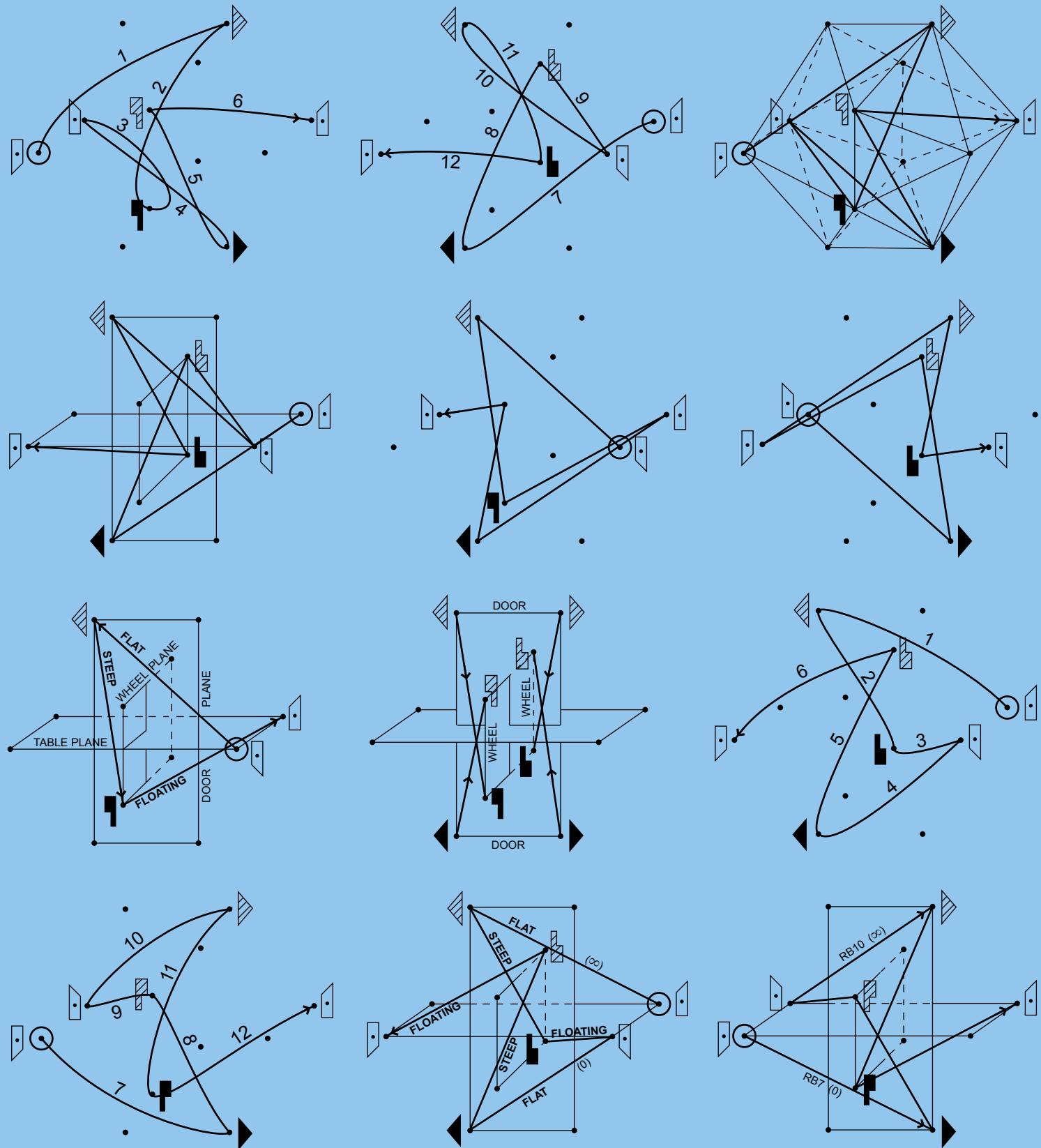


# Movement, Dance & Drama





# Laban Guild International Online Forum 2023

## Ladders of Laban: exploring swinging scales and virtual scaffolding

Convened by the Space Harmony Hub of LGI

Friday 15 December 2023, 12 noon GMT

This is a two-hour online forum with opportunity for questions, discussions and debate

It is convened by the Space Harmony Hub of Laban Guild International and includes presentations on notions of scales and harmony in ideas both ancient and modern, in theory and practice. It is suitable for those who wish to get an introduction to the topic as well as those experienced in Laban's approach to movement study.

### Forum Questions:

What do we mean by the use of the word SCALE?

Scales can refer to the size of movement, the structures used, the order of a sequence.

Linking to the idea of a ladder - a flight of steps, a staircase, a ladder - can we find a structure in space that helps us understand our movements?

What virtual scales govern our habitual movements?

Do certain movement scales have certain human personality characteristics?

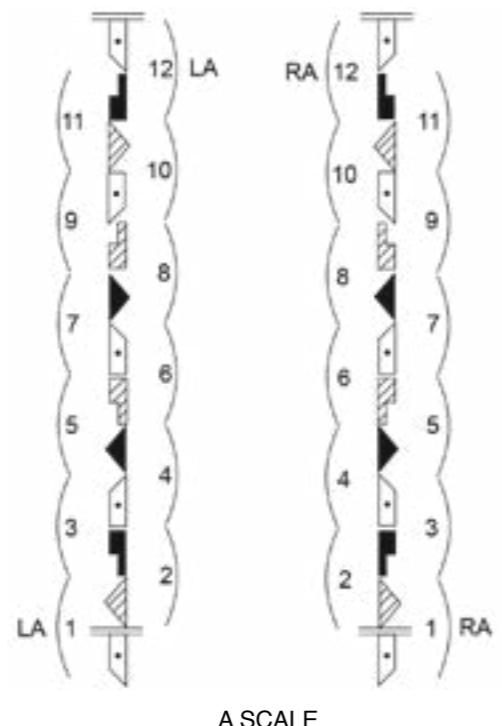
How can we use a Laban approach to understand architectural ideas in choreography?

In what way is dance a "living architecture" and what things may we analyse to understand "space harmony"?

Musical scales are essential for training in music harmony, but they are often only exercises and usually performed without a creative composition.

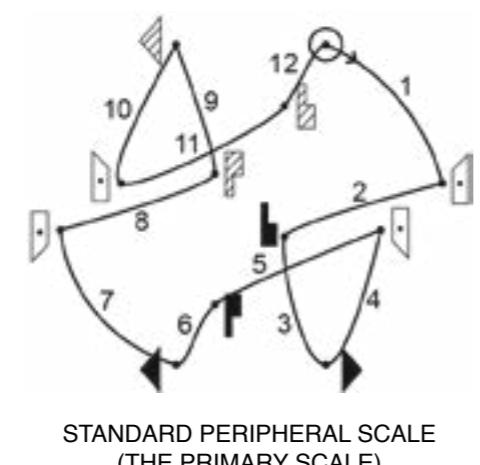
How do you incorporate movement scales in your practice?

How do you take these ideas into dance or drama composition?



A SCALE

**Vicky Spanovangelis:** Architectural ideas exposed in Laban's Choreutics: what is Human Scale and how can a dancer use their choreological art to make people aware of the spatial dynamics in fixed architecture.



STANDARD PERIPHERAL SCALE (THE PRIMARY SCALE)

**Denise Telles:** Trapped in the Voice Box: using Laban's cube to activate a moving opera singer. Reacting to texture of the music, the melodic phrasing,

and an awareness of spatial tensions between the moving body and a fixed scaffolding cube.

**Penelope Boff:** Multiverse Energies and the spatial designs of Charles Jencks (1939-2019): finding architectural

Laban's Scales are taught for the body performing solo, within each person's own personal body space - the kinesphere. In what way can scales be used to connect kinespheres - in dialogue and partner dance?

How can group compositions be developed from this shared knowledge of scales?

The following presenters are confirmed and will each present for 10-minutes.

**Olu Taiwo:** Sensing Scales with the Inner Self: focusing on Marion North's consideration of personalities established by movement patterns. Harmony can be derived from these scale sequences when your inner harmony is expressed in outer realisation. A dialogue between ancient ideas and modern science.

links to Laban's architectonics. Exploring the landscaping of Crawick Multiverse, in Sanquhar, Scotland and reviewing site-specific performances and creative potential.

### Darren Royston:

Crystal Scales: fire, air and earth in Laban's 1923 dance drama Prometheus - exploring the drama of free and bound scaffolding. Giving characters specific patterns in space, defined by their Platonic element, and showing how dramatic interaction changes shape, and can sharpen the focus for performer and audience.

**Olga Blagodatskikh:** Shakespeare's Cleopatra: Laban elements in classical text.

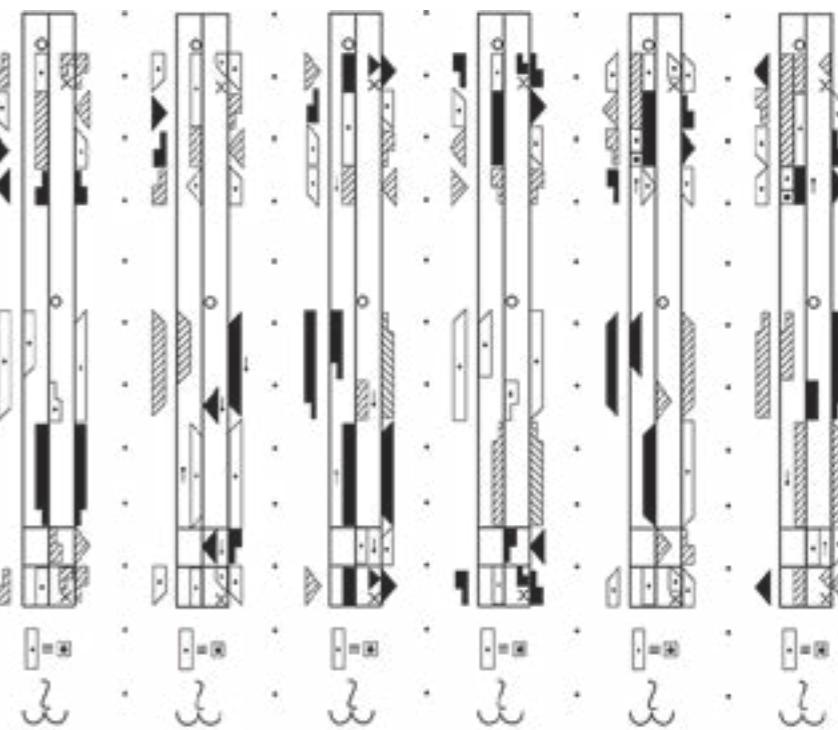
A short video report of theatre workshop process: directing Olga to develop scale variations in weight, space, time and flow. A solo performer allowing private emotions to be physically exposed through gradients, showing the choices available in live performance.

### Kiki Selioni:

New Scales in Actor Training: A report on how Laban's work is developing in physical training for the professional actor. Kiki's work is developed from an analysis of Rudolf Laban's concepts with reference to Aristotle, and current physical theatre approaches.

### Kelly Wilson:

Ethereal Elements: using a Laban approach of fire, water, air and earth to create dramatic characters in the fairy world of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. From text analysis to rehearsal exercises and rehearsed scenes.



LABAN BIRTHDAY CARD : Scale Kinetograms

### Maggie Killingbeck:

The Scales as Dance Exercise: a demonstration of how the A-scale can be used in exercise classes to activate the torso in a healthy and engaging manner. Examples of work in the community context, and how to use Laban ideas to develop teaching techniques.

The Forum is free for subscribers to Laban Guild International

Please contact [trustees@labanguildinternational.org.uk](mailto:trustees@labanguildinternational.org.uk) to receive the Zoom meeting link.

## Creative Sanctuary: Refugees at Dartington in the 1930s and Beyond Online Conference, October 20th - 21st 2023

Clare Lidbury

This conference was organised by Monica Bohm-Duchene following on from the Insiders/Outsiders Festival – a nationwide arts festival celebrating refugees from Nazi Europe and their contribution to British culture - which she founded in 2017. Although the official end of the festival was March 2020 this conference was part of the longer-term commitment to celebrating the impact of this remarkable generation of émigrées (see the excellent website <https://insidersoutsidersfestival.org> for all that the festival was and continues to be about).

The conference was full on with two days packed with presentations and talks about those who found

refuge at Dartington. The morning of Day 1, 'Setting the Scene', began with a talk by Anna Neima, author of *Practical Utopia: The Many lives of Dartington Hall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022) who spoke about Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, who founded the whole concept of Dartington as a Utopian centre for education in agriculture and the arts, and about some of the many artists who spent time at Dartington. She was followed by Charlie Knight, from the Parkes Institute for Jewish/non-Jewish relations (University of Southampton), who spoke about the Dartington Archive, now housed at the Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter (website). It is an amazing resource as so much of the day

to day running of Dartington was recorded and is accessible, however his points about whose voices are not in the archive – eg the estate workers, domestic staff and so on – were well made. His focus on some of the people who wanted to find sanctuary at Dartington but who, for many and varied reasons, did not get there was very interesting. The morning concluded with Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles (University of Exeter) giving a presentation on Spanish civil war refugees focussing on Magarita Comas, originally from Menorca and one of the first women in Spain to gain a doctorate in science. Comas was travelling in Europe when the civil war started; in 1942 she got a job teaching science at the progressive Dartington School whose ideas and ideals matched hers.

The afternoon was devoted to 'Architecture, Fine and Applied Arts'. Valerio Carullo (Curator, The Robert Elwall Photographs Collection, RIBA) gave a very interesting talk on Modernist Architecture at Dartington, focussing on William Lescaze who designed many of the buildings at Dartington – including Kurt Jooss's house with its integrated dance studio. The journalist Marcus Williamson's talk on the artist Rene Halkett and sculptor Willi Soukop, whose lives were changed through finding sanctuary at Dartington, was fascinating as was the presentation from Sigrid Ruby (University of Giessen, Germany) on the designer Hein Heckroth. He arrived at Dartington thanks to his close connection with Kurt Jooss, for whom he designed many ballets, and went onto design for opera at Glyndebourne and for films, most notably *The Red Shoes*. Rüdiger Matthias Joppen (University of Hamburg) gave a presentation on the Bauhaus artist Naum Slutzky who was at Dartington 1935-1940 followed by Anna Nyburg (Imperial College London) talking about the book artist Hellmuth Weissenborn and his friendship with Victor Bonham Carter who wrote *Dartington Hall: The History of an Experiment* (London: Phoenix House, 1958) for which Weissenborn supplied some drawings. The afternoon ended with a presentation on Community and Migration in the Freud family letters given by Elizabeth Lammie (University of Birmingham) which centred on the letters of Lucy Freud (wife of Ernst Freud, the youngest son of Siegfried) in which she wrote about the humanity and helpfulness of the Dartington family. Her children – Stephen, Lucien and Clement – all attended the Dartington School.

The morning of day 2, 'Dancing in Utopia', began with a brief history of dance at Dartington from Clare Lidbury. The first talk was from Marion Kant (University of Cambridge, author, with Lilian Karina of *Hitler's Dancers: German Modern Dance and the Third Reich* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003)) entitled 'Concepts of Utopia: Dartington and Dance' in which she focussed on Rudolf Laban, specifically on his relationship with the Elmhirsts, how Dartington, in Kant's words, "cleansed him of his Nazi

past" and gave him time to re-phrase his concepts (rather than re-think them) for a British public. Laure Guibert (Max Planck Institute, Berlin) spoke about the Ballets Jooss (based at Dartington from 1935) and 'the Odyssey of an exiled company in the Americas' in which she outlined the difficulties of the Ballets Jooss tours in north and south America during 1940/41. She spoke particularly about the falling out between Jooss, left behind in Dartington and facing imminent detainment, and Fritz Cohen, managing the company on tour and seeking to keep it financially and artistically viable. The dancer/choreographer Tim Rubidge then spoke about his memories of training with Sigurd Leeder in Herisau, Switzerland in the early 1970s. (Leeder went to Dartington in 1934 founding the Jooss-Leeder School, established his own school in London in 1947 and his school in Switzerland in 1964.) This personal memoir linked the past with the present as Rubidge spoke about the importance of dance notation, Leeder's use of etudes as training material and his recent projects based in his Leeder heritage,

Lorraine Nichols, author of *Dancing in Utopia: Dartington Hall and its Dancers* (London: Dance Books, 2007) gave an interesting presentation on Lisa Ullmann and Jenny Gertz - 'promoting dance, community and education in and around the crisis of 1939/40' - both of whom were students of Laban in Germany but who independently found themselves at Dartington – Ullmann as a teacher at the Jooss-Leeder School and Gertz, thanks to Jooss, a 'scholarship' student there. The focus was on the importance of movement choirs to them both. Rebecca Loukes (University of Exeter) presented on 'Gertrud Falke-Heller's body Awareness Training at Dartington Hall, 1937-40'. Falke-Heller, who had trained with Laban, Wigman and Jacques Dalcroze, was a successful dancer/choreographer before she trained with Elsa Gindler and went on to teach at the Jooss-Leeder School. Her work on body awareness pre-dates the somatic awareness of Alexander, Feldenkreis et al. The final talk of the morning was by Julia Seiber Boyd on her mother, Lilla Bauer, a dancer with the Ballets Jooss in the 1930s and who had a long correspondence with Laban. The talk was illustrated with many slides of the woodcuts made of her by George Buday.

The afternoon session, 'Music making in Utopia' began with a presentation on the contribution of the composer Fritz Cohen to the success of the work of Kurt Jooss. Their creative collaboration existed for nearly twenty years – half of which was at Dartington - with Cohen, as musical director of the company, accompanying rehearsals and performances, composing new works, advising Jooss on music by other composers for his choreographic ideas and arranging/editing such music as necessary. The final presentations were on 'Post-war Music at Dartington' focussing on the importance of the music summer

schools at Dartington given by Alison Garnham, and Norbert Meyn talking about the Music Migration and Mobility Project run by the Royal College of Music; both were fascinating.

Perhaps the most interesting session of the day was the last when three former pupils of Dartington School reminisced about their time there during the 1930s. Their memories of this time in their childhoods were remarkable as they recollected who taught them, who was in class with them, the guests of the Elmhirsts – such as the Huxleys, Stephen Spender and Oskar Kokoschka - whom they met at

the White Hart (the refectory for the whole estate) but perhaps more poignantly the reasons for their being at Dartington as the children of refugees. It was truly a remarkable end to the conference.

The whole event was recorded and is freely available:

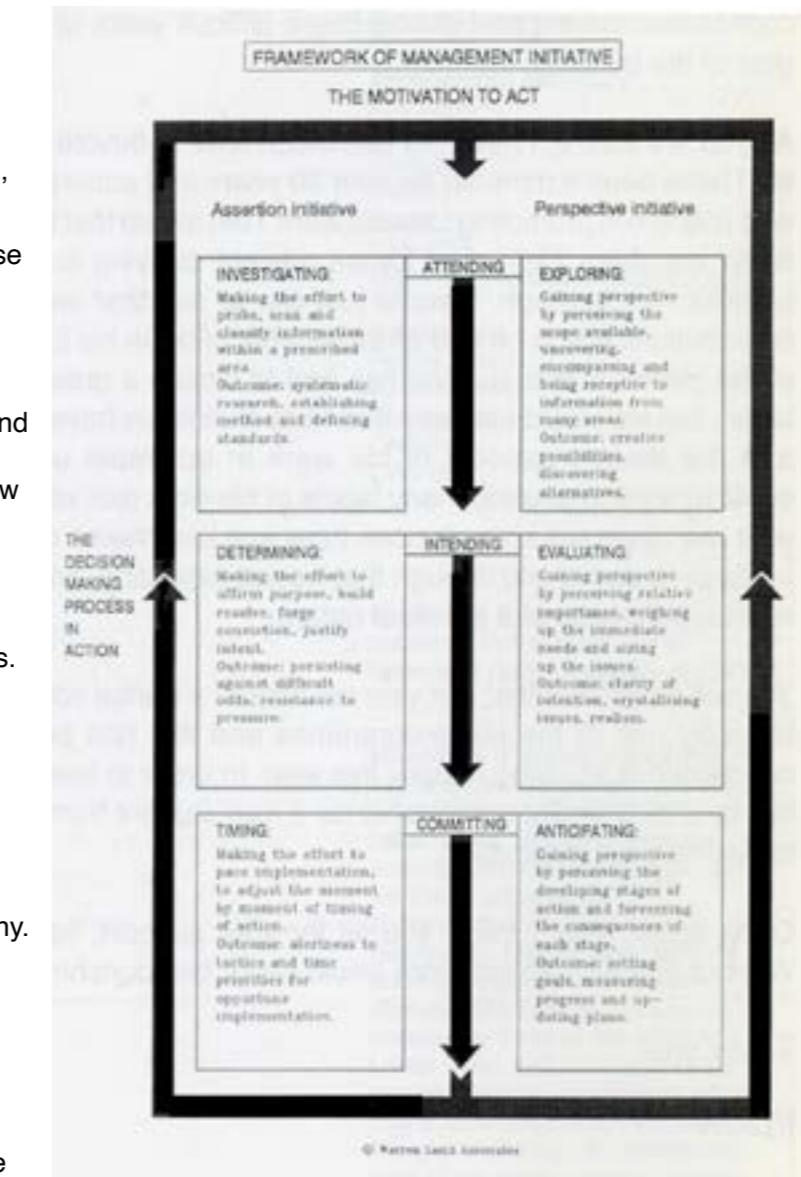
[172 Creative Sanctuary: Refugees at Dartington in the 1930s and beyond: Day One - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1234567890)

[177 Creative Sanctuary: Refugees at Dartington in the 1930s and beyond. Day Two - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1234567890)

## The Significance of Movement Analysis

Part II of Warren Lamb's presentation for the 2002 Mensa Conference "Moving On 2"

- and risk injuring your back into the bargain ... Application of these concepts can enhance relationships. For two people in a partnership to move in a relationship to each other which they



Then there is the relationship between Effort and Shape. Our record might show relatively more going on in respect to Effort than in Shape. How might this be interpreted? Or vice versa. Then within the Shape observations themselves we find similar associations. One approach has been to develop them into a concept of space harmonies and a whole system of scales exists. ... In order to train fully in Movement Analysis students have to do many such scales and try to get the harmonies into their bodies. There are scales circumnavigating the kinaesphere consisting of any number of movements from three upwards. These scales are analogous to music scales and allow theorising on what constitutes harmony as distinct from disharmony. There is some acceptance that it is good to educate children in these scales.

Then there are scales which relate Shape to Effort and this opens up further concept of harmony. If you get out of bed with a disharmonious relationship of Effort and Shape then you may well knock over the bedside lamp

perceive to be harmonious is surely desirable and perhaps awareness of the scales will help to bring about.

Please accept all this as giving you a taste only of techniques, theories and understandings of which the current state of development is still elementary. As already mentioned, I have a vision that it will grow. Perhaps all I can ask is that you see its potential significance within the context of a fast-changing world, and a world where we could well encourage people to act more harmoniously.

A practical consideration is how we take movement observations. Of course, all we can observe is the body, or parts of the body. Movement does not take place in thin air, nor can it be seen (as distinct from being felt) inside the body, which is why I never refer to 'inner attitude' as being part of analysis procedure. What we do see, however, can be divided into Gesture and Posture, defined as a movement or movements confined to part or parts of the body (Gesture) - as distinct from movement which is consistent in its phrasing throughout the body as a whole (Posture movement) ...

I claim to have found that Gestures usually change during adult life. So, too, can a Posture in the physique sense change. But the pattern of the components of movement revealed from mergings of Gesture into Posture, or Posture into Gesture, tend not to change. Such a pattern, being more or less preserved distinct from lots of other movements which come and go, must have some special significance.

The way I have attempted to fathom this significance is to see the framework as indicative of a decision-making process. It lines up with giving Attention, with having an Intention, with the Commitment to action or implementation. This diving board model helps to explain the process. A person's pattern of Posture-Gesture-Mergings (PGM) ... can be directly matched against the model so as to assess his or her preferences. This is what we think the movement analysis shows - a preferred way of going through a decision-making process. It can be highly significant because if we get it right, we find that people interpret the situation, or their responsibility in handling it, so that they can act according to their pattern of preference.

Illustrated crudely this suggests that a person whose pattern shows a predominance of directing-indirecting, and spreading-enclosing movement, in respect to PGM, will want to act primarily so as to give Attention. We do find, indeed, that such people will interpret a particular situation as requiring more attention, research, enquiry, before coming to an Intention on what to do ...

There must be some significance in the application of Movement Analysis which I have just explained - i.e. the discovery that each person has their own unique pattern of movement which remains fairly constant during adult life, and one way of applying this knowledge is by means of matching the movement pattern against a decision making model so as to reveal the person's decision-making preference. It can be argued to have significance for understanding how people are motivated to act and to interpret responsibility. Recently there was a news item which indicated a difference between the U.S. and the U.K. in their reactions to September 11. Both said there had been shortcomings in their Intelligence Services. The U.S. immediately made changes and then initiated study as to what had been wrong prior to the event. The U.K. immediately set up a committee of enquiry and are not making changes until they have the report. Irrespective of the arguments for or against on both sides the different approaches illustrate a different motivation and interpretation of responsibility which can be predicted when you know the people in power. Movement Analysis as a whole, beyond just that specialised aspect concentrating on the merger of Posture movement and Gesture movement, does have a range of applications - Sports, Therapy, Ergonomics, for example - how significant is that? Is it just an addendum to what is already being done, or is there a bigger more significant contribution?

One problem does seem to be that few people recognise that Movement is a subject which can be studied as a discipline. It has a problem escaping from its underpinnings in Dance. I have a problem finding my books in bookshops - they are variously catalogued under Psychology, Business, Keep Fit, Theatre and Dance. When asked what I do, if I reply 'Movement' people think it is anything from political movements to furniture removal. To some extent the study of movement is beginning to emerge from mainstream Psychology, Anthropology, Ethnography, Ergonomics, Therapy, Sports Medicine, for example, and colleagues of mine are working in all these fields. Recently two universities, the University of Surrey and Columbia University, Chicago, have set up courses in Movement Observation and Analysis.

Another problem is that it is difficult for people to observe movement in order to confirm what my colleagues and I claim. Of course, it should be possible for one's claims to be replicated before they can be taken seriously as having any general significance. There is no major problem in teaching people to observe movement ... it just takes a lot of time and practice to learn to do it objectively and accurately. However, technology may now be helping to get it into the mainstream. Biomechanics laboratories are equipped to collect incredibly detailed data of a person's movement and feed it into



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*Founded by Janet Kaylo*

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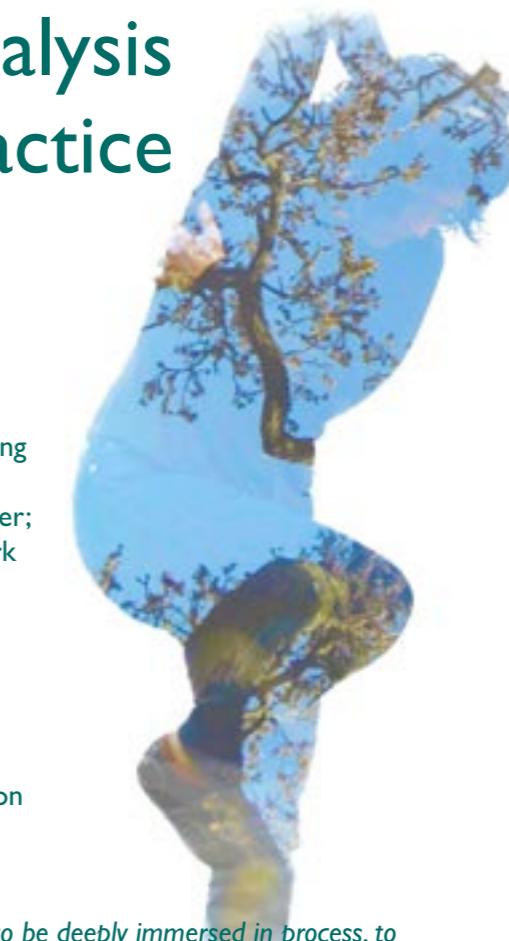
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Jasmina Zagrajski Vukelić CMA-SP



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a computer. Nevertheless, some theory of Movement is needed as a basis to analyse the data.

I would like to finish by offering my own amateur submission on the possible significance of Movement Analysis within the mind/body debate. 350 years ago, there began the Cartesian dichotomy between mind and body. Comparatively recently it developed that mind must be related to the body. Then the holistic approach insisted that the mind and body were one. There was the model put forward, for example, of the brain as the body's computer. I would like to suggest that we do away with concepts of mind and talk only of movement. After all, the brain is an organ for movement and the body (of which the brain is a part) exists for movement – when movement stops it dies. That leaves us with a need to differentiate between intelligent movement and unintelligent movement, and, also, movement conducive to change ... and movement conducive to inertia.

Forty years ago, when my first book, *Posture and Gesture*, was published, I played around with the idea of an Action Quotient (in the sense of proactively taking initiative to act) complementary to the Intelligence Quotient. You probably know the proverb which categorises people into four groups - those who are both high Action and high Intelligence and are the true world leaders; those of low Action and low Intelligence are the humble peasants of the world who are needed to do all the mundane jobs; those of high Intelligence but low Action are the professorial intellectuals of the world who have major influence; whereas those of low Intelligence but high Action are a menace and do immense damage. If we see Movement Analysis as a measure of Action potential, on a scale of Dynamic Action at one end and Inertia at the other, then it is a significant factor within an already existing trend of change. We are 'moving on' towards an ideal of intelligent movement as distinct from unintelligent movement.

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Online somatic movement class recordings in bundles of 6 or 11. Explore movement principles from the Laban/Bartenieff Movement System to support your personal practice. Led by Alexandra Baybutt (CMA, RSME, PhD). Year-long access to recordings. <https://alexandrabaybutt.co.uk/education/movementcoaching/bartenieff-fundamental-principles/>

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Email: [brendamckee@btinternet.com](mailto:brendamckee@btinternet.com)

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