the way one was so involved in the texture of movement ... it totally changed me and my perception of dance". Group work again impressed: "How wonderful to be part of a group that could shrink or expand, heave up and down; all of us breathing as one creature, to be in the centre ... on the periphery ... break away ... and interweave. (*Laban Guild Magazine* 1998, Vol. 17, No. 4). Her enthusiasm led her on to the new, *avant-garde Manchester Studio* staffed by Laban with Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer and other colleagues, which was "throbbing with vitality and invention".

By 1948, Geraldine had begun some teaching at the *Studio* when Laban became seriously ill - an emergency! She took over his classes at *Bradford's Northern Theatre School* and after he recovered she continued teaching in the mornings, with the opportunity to observe his work later in the day. She recalls how Laban's emphasis on movement variety and contrast impressed her. For instance, in what he referred to as "high", "medium" and "deep" characteristics. She gave an example: "A group of 10 or 12 actors as peasants - hoppy, jumpy, earthy - 'deep' dancers, exited into the wings and immediately re-entered, transformed, as aristocratic courtiers - 'high' dancers, heads lifted, elegant hand gestures". As in her own training, she also recalls Laban's emphasis on working expressively, systematically: "with the motion factors - time, weight, space, flow" which, together with the group and spatial work (shapes, patterns, directions), she has found to be an unfailing choreographic resource.

Around 1949, a heavy teaching schedule was proving exhausting, draining. Geraldine mentioned this to Laban, hoping for a reduced schedule. But his unexpected, characteristically wise recommendation was: "Gerry, make for yourself a solo dance recital". So of course she did. A creative change was even better than a rest, and a new phase in her life began. The recital, first performed in 1950 at the Studio, later developed into small-scale tours for a number of years, adding new dances. It was pioneering, independent work.

Despite her recital debut, Geraldine still had not considered choreography as a career until the following year when Laban offered her work on her first theatre show. This was for *Medieval Mystery Plays* in the ruins of *St. Mary's Abbey*, York, a Festival of Britain production.



The performers were professional actors, *Bradford's Theatre School* students, townsfolk and school children. It was an opportunity to put Laban's advocacy of dance for everyone into practice.

For this assignment, Geraldine was asked to design three sequences, including Lucifer's fall from heaven: a backwards, sideways, staggering progress down a long curving flight of stairs to hell - with dialogue! It was typical of actors' problems which she later became famous for solving. Laban's unique teaching about rhythm was particularly useful at such times, designing dance to co-ordinate with speech, combining metrical steps with the free rhythm of words. Geraldine discovered she was also expected to direct numerous crowd scenes with 250 people, such as: *Raising of Lazarus*, *Entry into Jerusalem*, *Last Judgment* - no less! She was "really flummoxed" and sought Laban's advice. She still remembers his reply: "That is easy. Cut the group into two sets of 100, from each of these make three groups of 30, put the two spare tens together, halve the remaining 50 and you have nine groups. Plan it all with your Bradford students and have one or two lead each group". Perhaps "easy" for Laban, he was speaking from his considerable experience with large-scale opera, theatre and movement-choir performance in Germany, of a kind unusual in England. However, it all worked well for Geraldine, and she says she has adopted this procedure ever since, when faced with devising movement for a large group.

She found she loved the whole experience and realised choreography was what she wanted to do. She moved to

London and was much in demand for her skill in using the effective group-work techniques and other Laban movement material. Work assignments in masques and pageants of all kinds followed, as well as dance in hundreds of plays for theatre, television, films and opera.

Geraldine can provide many examples of Laban's influence on her work. She spoke of how she particularly values his training in movement observation, for use in rehearsals and at other times. She made an unusual application of this when asked to choreograph Taverner's Opera *Thérèse* at the *Royal Opera House*. Seated behind the composer at his first full piano play-through - a most challenging score, with few obvious clues for the choreographer - Geraldine said what really helped her was observing the tall Taverner's back-view as he played. She saw all the shades of meaning and expression she needed as a basis for her work conveyed in his back and shoulders: clear effort phrasing which she could use.

Whether designing dance for opera or plays, Geraldine told me she learnt from Laban always to consider the dramatic context first. Then to design dance to underscore the dramatic action, characterisation and relationships; taking particular care with what Laban called 'characters' supposed "inner attitudes of mind" and resultant effort phrasing. Although Geraldine studied historical dance with other teachers, Laban's approach to period style, again via study of inner attitudes and effort qualities, was once more a prime influence. With an actor and a musician, she devised and toured two *Dance/Music/Poetry Through the Ages* programmes. Also, for many years, she devised, choreographed and directed the popular London and touring performances of the *Johann Strauss Dancers Company*, in period style, with orchestra.

As Geraldine discovered in her early training, Laban not only aimed to extend students' movement vocabulary - spatially, dynamically - from exaggerated gesture through to tiny shadow movements and stillness, but also to provide performance experience in a wide variety of dramatic, lyrical, grotesque, rhythmic-dynamic, comic, tragic, everyday, or even ritualistic performance themes. This breadth of movement expression and thematic range has certainly been mirrored in her own work.

There are hundreds of examples. For instance, a dramatic, violent



'University Student'

dance scene of servants' mockery of their mistress in Strindberg's *Miss Julie* (BBC TV); an easy-going, rhythmic Irish dance in a sunny field in *Barry Lyndon*, the Warner Bros film; an extended comic, swinging "Keep Fit" routine for *The Two Ronnies* (BBC TV); lyrical waltzing in *All's Well That Ends Well* for the *Royal Shakespeare Company*; a ritualised entry for the court in *The Duchess of Malfi*; and a mysterious, grotesque dance of tempters in Havel's *Temptation*, (both for the National Theatre). She has choreographed numerous festive ball and other dance scenes with characters' interplay, such as in *War and Peace* and *Vanity Fair* (BBC TV), and a flowing forest-glade *Farandole* in *As You Like It* (also BBC TV). In contrast to all these and many others, an example of complete stillness at the end of a BBC TV series of Shakespeare's History

plays. After the warfare with just 20 minutes to the end of filming, the Director made a surprise request for "a pile of bodies", a final tableau to include a hysterically mad Queen Margaret and her dead son. This with a large group of actors and to be held for three minutes. How did Geraldine achieve this? "Through improvisation" - an important feature of Laban training, long before it became standard student fare and also seen in performance work. She says she gave the actors an experience of quiet, sustained movement, "almost like a ritual" as, one by one, from a distance, they gradually moved in and attached themselves, in utter silence, to the slowly forming group. All held position and then the camera work began.

Geraldine's words, and I hope the few other comments which I have been able to include, serve to indicate at least something of Laban's influence on her work. But I consider this is truly seen at its most obvious when she is rehearsing, working with performers, drawing effective, expressive movement from them. More than five decades of a life in dance, swiftly responding to the needs of the moment, and always sustained by her Laban training: "I owe it all to Laban".

Note: Revised from material first presented in the USA at a *Society for Dance History Scholars* conference, and from an article first published in *The Dancing Times*, September 2003.

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'Le Miroir du Couturier'

Remembering Geraldine by Simon Horrill

My first meeting with Geraldine was at a birthday celebration for the mother of my teacher, Brian Loftus. I was dancing in a kilt in a living room, accompanied by someone reciting Edith Sitwell's poem *Scottish Rhapsody*. That chance encounter proved to be the starting point of a long friendship and working relationship.

Whilst working on an opera, a fellow dancer suggested I ring Geraldine as she was still looking for one boy for the next Strauss tour she was directing. Our previous encounter proved to be the first check of my credentials, and after she'd spoken to Brian, I was hired.

In a church hall in Pimlico I started my first day of waltzing that continued for 14 years. Geraldine was tall (always in trousers for rehearsals), slender and with her short cropped white hair, had a mischievous elfin-like quality. Her hands fascinated me; they were constantly on the go, the movement giving a sense of the style she wanted, the way the steps should rise and fall, or portraying a rhythm she could hear that we weren't understanding. As a dancer who had worked mainly in ballet companies my first learning point was that we did not work with mirrors. No constantly monitoring yourself here - just trusting Geraldine that you were delivering what she wanted. And what she wanted wasn't just perfect steps in a perfect pattern but personalities, characters and interaction. For her it was important that we were representing real people in a specific time. I loved being allowed to try things out, suggest ideas and feel you were contributing to the creative process. Geraldine would say it was vital to give the audience the chance to escape and be transported somewhere else and to forget everyday life.

Geraldine Stephenson *Gordon Curl*

- from the depth of hell to the pinnacle of academic achievement -

My first memory of Geraldine was during the evening's fading light in the ruins of St Mary's Abbey in York, where - under the auspices of the York Festival of the Arts in 1951 - Geraldine Stephenson was rehearsing the dramatic satanic fall of Lucifer from Heaven to Hell - from the Abbey's ruined heights down its crumbling stairways to the very depth of Hell. It was breath-taking, awe-inspiring, nerve-wracking and very hazardous - but superbly choreographed - with controlled free-fall movement. (I had travelled as a Carnegie College student from Leeds to witness this York Mystery Play spectacle - and to this day have never forgotten Geraldine's skill and artistry). Small wonder that the event was reported as 'the most widely applauded event in the country, with over 26,000 people witnessing the Plays'.

From that time onward I have followed Geraldine's career fastidiously - from live-theatre to period costumed television - from the Concert Hall with dazzling dance

For one tour, she had explained to me she wanted to create a piece based on impressionist painting. We had studied her art books looking at figures softened by defused light and that uncertainty of where they were coming from or going to, allowing you to create your own story. Geraldine wanted to recreate that "caught in a moment" impression . . . **You** try getting dancers to stop in between positions, it's counterintuitive from all those years of being drilled to hit exactly the correct shape on the right beat. Half opening an umbrella, not quite making the handshakes. We had to trust in her that we didn't look like untrained dancers, and it took some time but the result was sheer magic . . . As an impressionist painting, it worked and the hard work under Geraldine's brilliant guidance made it look effortless.

I remember being asked to help recreate some moments from the film *Singing in the Rain* for any audience members who wanted to come prior to a screening at the Festival Hall. Geraldine wasn't sure that many people would turn up but she was wrong - people were fascinated. I think we ended up on tables at one point so people could see what we were demonstrating. People with brollies, macs and even some in tap shoes crowded together laughing and enjoying the collective experience that Geraldine's enthusiasm and encouragement gave. At the screening, when the iconic rain sequence started, a group intake of breath of recognition of steps attempted earlier then spontaneous applause at Gene Kelly's brilliance which had been heightened through Geraldine's infectious learning experience.

Geraldine saw past the dancer and tapped into your other interests and provided opportunities to develop in other ways. We would laugh, annoy each other but most of all we had a shared love of communication through movement.

displays at Johann Strauss Gala Festivals to mass choreographed Kaleidoscopia in the Royal Albert Hall - from vivid Lecture-demonstrations to highly informed personal tutorials. Geraldine was for me a friend, a counsellor - an idol!

But there was one event which remains deeply embedded in my memory; it was the occasion of Geraldine's Conferment of a Doctorate at De Montfort University. The ceremony was a *tour de force* - describable only as '*Pure Gold, Pure Magic*'. (See *Guild Magazine* Vol.23 No.1 Spring 2004, edited version below).

Pure Gold! Pure Magic!

Geraldine Stephenson - bedecked in a full length crimson gown, satin-trimmed hood and broad-brimmed black velvet bonnet - resumed her seat at the conclusion of her 'address' to the tumultuous applause of a capacity crowd in the resplendent Great Hall of Bedford Corn Exchange on 23 October 2003. The atmosphere was euphoric as the Pro-Vice Chancellor of De Montfort University finally rose

to his feet in his scarlet and gold regalia - and declared:
'Graduation Ceremonies will never be the same again!'

Geraldine at a stroke had shattered the time-honoured conventions of academic protocol by transforming this sedate ceremonial gathering of mortar-boarded graduands and distinguished guests - into a howling, stamping, lunging, tomahawk-brandishing horde of tribal warriors! And she did it so sublimely - with consummate skill. It happened thus:

In her lavish academic attire Geraldine was invited to rise and address this august assembly; she did so with supreme calm, dignity and assurance - her velvet bonneted head held high. Behind her was a blaze of vivid scarlet and gold - a phalanx of richly-robed University dignitaries: Pro-Vice Chancellors, Governors, Fellows and Faculty Presenters. Immediately to her right were the symbols of high office: gold and silver Maces - the Royal Charter. It was a dazzling sight of academic splendour, prestige and power.

The University Orator stepped forward, doffed his cap to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and proceeded to chart Geraldine's star-studded career. Not only had she masterminded spectacular masques and pageants but 'for half a century had been the expert in advising the worlds of TV, theatre, film and opera'. Geraldine stood motionless, expressionless - as if disowning the accolades cascading upon her. With another doff of his cap, the Orator concluded his eulogistic Citation to a roar of applause.

There followed the ritual draping of a satin-trimmed hood over Geraldine's shoulders. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, again doffed his cap, shook her hand, congratulated her and conferred on her the title of *Honorary Doctor of Arts of De Montfort University* - he then handed her a parchment scroll of Conferment. Turning to the congregation he announced: 'Our Guest Speaker Ms Geraldine Stephenson, will now address the assembly'. The atmosphere was hushed; what could Dr Stephenson possibly say which would do justice such an honour?

Geraldine moved gracefully to the amplified lectern and proceeded to pay tribute to those who had inspired her at Bedford, Manchester, to Janet Goodridge, Lisa Ullmann and Rudolf Laban, and many others. She spoke nostalgically of memorable days - not least: choreographing large-scale events in the Royal Festival Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, the York Mystery Plays, Television, Film and Opera. These were jewelled moments in her life.

But this biographical sketch was short-lived, for abruptly Geraldine tossed aside her velvet bonnet, leapt to the forefront of the stage and - to the astonishment of everyone, not least the scarlet-robed dignitaries - she was magically transformed into

a Shaman, her academic gown metamorphosed into the mantle of a doctor of black arts. She bent forward - her eyes piercing the distance as if in a trance - her arms stretched forward over the assembled 'tribes' - commanding them to repeat after her a deadly ritual. They obeyed as if hypnotised, echoing her rhythmic foot-stomping: - left, left - right, right - left, left-right; the thunderous sound of a thousand feet (including those of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professors and Presenters) shook the Corn Exchange and echoed far beyond. It was pure magic!

But the resounding footwork was only the beginning - there was much more to come! Our witch-doctor lurched forward, followed dutifully by her disciples - including the elders - and as the young warriors flung themselves towards her, their vividly coloured flying hoods cast a sea of blue and gold over the auditorium; it was a warning sign of deadly deeds to come! And come they did for our high-priestess slowly raised her right arm - clutching a tomahawk - and the horde of submissive subjects *en masse* brandished their tomahawks too - in obedience. And then - oh so swiftly - she wielded her weapon, swinging it mercilessly downwards uttering a heart-rending cry. Her warriors complied ecstatically (including the elders behind her); the whole assembly erupted with blood-curdling cries!
...Then a moment of silence ... the ritual was complete!

Geraldine stood tall again and quietly reminded us of the extensive research required to choreograph this authentic tribal ritual; and then, donning her velvet bonnet and smoothing her satin-trimmed hood, she calmly resumed her seat - but not before she had reminded us that we had participated splendidly in the hunting ritual of North American Indian tribe. We had been magnificent Mohicans'. Small wonder, then, that the Vice-Chancellor, in admiration, announced to the assembly that 'Graduation Ceremonies would never be the same again'.

Hundreds of war-primed graduands then processed to the stage to receive their coveted degrees - passing before Geraldine on their way. Finally, the mace-bearing officials shouldered the University's precious symbols - leading the scarlet and gold retinue to the triumphant sounds of the great organ - with Geraldine stepping (oh so gracefully) down the aisle. Few could have imagined that moments ago she had magically transfigured this majestic assembly into a war-mongering howling mob of North West American warriors. But truth must out and our Guild President Geraldine Stephenson had demonstrated her incomparable ability to enthrall - in movement and dance - to both the uninitiated and to the sophisticated hierarchy of academia.



Photo by Judith Chapman

In the Bones

Anna Carlisle

Addlestone: The Art of Movement Studio 1965. The study of Laban's work on the three-year training course supported by the Ministry of Education was demanding and intensive, often a twelve hour day. And homework. And Labanotation, Music, Art, Anatomy, English Literature, Educational Psychology and Gardening. It was a unique experience - all absorbing - and carrying a gamut of emotions from highs to lows. There was also exhaustion, physical and mental. And aching muscles. We ate, lived and dreamt Laban. Not much time to explore the nightlife of Addlestone.

Then Geraldine arrived, a link to the outside world. She blew in with the glamour of film and television and the rare qualities of her sparkling personality. She was a demanding teacher and her material was challenging but she had a unique lightness of touch which lifted the spirits and brought air inside the room. She was an inspiring facilitator of creativity. The ebb and flow of her classes were seamless. She knew exactly when to change the dynamics, what was needed, and she had a kind of delicate objectivity which created a sense of freedom to learn. We loved her sessions; we wanted more.

Geraldine's association with and commitment to Laban and Lisa Ullmann continued until her recent death. She joined the Guild in 1947 and despite her busy career,

choreographed Guild events, taught courses and attended annual AGM Conference Days in her role as President. She was a founding member of the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund in 1986, took the Chair and was President until Christmas Eve, 2017. She was instrumental in securing the health and status of the Fund and would have been happy to know it is functioning and flourishing today.

During her early retirement years she raised the idea that the profile of Laban's work needed to be promoted more in the professional arena. Geraldine hosted meetings for the planning of a training course for a group of young professional practitioners with a Laban background. It was to be run over 2 years. Geraldine's maxim headlined the course: Laban's work only took meaningful hold if it was deep in the body - IN THE BONES. The Phoenix Course went ahead in 2006 with first generation Laban teachers. Geraldine was by then unwell and uncertain of her memory but she was determined to contribute. As she began class, 60 years of experience took hold. Anxiety dropped like a Cloak; she was on form, the sparkle and the lightness of touch intact and delightful. Inevitably, we wanted more.

In memory of her inspiration and in honour of her lifelong contribution to our lives.



Official photo from De Montfort University

Remembering Geraldine

Susi and Sam Thornton

Gerry touched everyone's hearts and sense of creativity and drama. Her light touch coaxed you to move, to dance to find the inner character you needed to be.

As a student at the Art of movement Studio, I and others loved it when it was Gerry's weekly classes. She inspired us, fired us up. We delighted in watching her move in so many different ways and with such an expressive manner. We were fascinated by the way she told us of her studies with Laban and how he saw in her the talents for movement/drama/choric work and inspiring others.

Sam and I will never forget our experiences in Kaleidoscopia Viva - a huge piece of work which Geraldine organised for the Laban Guild. Her ideas and collaboration with librettist, composer John Dalby and assistant David Henshaw would already have been in place to share with the Guild Council, where Sam was serving, and where the decision was made to have two performances at the Albert Hall. Geraldine worked tirelessly. Groups to interpret 'the story' were set up in all parts of the country, each one with a leader. Gerry travelled up and down the country meeting up with the groups. Our Yorkshire contingent was led by Joan Tomlinson. In our group we had the theme of corruption and with Joan explored and experimented to find our way of working and created our dance. Sam was a blowfly, I was a dragonflower some were slugs (very

hot costumes!) Gerry came and watched what we were doing...most probably made some suggestions. She also taught us the steps for the Grand Finale. We had a big get together for the northern contingents at IM Marsh when we all shared our dances and did the Grand finale together. I expect southern regions did the same.

It had been enthralling to watch as she managed the large numbers, everyone knowing their place, knowing what to do. She told us that she talked with Laban about large group dance when she was designing the Pageant for the Girl Guides and from these discussions she learnt that if you know what 10 people are doing you can work with 100, 1000!. It was absolutely amazing when we turned up at the Albert Hall and found that the Grand finale worked like clockwork although it was the first time the **whole** group of dancers had met.

Later when Sam and I moved back South, Gerry welcomed a friendship, gave warmth and support especially to L.in.C and we were honoured in 1979 for her to lead the movement choir for us on our 'maiden voyage' of courses which would go on for 30 years. She often visited us at Avery hill and at Eastbourne to enjoy the festive atmosphere.

We were so proud when we saw her name in the credits of shows and tv. I remember her sharing one of the dances from her Chekov play showing on the West end stage. She had created this for the actors and actresses, ensuring that each one of them (and us in our version of it)

danced it in the manner of the character that was being played. We were able later to watch this show and see exactly what she had facilitated with them. It had not been easy as in those days actors were not dancers but her 'magic' worked with them.

We know Gerry has not been 'in the world' for some time and we hope that now it is a happy release for her. She will join all the dancers in the sky and will get them going! This Circle awaits us all!



Aerial view of large group of dancers showing group formations at *Kaleidoscopia Viva*, (Stephenson, 1970) at the Royal Albert Hall (Ref. no. ACC22_2015/36/52/1). From the Geraldine Stephenson Archive, University of Surrey, © Ian Stamp, 1970.

Alysoun Tomkins and voices of the 1968-71 cohort

I am writing this on behalf of the Laban Art of Movement cohort 1968-71 and include many of the reflections that my peers made on hearing of Geraldine's passing.

There are few teachers whom one remembers as being inspirational and Geraldine Stephenson was one such teacher. Many comments contain the same themes: that she was energetic, professional, talented and a visionary. All of us confessed to watching the credits at the end of BBC historical dramas to see if Geraldine had done the choreography and of course she often had.

We were lucky enough to be part of the Kaleidoscopia Viva performance at the Royal Albert Hall in 1970 and it is perhaps the memory of that which is most vivid. Geraldine worked with many groups around the country choreographing sections of the final piece. Laban students were 'machines' and also danced in the colourful finale. We did all come together for a weekend at Bretton Hall but I believe we only had one morning to rehearse it at the performance venue.

Putting it together was an operational masterpiece I remember her energy and the fun at Bretton Hall, being 'sprayed' into our unitards!...How on earth did she cope with us all and put together such amazing choreography for the Albert Hall?

...Yes she had great energy and vision. I still don't know how we didn't get lost in the corridors of the Albert Hall.

...I loved her passion and commitment,

It was not just her talent as a teacher and choreographer that colleagues remembered. It was her personal qualities.

One commented that she:

...took her responsibilities for 18 year olds carefully She was lovely with it: caring. When one student was unwell she showed great sympathy and concern.

She also recognised other talents in her students as one of them recalls:

I have fond memories of her and one in particular is of making curtains for her Addlestone flat. Why she asked me I cannot remember but I do recall sewing the many, many, yards of material for a large picture window.

Twenty five years later I joined the LUTSF committee – Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund set up in memory of Lisa Ullmann who was Director of the Studio when we attended. Geraldine was Chairperson at that time and was passionate about the fund and worked tirelessly to maintain it.

The fund is open to applicants from the diverse world of dance and Geraldine was particularly interested in young people working specifically in theatres or dance companies as that was where she spent much of her working life as a choreographer.



Dancers as part of the *Kaleidoscopia Viva* event (Stephenson, 1970) at the Royal Albert Hall (Ref. no. ACC22_2015/36/52/3). From the Geraldine Stephenson Archive, University of Surrey, © Ian Stamp, 1970.

Henry Metcalfe

I first met Geraldine (or Gerry as we all knew her then) in the autumn of 1961. It was part of my audition to become a student at the Art of Movement Studio in Addlestone. Lisa Ullmann (whose apartments always seemed to smell of apples) was considering if I would be suitable for a future career as a dancer/actor and so I attended one of Geraldine's (always looked forward to) Dance-Drama classes. She must have put in a good word to Lisa, because even when my local authority turned me down for a grant...the Studio gave me a free scholarship.

At the end of my training, Geraldine contacted Gerard and Tonya Bagley of the British Dance-Drama Theatre as it was known then and arranged for me to audition for them. I was successful and stayed for three years.

After my time with the Dance-Drama Theatre was over, I became an Assistant Lecturer at Trent Park College of Education and after a year, I was invited to interview for the post of Lecturer at the Art of Movement Studio - again Geraldine was on the selection panel.

After six years the Studio closed and transferred to Goldsmith's University, so I returned to the theatre and worked on the Johann Strauss Gala for Raymond Gubbay - Geraldine joined as Choreographer on my second tour - It seemed happily, that our paths were set to cross forever - which they did, through several television productions and Dance projects.

Geraldine always reminded me of a young Vera Lynn. As Liz my ex-wife and great friend recalls "Geraldine liked fun. She would like to bring a chuckle to you all"

And so I remember her with a smile, a chuckle and her deep hearty laugh.

"Laughter is the music of Heaven and if I sit quietly I can hear her laughter now."

B J Lewis

When I was a PE student at I M Marsh Lorn Primrose, our dance lecturer, told us about the legendary (even then) Geraldine Stephenson who was using Laban's principles for her work in theatre, film and television. Since then I have regularly scanned programme credits for her name, and often found it! Little did I know I would come to work closely with her and, in 1996, take over from her as chair of the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund.

As reported elsewhere Geraldine was one of the founders of the Fund in 1987 and its first Chairman. She gathered around her a talented and representative committee from the world of dance and movement and together they worked tirelessly to raise money, encourage applicants for scholarships, select winners and support them. Working with Geraldine was fun! Meetings were enjoyable and

informative. Through her many contacts in dance she ensured that the Fund's guiding principle of supporting people from all forms of dance and movement, and also movement related professions, was carried out. So many scholarship winners reported their experience as 'life changing'. It is interesting to scan the list of all scholarship winners and see names of many people who have had long and distinguished careers in Dance.

When Geraldine retired as chairman she was elected President and continued in that role until her death. As President she was such a knowledgeable advisor to the committee and a wonderful figurehead. She would travel by train to the depths of Surrey whenever we held fund raising events in our garden and there she would grace the occasion with her humour and vitality. It is to her great credit that the fund, established in 1987, has survived and that, by 2017, 534 scholarships had been awarded and the total amount given was £263,000.



Photo by Pam Anderton

Geraldine at a LUTSF Tylosand fund raising event

Judith Chapman

Geraldine was a wonderful teacher, lively, full of ideas and able to bring together the seemingly impossibly varied contributions of a large class into a dance which one felt thrilled to be a part of. I first met her in this teaching capacity as a very young teacher when her theme was William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood in the human body when, using our experience of "effort" we flowed, were pumped or squeezed through imagined blood vessels helped by a powerful group conveying the strong movements of the heart and sometimes we even formed blood clots. The day was memorable.



Photo by Pam Anderton

Geraldine at the 50 years in theatre celebration with John Dalby, Simon Horrell and other friends from the theatrical world

Having attended many such courses over the years, in the early 1990s I was to meet Geraldine when I was invited to join the LUTSF Committee. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss applications to the Fund. We met in Geraldine's flat, ate a delicious lunch, laughed a lot and had some serious debate. Discussion was lively, sometimes almost heated but always good tempered and disputes were resolved. The strength of Geraldine's commitment to LUTSF, undoubtedly fuelled by her memories of the achievements of Lisa Ullmann, was obvious. I learned that it was Geraldine together with Ellinor Hinks and Athalie Knowles who were instrumental in establishing "a 'living memorial' to Ullmann. They were inspired by the fact that, no matter how far she had to travel, Lisa always responded to requests for her to lead courses and classes both in this country and abroad." Meetings were fun, driven by Geraldine's dedication to helping others, especially young dancers, to take and make the most of every opportunity. This continued when she retired as Chair of the Fund and became its President. She attended meetings and events regularly, always offering suggestions and comments, always positive, always fun. Sometimes she travelled from north London to our home near Farnham, in her role as President of LUTSF welcoming visitors to a fund-raising event and encouraging everyone present to donate generously - and of course they did!

Geraldine was thrilled when a celebration was held to mark her 50 years in the theatre. This was organised jointly by LUTSF and the Laban Guild and attended by many people from the theatre world as well as members of these two organisations.

Another event, which celebrated Geraldine's extraordinary achievements in movement and dance, was the award of an honorary doctorate by de Montfort University. The presentation of the award and Geraldine's response on stage were memorable. The audience was spellbound by this lady who not only talked about her art but also

demonstrated, moving across the platform to illustrate the things she was saying. She was a performer and one who was able to turn part of a degree ceremony into a theatrical performance. There was much applause and great appreciation of her contribution.

It was a huge privilege to get to know Geraldine over the years and gradually to become aware of the range of her work and to realise the sheer number of lives she must have touched during her work in movement, choreography, theatre and television. At this sad time of her death, it is good to know that in 2012 she donated her archives to the National Resource Centre for Dance at the University of Surrey so that a legacy of her many achievements is safe.

Carol Wallman

Like so many other people in the dance world, I was extremely saddened to hear the news of Geraldine's passing. As a young student at the Art of Movement Studio, Geraldine was one of my tutors. She taught Historical Dance and rhythm and choreographed for us the *Masque of St Teilo* which we subsequently performed at Llandaff Cathedral, with Geoffrey Sutherland in the lead role. Geraldine's teaching was vivacious and captivating - as students we eagerly looked forward to her lectures, aware that she had a window on the wider world of theatrical dance; we hoped some of it would rub off. She was a great influence on my understanding of integrated performance arts and my own teaching.

Later, for a short time, I served with her on the Committee of the Laban Guild. Her knowledge, vast experience in the field, practical common sense, gentility and sensitivity were invaluable in discussion and decision making; I am privileged to have known her.



Photos from
Geraldine's
collection given
to the Guild in
2005

From Dance to Art - the value of Laban-based work in Education

Ann Ward

Laban analysis and an awareness of its implications can be useful in many areas of education, not only in the dance studio. For example, teaching A level Art in an FE College in Northern Ireland, I found that students often came into the course with a good GCSE and reasonable technical ability, thinking they knew it all. Everything had become intellectualised, but it is the body which comes between eye and the brush – or pencil - and we interpret what we see in terms of our early movement experience. As Laban said in his book *Choreutics*, movement is “the basic experience of existence”. Shape, space, texture, rhythms and relationships are all first appreciated through kinaesthetic or tactile experiences. Using movement to re-awaken this awareness helps students to become much more sensitive, better able to empathise with their subjects and to make personal statements in their work.

I was fortunate to have a sympathetic deputy head who agreed to timetable me to have two hours on a Friday morning with all my A level and post-A level students, 24 in all, on their own. I am sure many Art teachers have experienced Art being put at the bottom of the list so students are attending as and when, as other subjects are prioritised. So, not every week, but at regular intervals, we would have a movement session. The format was to spend 20/30 minutes introducing the topic – the most challenging part for me as I had to make sure that I engaged the students' interest and trust - then an hour or so of movement work, culminating in 30 minutes when they were issued with A1 sheets of paper and whatever media they chose to reflect their experiences. It was rewarding to see that no-one ever hesitated – they couldn't wait to put something down on paper.

The first area I tackled was the dreaded “Life Drawing”, trying to improve the students' skills by working on body awareness and getting them to relate what they could see in the model in front of them to themselves and their own experience. After a general session on “The Body”, they had to put themselves in an uncomfortable position and draw, not what they thought it looked like, but what it felt like. The results were outstanding, particularly in the case of Vicky, an obviously talented young artist who was having real difficulty with life drawing. Vicky went on to get a degree in sculpture.

We next tackled the concept of “Space”. Art students tend to be as frightened of leaving spaces on paper as dancers are of standing still. In composition, the student may plonk an image in the centre of the page and then wonder how to fill up the spaces round it. In drawing or painting something they can see in front of them, they may tend to “read” it from left to right, rather than experiencing it as reflecting three dimensional space. So I decided to see if session on shape and space would help.

Again, the first challenge was how to introduce the subject and get the students moving. Having cleared the art room, I lined all the students up on one side and asked them to guess, and then test, how many normal steps, how many heel toe steps and then how many leaps it would take to cross the room. All were very accurate and by this time the students had relaxed and were enjoying themselves. I then asked them to guess the distance in metres. In most

cases the guesses were wildly inaccurate so I could point out how much they knew when they relied on their own experience, and then we were away.

On their own, then with a partner and then in groups, they experimented with surrounding space, filling space and extending shapes into space, creating and then investigating the spaces they had made within their groups. We explored the relationship between shapes and spaces, creating living sculptures in space which could be viewed from all sides. We set up small dramas which showed how space could be a barrier, a challenge, a channel for communication or could be dissolved - the possibilities were endless.

The results were amazing! Students brought a new awareness and enthusiasm to their work. They enjoyed investigating the relationship between shapes and spaces in still life groups, the way in which plants grow into shapes which distinguish a daffodil from a geranium and make every geranium different, the way people relate across or within a space and the ways in which space can be used positively in a composition. When I took a group of students with their work to the College of Art in Belfast for advice, all the tutors commented on the evidence of spatial awareness evident in their work.

In trying to teach my students something about composition, I had been looking at works of art with them and asking them to let their eyes wander round the canvas. Is the eye drawn to a block of colour? How is this balanced in the composition? Are there areas of busy detail contrasted with solid shapes? What is the relationship between foreground and background? Can you identify a geometrical structure in the composition? What is the focal point in the picture and how is the eye drawn to it?

I was obviously getting nowhere, so once again I decided to try a movement session. Having cleared the room and provided the students with large sheets of paper and chalks, I asked them to start by writing their names on the paper, then to make it bigger, then take it off the paper onto the floor, then as large as possible, from one side of the room to the other. This became most exciting and a wonderful work of art, though I might have curbed my enthusiasm if I had realised how long it would take to clean the floor afterwards! I then asked them to take a small section of the movement involved and try it in the air, with different body parts, different effort qualities etc. until they had their own personal movement motif. With a partner, they experimented with making their phrases clearer, more dramatic or interesting by working on “the way” they were doing them. Pairs began first to combine their sequences, then to “compose” another, then to combine with another group and so on until we had each half of the group making a moving composition for the other half. Students could immediately see when someone needed to slow down, speed up or make their movements more staccato; change their grouping, levels, direction or focus; make movements lighter or stronger - or whatever was necessary to add to the interest, impact or balance of their “composition”.

Not only did the students learn and begin to apply some of the formal elements of composition to their work, but an unexpected bonus was that they started looking at their surroundings in a completely different way. No longer did I hear “but there’s nothing interesting to draw”, as the students started bringing in work based on hitherto unnoticed corners of their surroundings, full of life, rhythm and excitement.



And there was more! Finger painting; scribbling to music and becoming aware of the different rhythms and physical sensations involved in drawing flowing curved lines and short jagged ones; going to the local beach to make patterns and textures in the sand; using skipping ropes from the gym to investigate line; drawing something intricate like a section of a tightly ?? cabbage or a Christmas cactus without taking your eyes off it or looking at the paper; or, to emphasise that the total experience of an object is as important as looking at it, I would take a variety of unseen objects into class, each in a plastic bag, and ask the students to draw them simply by putting one hand in the bag and drawing the object from touch alone.

Art is all about relationships - of colour, shape, line, tone

AQA GCSE Dance - the new specification

Mary Cormack

Having never taught GCSE Dance before I was excited to be given the opportunity to introduce it onto our school curriculum to coincide with the launch of the new AQA specification; it has been a real challenge but a stimulating one. The exam board have provided limited information and guidance so writing the schemes of work has involved closely liaising with other teachers and having confidence in our own interpretation of the specification. Although this new specification saw a drop in the practical component from 80% to 60% I was very grateful that it did not follow the same pattern as the PE GCSE specification which has a heavier weighting on the theoretical component. The new Dance specification is 60% practical and 40% theory. The practical component of the specification is split into performance and choreography. The first performance element is split into two elements- firstly the set phrases which are performed as a solo. The exam board has produced four set phrases - breathe, scoop, flux and shift. They are 30 seconds in duration and teachers must select which two their pupils perform. The pupils must then replicate these two phrases exactly and are assessed on their ability to replicate the physical, technical and expressive skills demonstrated in the phrases. When I first learnt the phrases, which have a very contemporary feel, I found them extremely challenging - the floor work was particularly demanding and coming away from the course where we learnt them I found my feet and knees rather bruised and battered. Now they feel much more familiar and I have really enjoyed teaching them. They are performed to a metronome set to 105 bpm and one of the biggest challenges for the pupils has been maintaining the fast dynamics and moving to and from the floor at speed. The action, spatial and dynamic content is very detailed,

etc. – but these are only the beginning. Of far more interest and the greater challenge to me was the eliciting of a relationship between the student and their subject matter. The fact that you are trying to get the students to “see the world the way it is and not the way they think it is” does not mean that you are trying to negate a personal response. Ideally, sixteen drawings of a teapot will all be accurate representations but subtly different, as no one person sees the world in exactly the same way as anyone else.

In many Art departments these days there seems to be far less emphasis on drawing and painting from observation, but without this the students can become fixated on pre-conceived ideas, images and fancy presentation. Learning to look at whatever is in front of them through their own eyes and not someone else’s is, for me, an important part of art education. The success of this approach was evident in the students’ new found confidence in their ability to see things for themselves and to record their reactions in their own way. They became much more responsive to their surroundings, to new ideas and experiences, better able to analyse, experiment and solve problems, and their work not only improved technically but made a much more personal statement. In short – they became Artists!

and the pupils have had to work hard to capture every detail consistently. The other two phrases that were not used in the solo assessment are then used as the stimulus for the other half of the performance mark. Pupils must perform in either a duet or a trio between three minutes and five minutes long. This element of the specification is extremely flexible, which can be a little overwhelming at first, but it does allow the teacher to tailor the task depending on the ability and strengths of their pupils. It may be choreographed by the teacher, or pupils, or a combination of both and there must be a specific choreographic intent which is supported by the mood, meaning and style of the piece. The action, spatial and dynamic content of the two set phrases not used in the solo performance must be developed to produce movement content for the duet/trio piece and to help to convey the choreographic intent. It was really hard to decide how to approach this task - should we let the pupils choose their choreographic intention? Should we give them all the same theme? We decided to go with a theme that the pupils had had previous experience of (the suffragette movement) and to use the same choreographic intention for each group so the pupils could help each other. We selected movements from the set phrases we felt the pupils would be able to perform well and build our material around them. The choreography element is based on five stimuli set by the exam board, released in September in the year of certification. They are broad and balanced offering a range for pupils to choose from - some lend themselves to a more narrative direction whilst others are more abstract. The options this year were: three action words; a close-up or zoomed-in photograph of a natural object; an object or

machine you might find in a domestic kitchen; the force of gravity; a specific mining or other industrial disaster that happened between 1800-1999. Our pupils have enjoyed exploring these options and it is interesting to see which ones they have favoured - most of my class have leant towards the industrial disaster. The pupils have the choice to choreograph a solo (2-2.5 minutes) or a group piece (3-3.5 minutes) and they have the choice to be in the piece or not. We talked about lots of different ways to organise this during the lessons - in the end we got the pupils to write down their preferred dancers and group size and tried out best to accommodate them. We are working on a rotation so each choreographer has six lessons to choreograph, teach and video her piece and then we rotate choreographers which seems to be working well so far.

The theoretical component of the course has been really interesting to teach. The exam is an hour and a half and there are three sections to the paper. Sections A and B are based on the pupils’ ability to critically appreciate their own work in performance and choreography while section C is based on their critical appreciation of the professional set works of the dance anthology. The pupils have really enjoyed exploring the theoretical content of the course but the large amount of content and the detail that they are expected to know each set work in is extremely challenging. Sections A and B the pupils seem to be getting to grips with now, and it is useful that the pupils can draw on their own practical knowledge - I think the fact that the practical and theoretical components of the course are so closely linked is a real strength of the specification. Section C however is still proving a struggle for them. The last two questions are worth 12 marks so are essentially mini essay questions and the girls are required to write about the chosen set works in a lot of detail. Some of the pupils who struggle with English are finding it hard to structure these answers so this is going to be our main focus for next term.

The set works are very diverse and the pupils have really enjoyed learning about them. *A Linha Curva* by Itzik Galili is a vibrant, fast colourful samba based dance on Brazilian culture; the pupils really love this piece and going to see it live was massively inspiring. *Within Her Eyes* by James

Cousins is a fantastically intimate piece which is set in various outdoor landscapes; it is contemporary contact work during which the female dancer does not touch the ground once for the entire duration of the piece. The pupils were fascinated by the unusual setting, the physicality of the dance and the tragic love story that it represents. *Infra* by Wayne McGregor is a contemporary ballet based on the idea of life beneath a city. There is unusual use of graphics in this piece with an 18m LED screen raised at the back of the stage and throughout the piece there are electronic figures walking across. This allows pupils to see set design in another way and McGregor’s use of manipulation of number allows the audience to select what they focus on. *Emancipation of Expressionism* by Kenrick H20 Sandy takes the pupils on a journey of discovery through the medium of hip hop. The idea of being free to express yourself through movement really appealed to the pupils and although none of them would say that their preferred dance style was hip hop, they found it really engaging to watch and they enjoyed the musicality of the motifs. *Artificial Things* by Lucy Bennett is fantastic to have on the specification as it is performed by Stopgap and uses disabled and non-disabled dancers so the movement content is really different from the other pieces. It challenges pupils’ perception of what can be achieved in terms of movement. Finally Christopher Bruce’s *Shadows*, where the pupils enjoyed the opportunity to have a narrative piece to write about. All of our pupils have studied Christopher Bruce at key stage 3 so it was lovely to give them the chance to continue this at GCSE level.

Although teaching this specification has been treading very much into the unknown, the pupils are really enjoying their experience of this course and everyone in the country is in the same boat regarding the new specification. I have already learnt a lot from delivering my schemes of work in Year 10 and have adjusted the schemes of work ready for the Year 10s who started the course in September just gone. We will nervously await our first set of results in the summer this year and, with a clearer idea of whether or not we were on the right lines, continue to try to increase our numbers and keep convincing our senior leadership team of the importance of keeping dance on the curriculum.

Rambert - A Triple Bill - 11th October 2017

Mary Cormack

With Rambert performing one of the set works on the new GCSE Dance specification, it seemed an ideal opportunity for a school trip so in October we took 15 pupils to The Mayflower, Southampton to watch Rambert’s triple bill. The only piece we knew they would perform definitely was *Ghost Dances* but we were hoping that *A Linha Curva* would also be on the programme as it is on the new AQA GCSE Dance specification.

The first piece was *Transfigured Night* which is based on a tumultuous relationship between two lovers. The piece had some fantastic group formations and shapes which transfixed the pupils. The ensemble seemed to move and breathe as one body with a vast depth of shape and texture. The lovers in this piece - one male and one female dancer - took us on a journey through a trying time in their

relationship. Their duets are highlighted with moments of poignant contact work showing that there is still intimacy between them but there is something preventing them from being together. Lifts, counter balance and counter tension were all used effectively and the pupils loved the physicality of these movements. The lighting was also an integral part of the piece with shafts of lighting being used and the dancers lay in the subsequent shadows.

We teach *Ghost Dances* as part of our KS3 curriculum and it was brilliant that our pupils got the opportunity to see it live - it definitely enhanced their understanding and it brought the work to life. Until they are seen live, I do not think you can explain the impact of the costumes of the three ghost dancers. The masks were unbelievably eerie and the body paint enhanced the physicality of the

dancers, allowing clear muscle definition and reinforcing their skeletal frames. When I asked the pupils what had stood out to them about the piece, a common theme was the positioning of the ghost dancers in the background throughout, lurking in the shadows whilst the dead were dancing. They found themselves looking for them and they created a constant fear of what was to come, that a presence was always watching over them. The pupils also mentioned the music as helping to establish the unnerving atmosphere, with the wind effects suggesting a cold and unwelcoming place. The fact that *Ghost Dances* is not available to watch on YouTube means that pupils can only view the work in its entirety live and this definitely made the performance more special.

A Linha Curva was performed as the last item on the programme. What a vibrant, fast and exciting piece it is – there is no comparison between watching it on film and watching it live which is why we knew it was so important for the pupils to experience it. One of things that had the most impact on the pupils was the noise. Heavily influenced by samba music, the volume and pace of the music is infectious, automatically creating a party, carnival type atmosphere; the four percussionists were incredible. One pupil said ‘The rhythm was so strong I could feel it in my chest and it made me want to get up and be a part of it.’ The percussionists and some of the dancers also use vocal sounds during the performance which enhances the carnival feeling and was great to hear live.



Laban's Legacy Lives on at Monmouth School for Girls: Laban Guild Certificates of Achievement and Foundation Course in Creative Dance

Rhyan Parry

Laban continues to be at the heart of dance education at Monmouth School for Girls, from Years 3 – 13. Whether dance is studied as part of the curriculum, cross-curricular, or co-curricular, Laban's concepts and principles are continuously being embedded through a creative and all-inclusive approach to every style of dance offered.

All of us who use 'Laban's Tool Box' know that we do not just teach dance, we educate through the medium of dance. The Laban Guild Certificates of Achievement and Foundation Course are outstanding ways to ensure our young dancers and next generation continue to connect

The lighting is a fundamental part of the piece with a chequer board effect on the stage made up of bright vibrant colours that defines the formations of the dancers in the large ensemble sections. The lighting is pre-programmed and the grid changes at a fast pace reflecting the tempo of the dancing and the music. The style of the movement is made up of capoeira, samba and contemporary which gives a fluidity and freedom of movement that matches the fun atmosphere. In the narrative sections Galili explores the competitive nature between Brazilian men and women and how they interact. These sections are dynamic and contain lots of flight and contact work. In this particular rendition the dancers created several humorous moments which the audience really engaged with as the dancers showed off their individual personalities.

All three pieces showed the diversity of Rambert's work and were a complete contrast to each other. It was important to show the pupils that, even though dance companies might have a particular style, they can still create pieces that have very different choreographic intentions and can look and have a totally different impact on the audience. The pupils found seeing these pieces live inspiring and it reminded me that despite the time constraints and logistical implications of taking pupils on trips to see live performances, it is always worth it; the impact of a live performance should never be underestimated.

with the roots of educational dance and carry forward the legacy of Laban. So many modern educational dance programmes, although using all the principles of Rudolf Laban's ingenious work, make no reference to our pioneer. It is vital this connection is not lost!

No other organisation offers certificates or courses in creative educational dance, which can be delivered so holistically and with such flexibility; they have provided a precious 'jewel' for my teaching since their inception.

If anyone reading this article teaches creative dance, or

knows education trained dance teachers who would be interested in applying for approval to deliver these courses, then please contact Ann Ward coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk for more information.

Give students the opportunity to achieve a certificate

from a prestigious organisation, as recognition of their achievement and help ensure that Laban's legacy is carried proudly through future generations of dancers.

Rhyan Parry is Head of Dance at Monmouth School for Girls

Laban Guild Certificate for Graded Achievement

Jade Batchelor

Howell's School, part of the Girls' Day School Trust (which is the leading network of independent girls' schools in the UK) delivers dance throughout the curriculum as part of Physical Literacy to girls aged 3-10 and is then developed in the core PE Curriculum in Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 covering 11-18 year old girls. For the first time, over the autumn and spring terms, the Laban Guild Certificates for Graded Achievement will be introduced and delivered to all Year 5 girls. Next academic year we hope to be able to deliver more courses across the age range. Integrating the course into the PE curriculum has proved to be a valuable resource with specific dance objectives and clear dance assessment criteria. Teachers are able to plan effective lessons based on the principles of educational dance movement. Having the opportunity to deliver the course has inspired planning and delivery of lessons and in turn has enthused the girls to work towards an achievable, accredited award.

An example lesson that the girls recently enjoyed explored the theme of shadows using portable spotlights. The girls appreciated working in their own spotlight and their own creative performance space. The audition 'Attraction' from Britain's Got Talent 2013 was used to really inspire and relate to the girls interests. The focus for the lesson was improvisation and being able to show increasing sensitivity

to the accompaniment. To structure the improvisation the girls had to focus on using Travel, Turn and Jump in their given tasks. The music used to achieve the objective was from the soundtrack *The Matrix - Clubbed to Death* - which had a significant musical change which allowed the girls to reflect this in their dance movement. The lesson observed was graded outstanding and the girls' thrived in the simulating dance environment. The opportunity to deliver the awards is exactly what schools need to be able to deliver educational dance effectively. Dance is developing rapidly in schools, with many girls and boys wanting to take up the sport, but there are not enough confident and qualified practitioners who can deliver the high standards required to enthuse and build the sport from grass roots up. To be able to meet the needs of students, professionals from a variety of backgrounds need the opportunity to be able to learn about educational dance. I hope this is something the Guild and its members can see would be an amazing investment; increasing the levels of participation in dance across schools and community groups and in turn, improving the accessibility to high quality dance education ultimately enhancing the level of dance skills in children.

Jade Batchelor is a Teacher of Physical Education and Dance at Howell's School, Cardiff.

LABAN GUILD ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE AT BEDFORD 17 – 19 AUGUST 2018

This year we are planning a more flexible programme with more opportunities to mix 'n' match. You will still be able to specialise in further Laban studies and choreography with Anna Carlisle for the whole of Strand 1, but it will also be possible to do the first day alone and then try something else, or to join the group on the second day. Cathy Washbrooke will be offering a slightly different programme, but will still take her very popular dance/drama sessions. Other sessions in Strand 2 will offer a variety of different aspects of the application of Laban's work.

For our third Strand, we are delighted to welcome The Sherborne Association, an international organisation, as our partners this year. Veronica Sherborne was a student of Laban's. Sherborne Developmental Movement is a therapeutic approach used with both Main Stream Children and people with Special Needs. The work is not just fascinating but fun, and the six hours allotted to this strand will enable you to gain a level 1 certificate in Developmental Movement with the Sherborne Association. As usual, there will a choice in the first session of the day between a technical study and a session based on improvisation, and the days end with the opportunity for everyone on the course to dance together. There is plenty of time for networking, catching up with old friends and making new ones, with a reception on Friday evening offering you a chance to find out a bit more about your fellow students, and a meal at a nearby pub for everyone on Saturday. The Campus is small, very attractive and secure, and accommodation is available on site; basic student but with the option of en-suite. We have the use of excellent working spaces and a communal area for breaks and lunches,

AND THREE DAYS OF DANCE!

Full details and booking forms will be available shortly, but meanwhile you can register your interest or make further enquires at coursesofficer@labanguild.org.

The Northern Region Network

Helen Bryce, Bobbie Millar and Beth Loughran

Laban in Context:

A study day held on Saturday 10 November 2017 at the University of Cumbria, Brampton Road Campus, Carlisle.

Bobbie Millar, Northern Regional Representative of the Laban Guild created a new opportunity to take part in a day of dance in the North. Bobbie, in association with Beth Loughran, Lecturer in Movement and Dance at the University of Cumbria devised, designed and organised the day with the aim of refreshing or deepening knowledge and practice of the Laban approach.

Laban in Context gave participants the chance to work with three different members of the Guild and to explore some of the ways in which they use Laban's principles in their work. At the same time, this laid the foundation for a Northern Network of the Guild and for future practical events. The study day was supported by the University of Cumbria. Bobbie Millar, Beth Loughran and Helen Bryce each led a session offering a snapshot example from each tutor, sharing their use of Laban's principles in their own work. All of the sessions were practical and stimulated discussion and questions from the participants. The setting of the University of Cumbria was an excellent venue and provided a good learning environment in attractive surroundings. The atmosphere for the day was friendly, encouraging and positive.

The practical sessions included:

- a Warm up session from Beth
- a session on Relatedness from Helen, exploring aspects of Laban's structural model, as further developed by Valerie Preston-Dunlop, Melanie Clarke and other staff at Trinity Laban
- a session on a Multi-disciplinary approach from Bobbie involving dance, music and science; and
- a session on Jazz dance from Beth using elements of Laban's approach.

Participants, which included students and teachers, were eager to share ideas and exchange views about the day, and also identified ways they could use some of the experiences in their own work.

The concluding discussion brought agreement that we achieved our aim to create the beginnings of a Laban study network for the North. From the University, Professor Graeme Danby visited the course group to find out more about our aims and objectives. He offered continuing support from the University for future events stressing that early planning would help to create and consolidate the day as an annual event. The idea of November in the North seemed a good option in relation to the existing Laban Guild calendar of events.



Although a busy time for students there were no strong objections to this. The group agreed that an annual event should be established in the North to continue the study that had been started.

The next study day will be on The Hodgson Collection on Saturday 9 June 2018 12:00 to 18:00 at the University of Leeds. The focus of this Second Study Day in the Northern Region is the John Hodgson Archive which is housed in the Special Collections in the Leeds University Brotherton Library. There will be an opportunity to learn about this Collection and how to access and use it, in the context of a growing dance and movement archive in the University, together with practical classes relating to this Collection. Presentations and classes will be led by Tim Procter (Special Collections, University of Leeds), Dr Clare Lidbury (University of Wolverhampton) and Dr Dick McCaw (Royal Holloway, University of London). This event will also provide an opportunity for members to meet with others in the Region. It is also open to all members of the Laban Guild and other people interested in the work of Rudolf Laban, Kurt Jooss and Sigurd Leeder.

Photographs of Laban's structural model and participants taken during the practical sessions by Bobbie Millar and Beth Loughran



Geraldine Stephenson died on Christmas Eve. Her funeral was held at Breakspear Crematorium on Tuesday 16th January 2018; a Memorial Service at St Paul's in Covent Garden will take place on April 26th 2018. Members will be able to read in the magazine tributes to Geraldine, an outstanding Laban practitioner who will be greatly missed.

As 2017 became 2018 it may be that Guild members made resolutions: to give back to their communities; help others; be more positive/purposeful; volunteer; extend their horizons and so on. The Guild can help you realise those good intentions since we have need of the following: Secretary, Membership Secretary, Regional Representative for London and Sport and Recreation Alliance Representative. Happily we have these roles covered at the moment but this is prolonging/increasing the workload of some Council members so if you would like to get more involved in 2018 please contact me in the first instance M.Killingbeck@ntlworld.com If you would like to volunteer your services for single projects eg marketing/fundraising for the Summer School, this is also possible just get in touch. If your resolutions were more to do with health, fitness and well-being, again the Guild can help. There are regional events in the South West, South East, East and North East. The Annual Conference Day/AGM, Summer School, Hertfordshire Training Course and Laban Foundation Course are all planned for this year; please support.

The Annual Conference Day/AGM, as members are aware, will take place on Sunday 29th April 2018, to coincide with the UNESCO World Day of Dance. Because of its convenience for most travellers (walking distance from Kings Cross, St Pancras and Euston Stations) Council have decided to hold the event at The Place again. Alison Curtis-Jones has agreed to give the Laban Lecture on her re-imagining of Laban's *Drumstick*. She will lead one of the workshops and she is arranging for her company Summit Dance to perform *Drumstick* at the end of the day. Needless to say Council are thrilled that members will have an opportunity to see the work that the Guild supported at The 3rd Dalcroze International Conference in North America last year. Council are delighted also that Adrian Look has agreed to lead the other workshop at the Annual Conference Day/AGM. Adrian is a freelance dance artist and lecturer for Tanztheater. He studied dance at the Folkwang University in Essen, whose alumni include Pina Bausch, Reinhild Hoffmann, and Susanne Linke, all of whom played a big part in the development of dance-theatre in Germany, and across Europe more generally (see LookAtMovement.co.uk); it promises to be a brilliant day. Contact Selina Martin SMartin@LodgeParkAcademy.co.uk for further information and/or to book your place making the most of early bird discounts. Council would like to thank Selina for her annual organisation of this event and looks forward to renewing contact with members.

Summer School will take place at The University of Bedfordshire 17th – 19th August 2018. This year Council are planning to offer a more varied "mix and match" programme - participants will still be able to follow a specialised strand with one tutor for all or part of the course, but will also have the opportunity to partake in a wider variety of sessions that will cater for both the more or

Chair's Report

Maggie Killingbeck

less experienced followers of Laban's work. Suggestions so far include drama, Laban and music, the language of dance and possibly a research option. As previously Ann Ward is organising this event please get in touch with her coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk if you would like more information and/or you wish to secure your place. Our thanks go to Ann for her work in ensuring that the Summer School is such a success.

Ann also organises the Creative Dance Leaders Courses. As members are aware these courses have been running extremely successfully in Ireland for many years. In the UK, however, in recent years there have been pockets of interest but insufficient numbers to make the organisation of a course a viable proposition. We have an excellent venue in Ware, near Hertford, but need at least 12 students to make the course viable. I know that we have a small group of very enthusiastic potential participants however, if you think that this is what you need personally or professionally please contact Ann coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk as soon as possible. It will be reassuring for all to know that the course is definitely going ahead.

A Graded Certificate course has taken place this year in Wales and from feedback received it is apparent that this has been extremely successful. Indeed one teacher used the Graded Certificate course content in the context of teaching dance to her Year 5 pupils; she commented "thank you again for giving me the opportunity to deliver the awards, they have inspired my planning and delivery"(J. Batchelor Teacher of PE and Dance). This is good to hear. Similarly participants on the Foundation Course held at Bedford in the autumn were extremely positive about their experience. It appears to have whetted appetites for further training either with us or with Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Again Council would like to thank Ann most sincerely for the time and effort that she gives to training.

On behalf of the Guild I attended a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training event in Nottingham. The GDPR becomes law on 25th May this year. In essence regulation is intended to ensure that all data is captured lawfully, fairly and transparently, that it is captured for specific and legitimate purposes, that it is kept up to date, kept for no longer than necessary and that appropriate measures are in place to ensure security of data, including prevention of unauthorised/unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction or damage. Notes from this event were circulated to Council in order to check that our practice meets the integrity and confidentiality required by this regulation. Interestingly, whilst our digital footprint is our greatest asset it is also our greatest threat. Needless to say further training, advice and insurance is available but at significant cost. Fortunately, with Janet Harrison currently responsible for the Guild's data our practice is mostly in line with the regulation however we will consider what else needs to be done to ensure compliance with the regulation.

On behalf of Council I would like to thank Janet for continuing as Membership Secretary when she made known her desire to step down over a year ago. Unfortunately, to date we have received expressions of

interest which, for wholly understandable reasons, have come to nothing. It is possible to split the role between two Guild members so please consider sharing Janet's shoes with a fellow Guild member. Not only will Janet be leaving the role in excellent shape, she is prepared to support her replacement(s) for as long as necessary.

With technology in mind I would like to encourage all Guild members to access the website and to contribute to twitter and Facebook. Our technology team - Yael Owen-McKenna, Mary McCormack, Louise Douse and Pam Anderton - are keen to receive your contributions and welcome your comments. These platforms are available for you to feel part of the Laban Guild community as well as to advertise your Laban-based activities. Our thanks go to the team for their on-going work on our behalf.

In many instances regional communities are beginning to develop as a result of the Regional Representatives. Indeed following my email to London Guild members just before Christmas it was encouraging to receive a number of replies, social, professional and general updates on recent developments. Please use your Regional Representatives (listed below) - tell them what you think, what you can offer, what you would like to see in your region, what Council can do for you. We look forward to hearing from you at least once in 2018.

Scotland, North East, North West and Yorkshire: Bobbie Millar bobbie@bobbie-millar.com (as members in these areas increase we will look for further support for Bobbie),
South East: Patsy Izzard patsyizzardco@hotmail.com
London Maggie Killingbeck: M.Killingbeck@ntlworld.com (this is an interim appointment until a member in the region volunteers to take over) West Midlands: Yael Owen-McKenna ynsowen@hotmail.com South West: Lydia Everitt lydia.everitt@btinternet.com East Midlands: Selina Martin SMartin@LodgeParkAcademy.co.uk East: Carol Wallman pcwallmandance@hotmail.co.uk Eire and Norther Ireland: Ann Ward annonhols@yahoo.co.uk Wales: Rhyan Parry rhyanparry@hotmail.co.uk International: Penny Boff penelope8boff@gmail.com

For 2018 the Laban Movement Choir Project are touring a 'Dance in a Day' event, in recognition of the 100 years anniversary of women "who were occupiers in their own right or wives of occupiers, with a minimum age of thirty or thirty-five years" (Pugh 1980, 33) gaining the vote. Issues related to the suffragettes will inform the movement/dance experience. To date the project has bookings in Egham in Surrey and Letchworth in Hertfordshire. If this is something that you feel would be welcomed in your region please contact your Regional Representative or Susi Thornton susi@thorntonclan.com

Following the Heritage Lottery Funding bid handover between Yael Owen-McKenna and Dr Louise Douse a meeting was held at NRCD between Louise and Helen Roberts. As previously, transcribing and supplementing archive materials will provide the foundation for the bid;

it is hoped that exhibitions, workshops and symposia will result. Work is on-going and members will be advised as ideas become clearer and more fixed. On behalf of the membership Council would like to thank Louise Douse and Helen Roberts for the work they are undertaking on our behalf.

I am continually heartened by the magazine. Thanks to articles submitted by members and the voluntary activity of the editor Clare Lidbury, the magazine producer Pam Anderton and the distributor Dorothy Ledgard members receive a varied and interesting movement and dance publication termly. On behalf of Guild members I would like to thank all contributors and operatives; your support is greatly appreciated. Members are encouraged to write for the magazine and/or communicate with the editor C.Lidbury@wlv.ac.uk

Similarly I am grateful to Loma Lockie, our treasurer, who despite little initial knowledge of Laban/movement/dance, has devoted one day per week to Guild business. Bank accounts either have been or are in the process of being rationalised and clarity, transparency and accountability are underpinning all development. It is appropriate to note here that the Sesame Institute UK has disbanded as an organisation. £1000 of its remaining funds has been banked with the Laban Guild for Movement and Dance which have been ring-fenced for use in Laban-based Sesame training. Council, on behalf of the membership would like to thank Loma for her work on our behalf.

Also on behalf of the membership I would like to thank Council for the time and effort they give to Guild affairs. All are busy individuals and yet their commitment is such that they find time to execute their tasks efficiently and effectively; our thanks to all. Please remember that good governance requires that we address succession so if you think that you have the capability, commitment, time and energy to become involved please get in touch.

Pugh, M. (1980) *Women's Suffrage in Britain 1867 – 1928*, University of Virginia: The Historical Association.

Advertising Space

Back cover - £250; A4 page - £150;
half page - £80; quarter page - £45
Classified adverts - up to 50 words at 20p per word
A5 flyer - £40; A4 flyer - £50

Please contact: magazine@labanguild.org.uk

Training Committee Report

Ann Ward

HERTS CDLC

We now have an excellent venue in Ware. Dates have been fixed and tutors booked. We have 9/10 people who appear keen to do the course and application forms have gone out but we still need a few more to be sure the course can go ahead. The dead line for applications is 28 Feb. so if you have been thinking about it, know someone might be interested or can help to publicise the course either locally, through newsletters or social media, please contact the Courses Officer for details.

LISBURN CPD MODULE IN COMMUNITY DANCE

We have had some excellent reports of community work and expect all 7 of those eligible to apply for their certificates to have completed their reports soon. The group has kept in touch and most attended a WE taken by Wendy Hermelin in September, organised by Linda Dickson..

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT

These courses provide frameworks for teachers to use either within schools or private classes, aimed at pre-school or Key Stage 1, 2 or 3. They have been taken up less often than the Foundation Course, but we are delighted that they are being used by one of our members, Jade Batchelor and hope that this will be the start of a wider take up. You can read more about Jade's use of the courses elsewhere in the magazine

FOUNDATION COURSE

Maggie Killingbeck ran another highly successful course at the University of Bedfordshire in Bedford in the Autumn and, again, you can read a report elsewhere in the magazine. It is also currently being completed by Jean Hunter with her Elderberries group of older dancers in Belfast.

SHEILA MCGIVERING

After so many years of service to training and an inestimable input into its development, Sheila McGivering has decided to retire from the day to day details involved in committee work. We shall miss her regular input of wit and wisdom but will still be asking her advice and keeping her in touch with developments. She is one of those people dedicated to furthering Laban's work, beavering away quietly in the background and not asking for recognition. But her contribution has been enormous and it has been a privilege to work with her and learn from her. We all regard her as a much loved friend as well as mentor and will be keeping in close touch.

Information on all courses can be found on our website, www.labanguild.org.uk. and further details from coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk.

Training Committee: Janet Lunn (Chair), Arline Balmer, Louise Costelloe, Noeleen McGrath, Ann Ward

Members' Events and Classes

Adult Movement and Dance in Belfast

Monday: 5.30pm - 6.30pm at Crescent Arts Centre

Contact: **Brenda McKee**

Email: brendamckee@btinternet.com

'Third Age Dance' in Cambridge

Wednesday mornings

Contact: **Maddy Tongue**

01223 302030

Weekly Drop in Classes

led by Viv Bridson

Viv runs a class every Sunday at The Place (16 Flaxman Terrace WC1) from 12.00 – 13.30.

The class is for those who are trained or would like to be dancers, actors or performance artists. Viv does not teach Laban theory, rather, in the tradition of Jooss and Sigurd Leeder who developed their professional training from Laban principles, she uses her knowledge to structure the class and the material.

£9.00, concs £7.00, unwaged £5.00 – pay in Studio

The class is usually in Studio 1 and there is a musician.

Weekly Workshops

led by Jenny Frankel

Tuesdays from 12 noon to 1pm at the Primrose Hill Community Centre, 29 Hopkinsons Place, Fitzroy Road, London NW1 8TN

Fee: £10 per workshop Contact: 07970 536643

Email: jennyfrankel.labanl@gmail.com



Photo by B J Lewis

Celebrating with Gordon Curl



Photo by Pam Anderton

Introducing a LUTSF Tylosand fund raising event