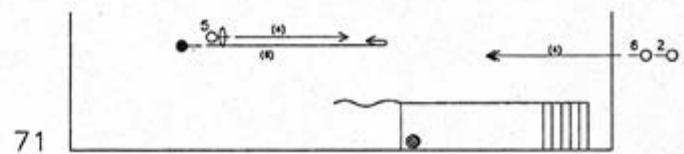
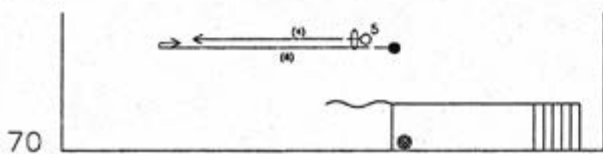
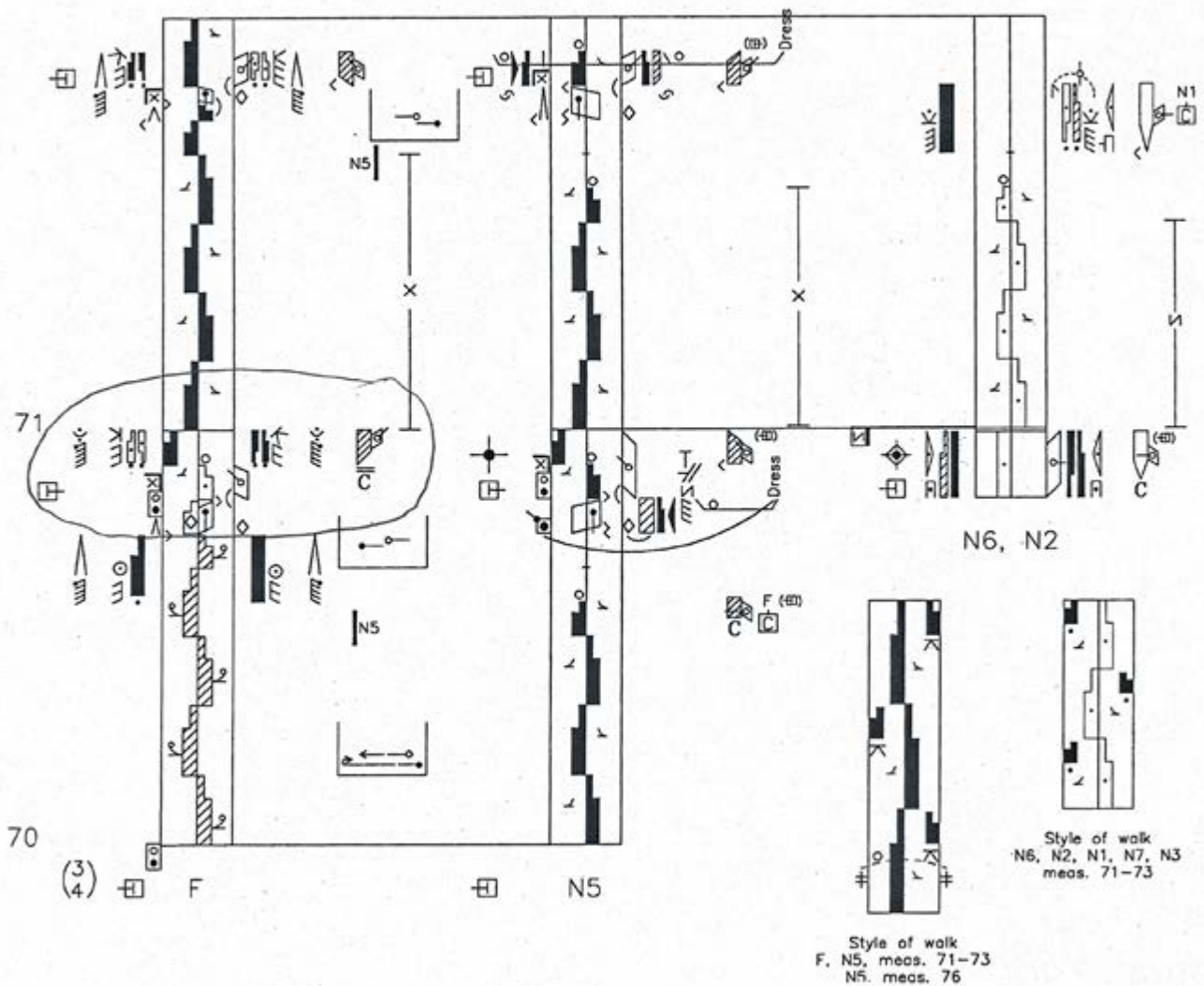


Movement, Dance & Drama



Extract from the Choreographic Score of Nijinski's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*

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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.

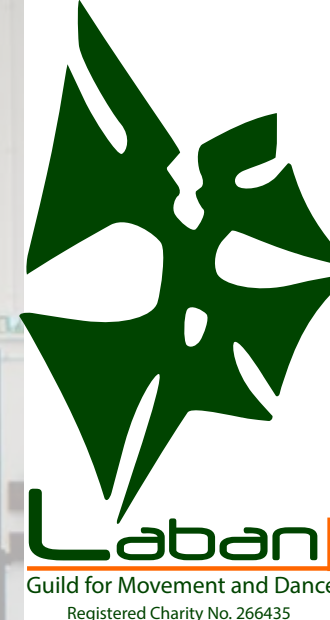
For our third Strand, we are delighted to welcome The Sherborne Association, an international organisation, as our partners this year. Veronica Sherborne was a student of Laban's. Sherborne Developmental Movement is a therapeutic approach used with both Main Stream Children and people with Special Needs. 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 be 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.

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Editor: Dr Clare Lidbury
43 Bittell Road
Bart Green
Birmingham
B45 8LU
Email: c.lidbury@wlv.ac.uk

Editorial Team:
Dorothy Ledgard
Pam Anderton

Editorial Advisers:
Anna Carlisle
Gordon Curl

Correspondents:
Council: Yael Owen-McKenna
Email: chair@labanguild.org.uk
Courses: Ann Ward
Email: coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk
Drama: Darren Royston
Email: darren_royston@hotmail.com

Pre-printing Production: Pam Anderton
Email: magazine@labanguild.org.uk

Printing: Mickle Creative Solutions
30 Simmonds Road, Canterbury CT1 3RA
Phone: 01227 780001

Distribution: Dorothy Ledgard
Email: DRLedgard@gmail.com

Guild Membership Secretary: Janet Harrison
Email: membershipsecretary@labanguild.org.uk

Magazine Contributions
Final copy dates:
15th January, 15th May, 15th September
Format: email or scanner-ready copy to the Editor

Cover Images

Front: Demonstrating the Faun's position for the start of measure 71 (circled in the notation)

Back: Forthcoming CDLC Hertfordshire

ISSN 2046-3065
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Movement, Dance & Drama is published in England and is distributed worldwide. It is free to all members of the Laban Guild. Individual annual membership subscriptions for UK addresses £35; affiliated groups UK £45; concessions UK £20; individual worldwide £40; groups worldwide £55; concessions worldwide £25. Online rates: individuals £25 groups £30; concessions £15. Library and institute subscriptions on request.

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New Series

In an occasional series, we will be highlighting new Laban-related articles and activities which readers might find interesting – please feel free to recommend material you come across by emailing me with all the details c.lidbury@wlv.ac.uk

Gordon Curl's article "Sometimes ... dances ... 'do more' on the page than they ever did on the stage" was published recently in *Research in Dance Education*, vol.19, 2018 – see it on-line at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14647893.2018.1429248> The abstract states: *This critical review aims to expose the confusion that exists in professional arts criticism in general, and dance criticism in particular – with implications for dance education. The underlying principles of formalism are outlined and its strengths and weaknesses highlighted. A demand for more interpretive, theoretical and contextual criticism is made – undermining the centrality of formal values. Intrusive critical interpretations meet with scepticism – they 'do more on the page than they ever did on the stage'. Wittgenstein's analysis of 'seeing aspects' is proposed as fundamental to aesthetic appreciation; its pre-conditions are made explicit. Multiple examples of 'seeing-aspects' in dance are given.*

Clare Lidbury's "What Will Survive Us? Sigurd Leeder and His Legacy" was published in the Dance Studies Association's *Teacher's Imprint – Rethinking Dance Legacy*, vol 37, November 2017. This can be read on-line at <https://dancestudiesassociation.org/publications/conversations-across-the-files-of-dance-studies/teachers-imprint-rethinking-dance-legacy> The Dance Studies Association is the recently (2017)

merged entity of the Congress on Research in Dance (CORD, founded 1969) and the Society of Dance History Scholars (SDHS, founded 1978); as they say, DSA is both grounded in and extends the work of those two organizations.

You might also be interested in "Whoever Pays the Piper Calls the Tune: Kurt Jooss, Public Subsidy, and Private Patronage" published in *Dance Research* vol. 36. No.1, May 2018, in which Clare Lidbury discusses how subsidy and patronage from German municipalities, private individuals, and British organisations supported Kurt Jooss's work. It focuses on him as a theatre/opera director and as a choreographer for Baroque operas and oratorios. See <https://eupublishing.com/toc/drs/36/1>

This on-line seminar might also be interesting - Webinar series: Laban Movement Studies - History ... register on-line at <https://www.eventbrite.com> The next seminar is Seminar 11: Laban's Art of Movement in Education given by Frederick Curry on June 18, 2018. "This lecture will examine the United Kingdom origins of applying Laban's movement concepts, known then as the Art of Movement and Modern Educational Dance, to the teaching of dance in primary and secondary schools and its evolution into the contemporary landscape of PreK-12 Dance Education in the United States."

The 'Laban Event' in Ascona, Switzerland will be held 5th-7th October; details are not published yet but will be available soon at http://www.laban.ch/en/home_en.html

Editorial

This edition of *Movement, Dance and Drama* welcomes the first report from the Laban Guild's new Chairperson, Yael Owen-McKenna; the editorial team wishes her well as she takes over from the excellent work of Maggie Killingbeck. Maggie's contribution to the Guild was given due tribute at the well-attended AGM and conference where she played her full part in the day – introducing the events, taking part in the workshops, chairing the AGM and receiving good wishes and thanks from all those present. As might be expected following the AGM and conference the magazine has some reports and thoughts on the Laban Lecture, workshops and performances. It is with regret, and apologies, then that for several reasons we are unable to publish in this edition the text of Alison Curtis-Jones' informative and interesting lecture *Re-imagining Laban: Tradition, Extinction, Invention – re-staging as Creative Practice*; it is anticipated that we will publish it in the next magazine.

With holidays and summer relaxation ahead perhaps your thoughts will turn to reflecting on your Laban experience. Please do share this with readers by writing something, however short, for the magazine; we look forward to receiving your contributions.

President's Address

Anna Carlisle

This is the 72nd annual general meeting of the Laban Guild. I have, in past years, highlighted events which have been organised over this last year by the Laban Guild. However, I want to open up the parameters relating to the promotion of Laban's work and draw your attention to a number of significant conferences, training courses and events that have happened at an international level – most of which the Guild and its members have been involved in or closely associated with.

Last summer, Carol-Lynne Moore, distinguished Guild member and author of many excellent books on Laban's work, led a major conference in Chicago for Movement Pattern Analysis practitioners; this was organised by the Warren Lamb Trust. Also last summer, the Guild granted funding to Alison Curtis Jones to assist with the presentation of Summit Dance Theatre's production of Laban's early choreography, *The Dancing Drumstick* (1913), at the Dalcroze International Conference in Quebec, Canada.

In October, the 5th annual organisation of the Laban Event took place in Monte Verita, Switzerland. Its theme

Laban Guild AGM and Conference 2018

Re-imagining Laban: Traditions and Interventions. Restaging as creative contemporary practice
Charmian Wilde

In a large dance studio at The Place on a chilly late April Sunday morning, the conference opened not with an empty space but the unforgettable spectacle of Darren Royston's crew of period dancers beautifully clad in the costumes of Shakespeare's court. By way of a warm-up into the day, the dancers coaxed us into a series of elegant and gentle steps and twirls, with plenty of humor.

Already buzzing with ideas, meeting friends old and new, we had our first workshop with Alison Curtis-Jones, a contemporary dancer, professional performer and choreologist who guided us through some of her ideas of how to re-imagine and use Laban principles in dance and movement. In paired and group work, with Alison's guidance, we quickly tested out our ability to respond and react through sensing group changes in both body

– the enactment of a re-imagining of Laban's major site-specific choreography from 1917 - is a work in three sections: it begins at sunset, continues through the night with a 'dance of the demons' and ends at dawn with a dance to the rising sun. Antja Kennedy was one of the leaders of this project - she is co-founder of Eurolab in Berlin and their programme for this year has a focus on 'The Movement Choir' (see <https://www.laban-eurolab.org>).

Back here in the UK, the Guild has organised the very successful completion of the Creative Dance Leaders Course in Lisburn, Northern Ireland and the annual Laban Summer School at Bedford University.

Much work, of course, takes place behind the scenes; there are meetings, minutes, the magazine, the website, the training courses, the membership, the finances, the on-going Heritage Lottery bid and publicity. Each Council member has a designated role to fulfil in addition to their own busy careers and lives. Let us not forget that the work is voluntary and that the Guild cannot survive without their dedication.

Diary Dates

Laban Guild Creative Dance Leaders Course

Dates: from October 2018 until November 2019
Venue: Ware, nr Hertford
Full details from: coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk

Laban Guild Summer School 2018

Date: 17th - 19th August
Venue: University of Bedfordshire, Bedford Campus
Full details from: coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk

and space. Deep concentration was required and given we closed our eyes for sections of this work, the results were often surprising and unexpected!

This was followed by a Tanztheatre-style workshop from Adrian Look, the director and choreographer of London Tanztheatre. Adrian's enthusiasm for this dance form soon had us all moving with a sense of languorous abandon. Adrian devised the most gorgeous movement sequences that made full use of the studio space, particularly with exhilarating gestures of the arms and the clicking of fingers in distinctive Pina Bausch style.

A delicious lunch in the Café is always important at a busy conference and it hit the spot, with opportunities for networking and catching up with old friends. After lunch, a fascinating lecture by Alison ensued, delving into her work in recreating the Laban work 'Drumstick' (1913). This provided the theoretical thread and background to our morning workshop and opened up an absorbing debate around the issues of recreating a work from the past to the present. It was also especially inspiring to hear the insights of Ann Hutchinson Guest who sat among us in the audience.

After the AGM, we returned to the studio where our day had begun to find it transformed from workshop into performance space for *Drumstick* danced by The Summit Dance Theatre with musicians. This was indeed a rousing and powerful piece capping a stimulating and enjoyable day in all respects.

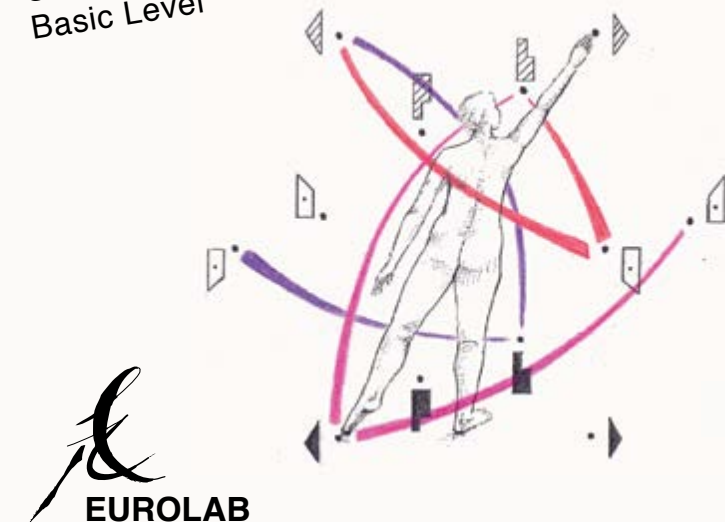
Having had some time to reflect I feel that this year's AGM was significant in many ways. In this brief report I will try to convey my personal reaction to some of them.

It was of course important to celebrate the life and career of Geraldine Stevenson and to recognise the tremendous contribution that she has made to performance in dance over the years. Many of us present at the AGM still cherish personal memories of Geraldine as friend, colleague or teacher.

The AGM was well attended by a range of dance enthusiasts, as usual from diverse backgrounds and with differing expectations of the day. The eclectic mix added to the excitement of the proceedings. Notably, during the meeting, Maggie Killingbeck, our much respected and well loved chairperson, confirmed her resignation. Personally, as a long standing member of the Guild, I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding contribution that she has made. Maggie's commitment, tenacity and professionalism has done much to move the concept, quality and image of the Guild's work forward; I wish Yael, Maggie's successor every good wish in her new role.

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Laban Guild AGM and Conference 2018

Carol Wallman

This year's Laban Lecture was delivered by Alison Curtis-Jones, currently Lecturer in Dance at Trinity Laban Conservatoire. Alison explained in some detail her research into Laban's early work *Dancing Drumstick* (1913) and the decisions she made in the re-imagining of the piece. In her practical workshop, Alison enabled delegates to experience some of the challenging technical and expressive elements which she herself had explored when constructing her new work. At the end of the day, delegates were treated to an accomplished performance of *Drumstick*, presented exquisitely by Alison's dancers and musicians, enhanced by most effective lighting and costume design. Palpable was a highly developed sense of interaction and group awareness. For me, I felt a direct connection to those early days at The Studio 63-65, when my fellow students and I spent much of our time exploring creative aspects of movement, extending boundaries.

At the end of the day, I feel that this year's AGM confirmed that Laban's work is still being explored and found to be relevant, particularly in the establishment which bears his name.

Bringing a Dance Score to Life: an account of the different aspects to be considered

Ann Hutchinson-Guest



Ann Hutchinson-Guest rehearsing Tudor's *Soirée Musicale*, the bolero section with Scottish National Theatre Ballet 1972

First comes the question – when is a dance notation score finished? During the early days at the Dance Notation Bureau in New York we had completed the movement scores which had included the music score. We felt proud that we had captured the choreography for future generations. Then, suddenly, we were accused of having incomplete scores. The idea had developed that a dance score should also provide information about the choreographer, about the dance scene (and world scene?) at the time it was composed, information on the costumes, the lighting plot, make-up etc. This makes it a much greater task, and yet, as people tackle the reviving of a dance score years later when so much in the world scene has changed, we realize all that background information is so valuable if one is going to try to capture the essence of the work, the message it originally delivered.

Another very important aspect is the training and dance experience of the performers who will be undertaking the work. An obvious example is the problems met in trying to teach a classical ballet piece to dancers who have had little if any classical training. It might be a valuable experience for the dancers, but in performance it would look all wrong. In my experience I have worked with professional ballet dancers when teaching Vaslav Nijinsky's ballet *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, the noble air of the trained ballet dancer perfectly takes on the elegant carriage of the nymphs. When teaching college dance students whose main background has been modern/contemporary dance, they understand

the up-lifted quality of the movement. I must interrupt here to point out that Nijinsky's choreography in this ballet is very simple, but also very unfamiliar to a ballet or a modern dance performer. I recently saw a video of a performance of Nijinsky's *Faune*, taught from the Labanotation score and performed by untrained bodies. The movements had been correctly read, but the performers had a sagging stance, there was no poetry in their movements. If the body could not comply, did they at least have an idea of the characters they were supposed to portray?

This question of the build of the performers and their training has been evident

in the Martha Graham Company. In the early 1940s her dancers were well built ladies, almost 'Amazonic' I used to think, but each was also an actress with strong stage presence. In the 1990s we see a Graham company with slender bodies, trained much more also in ballet, the movements are much more refined and also somehow less dramatic. Of course the same Graham choreography now has a very different look, but there is still much to admire and enjoy.

The Teaching Process

If the choreography has a story that should be covered early on; if there is a video or DVD showing it can give an immediate idea of the piece, however, it is not advisable to teach the work from the video, for the



Rehearsing Carla Fracci in Italy, in the Cachucha Sept 1984

personal mistakes of the performers are too easily taken to be part of the choreography. The ballet I have taught most frequently has been Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*. In the original version, which Nijinsky recorded in detail in his own dance notation system, the story line unfolds logically. For example, the faun while on his rock playing his flute, twice looks back into the wing from where the nymphs usually come. Will they be coming today? The nymphs are 'people' in that they relate to each other. When the first three enter the last one pulls back, looking into the wing, "Are the others coming?" The first two turn their heads to look at her, "What is wrong?" The third nymph looks at them, "Oh, nothing." And all continue walking to their positions on stage. Two late nymphs run in apologetically, they then ease into their places. Later, one nymph gets inattentive and wanders off, the others join her. They realize they have a part to do in the ritual, they apologize and return to their positions. And so it goes, many logical actions and reactions, all or which do not exist in the memory-based versions which, much distorted, have been handed down person to person and are available on video.

Learning the Steps

The choreography in Nijinsky's *Faune* is not easy to learn, particularly for classically trained ballet dancers. The choreography is all two-dimensional, similar to Egyptian wall paintings or Greek vases. The feet are parallel, the upper torso, the chest is turned to face the audience while the face looks in the direction of the feet. The arms are almost always in angular positions – low or above the head. None of the positions is familiar to the trained dancer; there are no familiar *ports de bras* thus learning the sequences takes time. Once mastered, the dancer can then focus on the motivations, the reasons behind each gesture. Even though these reasons have been mentioned in the learning process, they really cannot be 'taken on board' until the sequences are mastered. From this time onward the dance comes to life as each performer gains a physical understanding and can give the movement appropriate expression. Then enjoyment enters the picture as each performer embodies the movements, making each sequence their own.

College Students

Many college and university dance departments have studied Nijinsky's *Faune* not only for the physical experience of mastering the movements but also for its historical significance, Nijinsky in the Diaghilev Ballets Russe, the designer Leon Bakst and the composer, Claude Debussy, and also research into

the choreographic development. Dancers trained in modern/contemporary dance often related more easily to the choreography, they understood more readily about motivation, a word unfamiliar to many ballet dancers. The choreography of *Faune* does not require great technique, but an awareness of body and of space, the latter often acquired from familiarity with Laban's Space Harmony.

Timing

The musician in Nijinsky, his knowledge of it and application to movement relates the movements delightfully to Debussy's score. He does not 'parrot' the score, giving a movement for every note in the music – as one sees in some memory-based versions - his movement phrasing relates directly to the music score.

Because Debussy's score includes several changes of metre and also many rubato sequences, it is not easy to count. Only a few places can be counted with a regular beat. The dancers need to get to know the music intimately so that their bodies can 'sing' with the music. In rehearsal it has been found very practical to work with a CD that has the measure numbers spoken with the recorded music. Eventually the music is changed to a CD with no voice over, the dancers are usually rather scared

to have that 'prop' taken away, but in fact they usually sail along quite securely as they dance.

Visual Aids

The rare ideal situation occurs when the dancers have been able to learn their parts themselves from the Labanotation score - then one can go immediately to checking the motivations, intentions and the expressions of the different movements. If among the dancers there are some who can read Labanotation this is a definite bonus, for, as they learn the material, they can check and reinforce their understanding. I have often placed the visual aid of enlarged sheets of the floor plans on the wall to give dancers the immediate information about their placement on stage and pathways taken. In the case of Nijinsky's *Faune*, I have handed out cue sheets for each dancer's role, these sheets indicate the direction faced on stage, the number of steps, the specific head positions etc. using a few simple symbols for which there is a key. Reactions from the dancers have been mixed, some found such visual aids a welcome help and set to making use of them, whereas some dancers resisted because rehearsals had never before been conducted this way – the creatures of habit!



Rehearsing Zenaida Yanovsky and Carlos Acosta in Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* for the Royal Ballet's May, 2004 performance

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Recuperating Laban's 'secret religion' into the practice of Laban Movement Analysis

Juliet Chambers-Coe

Laban's connection with the Rosicrucian occult which, in spite of (in my view) inspiring Laban's attempt to “sensitize the body to inner and outer forces of energy leading to psychic experiences” and his aim to “balance the practical with the spiritual”, has caused many to look “askance at his free-love lifestyle and cultish ways” (Adrian, ed. Potter, 2016: 103).

Laban's interest in the occult and its links to Nazism are well documented (Kew, 1999; Döer & Lantz, 2003; Kant 2002), but his interest and involvement with occult practice pre-dates the rise of the Third Reich in Germany and remained an enduring feature of his philosophy of movement. It is not within the scope or the intention of this article to go over well-trodden ground relating to Laban's involvement with the Nazi's or draw conclusions about Laban's political beliefs based on his interest and practice of occultist philosophies. Rather, the aim is to offer a perspective whereby we might see Laban's involvement with the occult and notions of spirituality as expanding our understanding of his theories in such a way as to open the possibility of re-introducing these ideas into our own studios, classrooms and journeys of self-discovery through Laban - movement practice with a reconnection to its spiritual aims and context.

Extant literature on Laban's Rosicrucian background tends to fall into two camps: one which acknowledges this aspect of Laban's history but offers no insight into what it might mean or have meant for Laban himself, and the other, which is critical of Laban's involvement with Rosicrucianism suggesting that its 'secret' nature was somehow unethical or dangerously mysterious in some way. This suggests a certain level of ignorance or misconception about the occult practices of the Rosicrucians. This view confirms Laban's seeming instinct that his theories might well be dismissed if he openly acknowledged his spiritual beliefs - opinions and judgements about occultism and doctrines of spirituality were then and are now held with a definite level of suspicion.

Carol-Lynne Moore, however, offers a better-informed understanding of Laban's Rosicrucianism (2009). Her exposition of Rosicrucian doctrine and explanation of how she views Laban as a 'Rosicrucian thinker' have been the starting point in my journey toward developing a practical re-integration of Laban's Rosicrucianism into the practice of LMA and the realisation that the 'secret' is not really a secret, but is a way of being, available to us all.

It seems to me that Laban was in fact searching for ways to reveal that movement and dance inherently hold within them the unifying forces of spirit and matter and what we might understand in a contemporary dance and somatics as the 'subtle' body. That is, movement practice that involves the psycho-somatic or

often also called 'subtle' body of the performer which digs deeper into levels of consciousness, perception and expression that connects the body to mind and ultimately 'self' and this relationship to the well-ordered whole of the cosmos.

For the Rosicrucian, the actions of everyday life have spiritual significance which have the potential to refresh and reinvigorate humanity. Notions of 'spirit' for Laban and the Rosicrucians were rooted in human agency and everyday work and leisure activities. Thus, the scepticism and fear of the onlooker who is concerned by any 'other-worldly' religious over and undertones in Laban movement practice, may have their concerns assuaged by the realisation that even their own spirituality and movements of their soul come to being in life's every day movements of the subtle and physical bodies and their activities. As Rudolf Steiner asserts, “the Rosicrucian does not consider it his task to withdraw in any way from the physical world. Certainly not!” (Steiner, 2000: 11), the Rosicrucian plays a full an active part of physical life.

The symbolic language of movement and notation

Other than Laban's aim to lift dance to a status enjoyed by that of the visual arts and music (Moore 2009; Preston-Dunlop 1998), I suggest Laban had another reason for developing the analytic structure of movement analysis and dance notation through the use of symbols and linguistic 'codes'.

In *The Mastery of Movement*, Laban suggests that movement is the *carrier* of meaning in a symbolic sense, (1980 pp. 86-87) and alludes to the notion that the movement is the *meaning itself*. The use of symbols, graphic notation and symbolic movement reveal meanings or messages “of things ineffable” (Laban, *ibid*). That is, does movement give a *semblance* of the meaning being communicated or is it the reality in itself? Laban goes on to explain that “it has been found necessary to use various graphic signs, because words can never be entirely adequate in dealing with the changing nature of the subject before us” (Laban, 1966, p viii) leading us to the conclusion that his assertion that “thinking in terms of movement as contrasted with thinking in terms of words”² is vital for “man's orientation in his inner world in which impulses continually surge and seek an outlet” (Laban, 1980, p 15). Laban likens the uselessness of word language to dance as speech to music, “it is just as difficult to describe a dance in words as it is to interpret music verbally” (Laban, 1980 p 92).

Laban's use of symbols goes beyond graphic notation and toward movement as symbolic of 'deeper' meanings about life held in the 'silent world' of symbolic action, “a world too deep for speech” where “sequences of movements are the sentences of speech, the carriers of the messages emerging from the world of silence”

(Laban, 1980, p 87). Such movements are different from “the ordinary actions of everyday life” which may be ‘significant’ but are not necessarily ‘symbolic’. Although everyday action and symbolic action appear to share the same physical components in form and dynamic quality, the symbolic action is “pregnant with emotion” and “appear[s] in specific sequences having shapes and rhythms of their own” (Laban, 1980, p 87).

In contrast to Marion Kant’s assessment of Laban’s desire to “get beyond fleshly life and dwell in the realm of pure spirit” (Kant, 2002; 60) as a Rosicrucian, Laban would have understood the principle of *spiritual action*, in the *everyday* and the power of symbols to convey meaning. That is, the Rosicrucian must not withdraw from the physical world in order to obtain spiritual knowledge, but rather must fully embrace the physical world of action where such knowledges are manifest. The Rosicrucian must “rise to the highest regions of spiritual life and with the knowledge there obtained labour actively in the physical world” because “Rosicrucian wisdom must not stream only into the head, nor only into the heart, but also into the hand, into our manual skills, into our daily actions” (Steiner, 2000; 8). As such, the everyday action of the Rosicrucian can be seen as ‘pregnant’ with spiritual meanings, messages and intent and as Laban suggests, may be “the carriers of the messages emerging from the world of silence” (Laban, 1980; 87). This ‘hidden-in-plain-sight’ kind of spirituality may also go some way to understanding how and why Laban’s Rosicrucianism is secret and offers another way of understanding how Laban may have utilised symbols to reveal such meanings.

Secrecy and a secret language

The Rosicrucian Brotherhood, throughout history is understood to be a secret society and as such, its principles, methods of initiation and indeed its *raison d’être* are therefore seen as mysterious and only understood by non-initiates through exoteric texts which reveal certain aspects of it - outside of it, not from an insiders’ perspective. The fact that Laban’s Rosicrucianism has been left out of the practice of LMA is due in part to its secrecy, it is unknown and somehow the suggestion of a secret society implies an unethical or mysterious aspect which might endanger Laban’s body of work and legacy of movement analysis and education. However, I argue that the notion of secrecy actually supports Laban’s vision for a movement practice for all and that *the ‘secret’ is well-known to every mover*.

According to Henrik Bogdan, secrecy in esoteric texts is employed in three different ways (Bogdan, 2007; 46). I am concerned with the first in which esoteric texts “seem to be designed to mean something other than what they appear to mean at face value” and “seem to give the impression that he [the author] conceals while revealing and reveals while concealing” (Faivre, cited in Bogdan, 2007; 46). In this way we might understand Laban’s use of symbols in notation, to reveal a movement to the reader whilst concealing the individual

nature of its embodiment, whilst simultaneously concealing the harmonic nature of the movement and revealing its anatomic, spatial and dynamic composition. That is to say then, that both the reading of the symbol (understood here as both the notation and the language/code of Laban movement analysis) and the simultaneous act of moving it in the body are required to realise the secret or hidden potentialities of movement as a harmonic entity through a kind of “*mobile reading*”, (Laban, 1980; vi).

In this sense, the images and symbols of Laban’s notation, analysis and drawings can be seen as “a veil...as if the veil constituted the message itself” (ibid). Secrecy therefore becomes a necessary aspect of initiation into understanding Laban’s vision of movement harmony since it is not so much the movement itself or the reading of theory and notation in itself that matters, but the *experience* of doing it. In this way, Laban’s movement exercises such as the various scales of sequenced movements become ritualistic and it is the “experience of the ritual that constitutes the message – or perhaps more adequately, the experience *and interpretation* of the ritual is the esoteric message” (Bogdan, 2007; 47). As Bogdan, asserts, the *interpretation* of the movement-in-ritual is paramount since “without the experience there is nothing but meaningless symbols...to interpret, and without the interpretation the experience fails to become initiatic” (ibid). The notion of secrecy becomes important here as Bogdan further notes, that the “secret of a text is the noncommunication of something that is not transmissible” or as Faivre notes, “esoteric transmission cannot, so it seems, unveil secrets. Rather, it is the non-communication of what is not transmissible that constitutes the secret” (ibid). Thus, the secret or ‘hidden’ aspects of movement are contained in the *experience* of doing them and individual embodied experience is by definition impossible to fully communicate and is therefore ‘secret’. Further, the “experience of undergoing a ritual of initiation is tantamount to that of a mystical experience, and one characteristic of a mystical experience is the difficulty in expressing and describing it verbally” (ibid). I argue that Laban’s movement Scales are closely related to, if not actually constitute, a ritual of initiation of a kind. That is, when the mover experiences for example, the diagonal, or A- scale, they become initiated into Laban’s vision of movement harmony and by extension initiated into the philosophy of Rosicrucianism which views humanity and the cosmos as a harmonic entity. When understood in this light, Laban movement analysis and its symbolic notation can be seen to contain aspects of spiritual and esoteric ritual. It is the necessarily secret component of individual experience which gives the theory of movement harmony its hidden, secret and incommunicable character since, “the visible patterns of dance can be described in words, but its deeper meaning is inexpressible verbally” (Laban, 1980: 21).

Although Laban’s movement scales and practice of choreutic and eukinetik patterns are well rehearsed and experienced by many across time, it does not

mean that the spiritual underpinning of them has been present. As Bogdan avers, it is the *interpretation* of the ritual (or movement scale in this case) which serves to reveal its meaning and message. It is my belief that the reading of Rosicrucian doctrine as understood by Laban alongside and integrated into the practice of LMA will reveal the full and wholistic nature of movement harmony that Laban envisioned. Further, the resulting embodiment of these intertwined principles supports the mover-in-training when developing their own movement language and practice as an artist-citizen who practices her movement craft with an awareness of her own spiritual, ethical and moral values, in her community. As in esoteric initiations, the reading of theory alone cannot reveal the transformative effects of movement practice in spite of our attempts to give it a word-language. Laban states in *The Mastery of Movement*, that “the art of movement is an almost self-contained discipline which speaks for itself, and mostly in its own special idiom” and the use of word-language by Laban to expose his theories is explicitly “an incentive to personal mobility” (Laban, 1980; vi). Further, Laban hoped that “the perusal of the text itself will indicate how to accomplish what is really a kind of mobile reading. Those who prefer to remain comfortable in their chairs while they read will have to skip certain sections of the book” (ibid). Interestingly, however, Laban goes on to explain that even in sitting the reader is able to accomplish a sense of movement by “*thinking* in terms of movement” which isn’t merely “cavorting in the world of ideas” (ibid) but is the embodiment of movement-through-thought via the interplay of inner movements of emotions and thoughts and the sensation of their outward bodily expression. Thus, the ‘reading of’ alongside or integrated into the ‘moving of’ movement harmony, as in mobile reading, is necessary to fully embody the ineffable and secret aspects of the harmonic principles of human movement.

The secrecy of Laban’s Rosicrucianism in a contemporary context, I suggest, is not indicative of something unethical, unsavoury or even exclusive. Rather the very nature of personal embodiment of movement harmony, necessitates the ‘secret’ nature of it. Personal experience of one’s own ‘subtle body’ which dances and moves with the physical body, is available only to the mover herself. One and all are able to read Laban’s texts to gain an understanding of his spiritual philosophy, but it is the process of personal embodiment which holds the key to the lost ‘wisdom of circles’ (Laban, 1960; ix).

(Endnotes)

1 Linguistic ‘codes’ – referring to the analytic taxonomy of Laban Movement Analysis and its parameters of Body, Effort, Space, Shape.

2 In *The Mastery of Movement*, first published in 1950, Laban takes the view that ‘movement thinking’ is necessary to fully understand the intricacies of human movement as mentally, emotionally and physically dynamic, spiritual, material and spatial phenomenon.

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Obituary: Jean Newlove May 15, 1923 - May 16, 2017

Jenny Frankel



In early 1942, Jean Newlove, a young, fair-haired teenager not long out of school, applied for a teaching job at Dartington Hall, a co-educational, progressive boarding school. She was turned down, on the grounds of her youth and lack of experience — no more than local dance classes and a little teaching. As luck would have it, however, Rudolf Laban was at the interview — he had been linked to Dartington since 1938 when he fled Nazi Germany. Seeing ‘something’ in Jean, he asked if she would like to work and train with him. And so Jean became Laban’s first assistant in England — as well as having private lessons with him, his partner (and co-founder of the Laban Art of Movement Guild) Lisa Ullmann and Sylvia Bodmer. From that serendipitous meeting in wartime Devon grew Jean’s lifetime career as one of Laban’s most important ‘disciples’.

A charismatic, fiercely intelligent and feisty woman, she was born in a village near Lincoln in May 1923. Her mother was a nurse, her father an oil company manager. Her brother, Pip, was seven years older. At the age of three, she developed a stammer and someone suggested to her mother that dance lessons might help. So Jean started dancing — and didn’t stop for over 90 years. She was a beautiful dancer, an original and influential choreographer, an inspiring teacher for me and many, many others.

At the time of Jean’s Dartington interview, Laban was focused on ‘doing his bit’ for the home front war effort. With a young engineer, FC Lawrence, he was developing the Industrial Rhythm Programme. Its central idea was using Laban principles to help factory workers — women mostly, as nearly all men were in the armed services — reduce strain by making their repetitive movements more efficient and effective. Jean was sent to the Mars factory. Using the Laban-Lawrence approach, she taught the production-line workers how to pick up and wrap a Mars bar without disrupting its still-drying crinkly chocolate surface. Her work was a success - productivity rose, injury rates fell. (Laban’s fee was £250. Jean was paid £10 a week.) Jean also helped to increase the

output of land girls, forestry corps and textile workers. In time, Industrial Rhythm formed the basis of what became known as the Efforts. Jean then joined the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service, the women’s branch of the British Army during WW2). Though initially bored and frustrated to be parted from her work with Laban, she flourished nonetheless and was promoted to Physical Training Corporal.

After the war, Joan Littlewood, director of Theatre Workshop, contacted Laban. She wanted to know how her company could incorporate his work; he sent her Jean. Theatre Workshop toured widely from 1946 to 1955 and, as the company’s choreographer and movement coach, Jean worked on — and often acted in — several famous productions, including *The Other Animals*, *Oh, What A Lovely War!* and *Fings Ain’t Wot They Used T’Be*.

More than anyone else, Jean was responsible for bringing Laban’s principles to the theatre world. Wendy Richardson, director of Springboard Arts, interviewed Jean for *In The Company of Joan*, a documentary about Theatre Workshop. She said: “Jean was an inspirational woman whose life’s work forms a crucial part of British theatre history as well as of the study and analysis of movement.”

Jean started teaching evening dance classes in the early 1950s. From them, in 1953, she developed her own dance company, The London Dancers. They performed at festivals and entered competitions in Warsaw and Moscow, where Jean was awarded a medal for choreography — of which she was extremely proud (as was Laban of his protégée’s success).

In the late 1950s, Jean started planning with Maggie Bury, ex-member of Theatre Workshop, to set up the E15 Acting School. Taking its name from the postcode of Theatre Workshop’s Stratford base, E15 opened in 1961. Jean taught at it for several years - many of her students went on to have great success as actors and directors; they acknowledge the huge influence her Laban-based training had on their work. Ann Mitchell (Dolly Rawlins in *Widows*, Cora Cross in *EastEnders*) said: “She opened up a world of movement and character-building [that was] so unique.” Philip Hedley, Director Emeritus of Theatre Royal Stratford East said: “Jean and the icosahedron brought revelations into our lives. My work in theatre would have been hugely diminished without her influence. She contributed the joy of hard work, of physical exploration of text, of imaginative building of characters and of the necessary ingredient that it can also be fun.”

Jean also ran her own classes and courses. Lindsay Royan describes the classes at Pineapple Dance Studios in the early 1980s: “We were a motley crew. There was a lawyer, chef, lorry driver, singer, administrator and me, a psychologist. The floor was wet with sweat.” Lindsay remembers Jean’s gift for bringing together professionals and non-professionals from the worlds of theatre, opera, circus and movement and blending their skills into something extraordinary, notably the production of *The Castle of Perseverance* in Brixton in 1983. She added: “Jean’s Laban has enriched my work as a therapist to this day.”

My own first experience of Jean-in-action was in 1994, at a course in Ealing Town Hall. Her assistant, Sarah Aucott, movement teacher at E15, demonstrated the Dimensional Scale. I had been a dance teacher and choreographer for



Jean and team

twenty years, working in schools, colleges and television, had learned about Laban’s work as part of my initial teacher training and again, some years later, when I did a dance/movement therapy course. On neither occasion had it resonated with me. But Jean’s Laban was something else. She introduced me to the harmony of movement, to crystallography and movement scales, to choreutics and dynamics. I discovered that the Efforts were connected to the cube, that there were incomplete efforts and drives. And that all of these could be applied to education and theatre as well as dance. Jean made Laban come alive. She made it fun and challenging and exhilarating and — most exciting of all — clear; I was hooked, immediately, as were others such as Kevin Dowsett, founder and Artistic Director of Theatretrain, who was also at the course in Ealing. “I instantly knew that Laban would become important in every aspect of Theatretrain — drama, dance and singing. Jean has taken Laban’s work and kept it alive and made it relevant to a new and different age.”

I continued to study with Jean, as did Sarah Aucott and Lindsay Royan, her two longest-standing students and assistants. Sarah said: “Jean was a second mother, offering guidance, love and advice — both when it was and when it wasn’t wanted. Jean gave me the opportunity to bring Laban as it should be taught back into the training of the actor at E15 Acting School, influencing a new generation of actors.” Another member of the team was Mitch Mitchelson, freelance theatre practitioner and director, who applied Laban to his teaching of clowning and commedia dell’arte to striking effect: “Jean continues to be an inspiration, especially theatrically. She showed that Laban movement can enrich the actor’s range of acting choices and role diversity - a truly transformational vocabulary.”

Jean was a forthright woman, vocal in her opinion of others’ interpretations of Laban. Subjects of her criticism included students and assistants of Laban who came after her, drama schools that incorporated Laban’s work, the Laban Centre (now Laban Trinity) and Laban teachers — including me. Determined

that the approach to Laban’s work which she had learned should continue, Jean set up her own Diploma in Laban Studies. For two years, Lindsay, Sarah and I — together with an eclectic group of students — met most weekends for hours of Laban theory and practice at her house, in her garden or at a local church hall. Alan Caig Wilson, Feldenkrais teacher and theatre director, joined us for several of Jean’s week-long intensive courses: “Training with Jean changed everything in the way that I work and added never-ending, always-multiplying value to my work. She leaves an extraordinary legacy and ripples as wide as the world.”

Joan Littlewood was patron of Jean’s diploma course. She told me that Laban was drawn to Jean by her sharp, analytical mind. Jean certainly was intelligent, witty and inspirational — and, yes, she could be sharp, too. She was a tough teacher

who pushed students to their limits, sometimes beyond. She was also great fun and excellent company as Susi Thornton, actress, teacher and co-director of the Laban International Courses recalled: “Jean, Rosie Manton and I were teaching at Kastanienbaum near Lucerne for Claude Perrotet. He was always wanting us to do extra things, answer questions, explain what we were doing, not giving us any space. We saw him coming our way and shot into our room. Jean said: “Let’s hide.” So we crammed ourselves into the wardrobe and held our breath... he knocked... he entered... muttered to himself and left and we fell out of the wardrobe in absolute paroxysms of laughter... never a dull moment with Jean.” Viv Bridson, actor and dance teacher, met Jean for the first time in 1985, at Lisa Ullmann’s funeral. They had much in common and from then on talked every week right up till Jean’s death. Viv wrote of Jean: “Towering talent, towering intelligence, indomitable but fun!”

In 1949, Jean married Joan’s (just) ex-husband, Manchester Scots actor, playwright and folk singer Ewan MacColl although they separated in the late 1950s. They had two children, Hamish and Kirsty; Laban was their godfather, Joan and Lisa Ullmann their godmothers. Jean’s later years were shadowed



Jean at Ormesby Hall

by the violent death of her daughter Kirsty who, while diving in Mexico shortly before Christmas 2000, was run down by a motorboat. Jean fought for years to get justice for Kirsty, becoming a trustee of the Music Fund for Cuba. As well as providing instruments to Cuban musicians, the charity rebuilt a derelict theatre. Its main hall is named 'Sala de Kirsty MacColl'. Just three days before Jean died she was thrilled to learn that a bench was being erected in Kirsty's memory in Mexico City.

In 2012, Jean moved to western France to be close to her son Hamish. She continued to teach, both in France and in England. On one of her last cross-channel trips, she talked to an audience of Teesside University students about her life

with Laban, for over an hour, without a break, a glass of water or even notes (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMYqa-TI7I4>)

Jean wrote two well-regarded textbooks on Laban methodology, *Laban for Actors and Dancers* and *Laban for All*, co-authored with John Dalby. She wrote a book about her own life, *Yum Di Dee Dah*, and two about her daughter's, *Sun On The Water* and *My Kirsty: End of the Fairytale*.

She died, in France, on May 16, 2017, one day after her 94th birthday. Philip Hedley wrote: 'She'll be waiting for us in the Great Icosahedron in the sky, you just see if she's not!'

Chair's Report

Yael Owen-McKenna

It is with a great sense of pride and responsibility that I accept the position of Chair of the Laban Guild for Movement and Dance as the work and legacy of Rudolf Laban has shaped my personal philosophy and work in the dance sector for more than 30 years. As a graduate of the Laban Centre, when sited primarily at New Cross (alongside my dear friend Alison Curtis-Jones), my experience secured a love of the discovery in movement, along with self-discipline, commitment and drive to be the best I could be.

I have gone on to have a career in dance which has spanned teaching, performance, academia, strategic planning and project development. I am currently working at Arts Council England as a Relationship Manager in Dance for six National Portfolio Organisations in the Midlands. I hold an MA in Contemporary Arts Practice (By Research) from Nottingham Trent University where I explored the relationship between text and the creations of movement material and am currently a 2nd Year part-time Ph.D. student at Coventry University. I have been on the Council of the Laban Guild since 2012. My husband, David, is a former dancer with Earthfall and Motionhouse and has been a freelance choreographer/movement director for over ten years. Our children Lola-May and Raef also love to dance - Lola came with me to the AGM in Surrey and really enjoyed taking part in the dancing together Movement Choir from that year.

At this time, the Laban Guild is in a good and stable place to take us forward into the future of promoting and sharing Laban's legacy. This is due to a collective effort from you, the membership, the on-going hard work and commitment of Council Members, our President Anna Carlisle and to Maggie Killingbeck, our outgoing Chair. The energy, passion and enthusiasm that Maggie has brought to her role as Chair has inspired us all and has made a significant contribution to the progression of the Guild into an organisation with much to build on for the future. On behalf of us all I would like to offer my thanks and best wishes to Maggie for all she has done for the Laban Guild, and hope we can still call on her enthusiasm to push us all when needed! I would also like to thank Maggie personally for her support as a mentor and in her guidance of my taking over as Chair.

Our President, Anna Carlisle, has been instrumental in creatively shaping numerous Laban Guild AGM and Conference days with great vision of what will further our thinking, insight and practice surrounding Laban's work. This year was no exception and went it was a most vibrant, inspiring and informative day. Anna continues to be a supportive and present influence for all of us on Council as

we undergo the change of Chair this year and so, on behalf of us all, we wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to you, Anna, for your on-going support.

As you all know the Laban Guild Council is made up of volunteers who give up their time to continue development of the Guild and its activities. I would like to offer my personal thanks to each and every Council Member for their continued hard work and dedication in sustaining the Guilds work. In relation to such a successful Conference Day and AGM this year, I would like to offer particular thanks to Selina Martin for her work in bringing all of the elements together, supported by Darren Royston, Louise Douse and our interns who did an amazing job. Thank you to our workshop contributors this year - to Alison Curtis-Jones for sharing with us insights into her research through her workshop, insightful Laban Lecture and the inspiring performance of *Drumstick* and Adrian Look for helping us to embody Tanztheater... the sheer joy of dancing.

Going forward into the year ahead our priorities include ensuring that we comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and work on this has begun with the support of Maggie Killingbeck and Janet Harrison. We will continue to develop the Laban Guild as an organisation under the guidance of the principles of Good Governance which, as many of you will know, are concerned with organisational resilience and transparency. This is especially important for us as a membership organisation going into the future. Other priorities are to fill our current vacant posts, which were highlighted by Maggie in her speech at the AGM. Please do feel free to email me if you are interested and would like any further information, or, just even to discuss what this would entail.

As always, an on-going priority is to continue to develop and grow our membership, so any help or support you can offer would be greatly valued. I know we are all looking forward to an inspiring Summer School this year, with a strand offered to The Sheborne Association to deliver their Level 1 training course. Thank you to Ann Ward who continues to work tirelessly to ensure the Summer School is planned, organised and delivered to the highest standard.

As I take over from the amazing work of Maggie, already I have had a huge amount of encouragement and good will from many of you and from Council, thank you for this. Finally, please feel free to contact me directly if there is anything you would like to share, discuss or comment upon.

I very much look forward to seeing you at Summer School.

HERTS CDLC

We now have an excellent venue in Ware. Dates have been fixed, starting Oct. 0218, and tutors booked. We have 10/12 people who are 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 now 31 August, but if you are thinking of applying, please contact the coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk for details and with any questions. The outline of the course is on the website, but it falls into clearly defined modules and it may be possible to enrol for separate modules to start with. There are lots of options, so do ask if you are interested.

LISBURN CPD MODULE IN COMMUNITY DANCE

The Lisburn group has recently organised a day of dance, getting together to share experiences and benefit from further training provided by Jenny Elliott, Carmel Garvey and Noeleen McGrath. We are delighted that they wish to continue their use of Laban based dance and develop their work in the community; they are planning to meet regularly on a bi-monthly basis.

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 now becoming more widely used. Do contact the courses officer for details, not only of the courses but how you can get involved. You could be part of the revival of Laban based work in education, motivate your students, impress your school and enhance your CPD profile. The Laban Guild is planning to provide CPD masterclasses to enhance your skills and give you the confidence to teach dance within the educational sector. One of our members, Jade Bachelor, is using these schemes with her Key Stage 2 students throughout her school, Howell's School near Cardiff, and is delighted with the results. Rhyon Parry, at Monmouth School for Girls, has just completed a course for the Advanced Certificate; congratulations to all those young people who have been awarded their certificates.

FOUNDATION COURSE

These courses are regularly taken up by our tutors and prove very popular with the participants. They are very flexible so, whether you have students who are not going on to do GCSE but want to keep dancing, older groups who like to feel that they are part of a progressive learning programme, teachers who want to enhance their skills incorporating Laban principles, you can be provided with a framework programme and their achievements can be recognised with a certificate from the Laban Guild.. This is a course which may be delivered by anyone who has completed the Laban Guild Creative Dance Leaders Course, and others with a Laban background, on application to the Laban Guild. Congratulations to Jackie Henville, Salud Botella and Suzanne Hillier, who have just successfully completed the course as part of a group working with Wendy Hermelin in Somerset.

WANT TO BE PART OF THIS AND LIKE TO EXPERIENCE MORE LABAN WORK?

For ideas, inspiration and CPD do look at details of our summer school on the website.

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 of the Lisburn group enjoying a day of professional development.

Members' 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

CREATIVE DANCE

- in the community or within your professional area

The Laban Guild is offering a 12
weekend course starting 13/14
October 2018 and completing in
November 2019

INTRODUCING THE SKILLS
NECESSARY FOR LEADING
CREATIVE DANCE SESSIONS
- EITHER IN THE COMMUNITY
OR WITHIN YOUR OWN
PROFESSIONAL SPHERE,

The course will be held in Ware, Hertfordshire.

For further information, please contact:
Ann Ward: coursesofficer@labanguild.org.uk
Phone: 01920 465232



Phoenix Group photo by Matthew Andrews

THE LABAN GUILD DANCE LEADERS COURSE

- A RESOURCE FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE