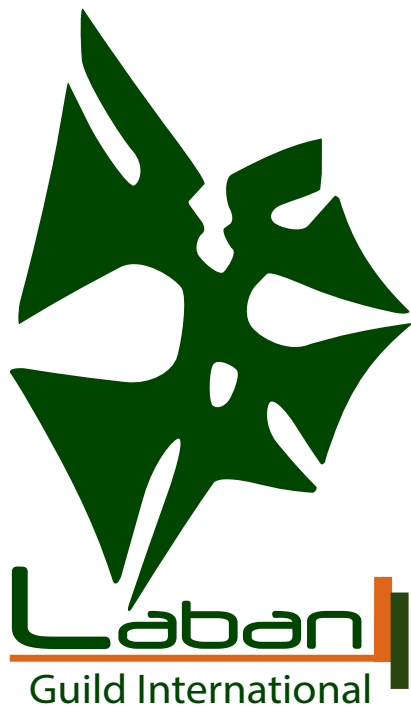


Movement, Dance & Drama



The Art of Movement Studio at Addlestone



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The Art of Movement - Rudolf Laban's Unpublished Writings

Edited by Dick McCaw

This book offers new perspectives on the thinking and practice of Rudolf Laban – a pioneer of modern European dance and movement analysis. Laban's own texts offer further elaboration of the key themes of his work – eukinetics, choreutics, community dance, pedagogy and dance notation.

Link to a Guardian article: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2023/dec/03/kilometre-house-how-dance-pioneer-rudolf-laban-dreamed-of-staging-performances-in-a-gigantic-dome>

There will be a review of the book in the April issue of the magazine.

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Editorial

Unfortunately, our Editor is unavailable for this issue but we wish her well and look forward to her return for the April issue.

New Events

Laban Guild International is pleased to announce two events:

Searching for Balance

The Laban Movement Choir Project invites you to an IN PERSON 'Dance in a Day'

Saturday 9th March 2024, 10.45 - 16.30

Studio 9
The Place
17, Duke's Road
London
WC1H 9PY

For further information contact Susi Thornton susithornton38@gmail.com

The Foundation Course in Laban Studies (ONLINE) will run this year on these dates:

Tuesdays (7.30 - 9.30pm)
April 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th,
May 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th,
June 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th,

Saturdays (9am - 1pm)
April 6th, May 18th, June 29th

For further information please contact Maggie Killingbeck mm.killingbeck@gmail.com

Laban Guild International Online Forum 2023

Ladders of Laban: exploring swinging scales and virtual scaffolding

Convened by the Space Harmony Hub on Friday 15th December 2023

Recording viewable here:
<https://youtu.be/zfqZQUeQRRQ>

The Laban Practitioners 2022 forum recording is viewable here:
Part 1 Presentations. <https://youtu.be/zETY0wx0TCs>
Part 2 Discussions. <https://youtu.be/8yumTYbuAsk>

Trustees Report January 2024

The Trustees are pleased to report that negotiations with the NRCD to preserve the Laban Oral History Collection are ongoing. The recordings and materials in the Laban Oral History Collection were created through a project that the NRCD ran, in association with the Laban Guild and its members, between 1983 and 1987. This project captured and documented recollections of key individuals who trained or worked with Rudolf Laban and were involved in the development of Laban-derived work in the UK into a variety of areas during the middle decades of the 20th century. Broadly, they represent his approaches to movement creation, analysis, documentation, and observation which influenced dance training and teaching, acting practice and theatre production, work in industry and management/personality assessment, as well as therapy, rehabilitation and psychological meanings of movement. Interviewees include, amongst many others, Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer, Lorna Wilson, Gerard Bagley, Leslie Burrowes, Jane Winearls, Athalie Knowles and Vi Bruce.

The Trustees recognise that Geraldine Stephenson was above all a practitioner, who passed on her knowledge of Rudolf Laban's work through practical dance and drama projects, thus they are *considering* a collaboration with various partners to hold a "choric festival" centred around the Crawick Multiverse, in the town of Sanquhar in Scotland between 20th – 24th June 2024 (<https://www.crawickmultiverse.co.uk>). It would be an ideal opportunity for Laban Guild International subscribers to practice and develop their practical training in the Laban approach and honour their past teachers: aspects to be explored (reflecting Geraldine's practice) would include Dance Drama, historical dance and movement choirs with tutors experienced in these areas.

The Trustees need to know that there is substantial interest from subscribers in this project before proceeding so please contact them to indicate your interest trustees@labanguildinternational.org.uk

The Trustees continue to meet regularly by Zoom. If you have any questions or suggestions do get in contact using the email address above.

Cover Images:

Photos reproduced from the 'Studio 25' book compiled by Susanne Thornton
© 1971 The Art of Movement Studio

A Brief History of the Studio

by R.M. Dewey O.B.E

This article was reprinted from 'Studio 25', compiled by Susanne Thornton and published in 1971. The book celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Art of Movement Studio and contains a collection of articles by former students and members of staff.

Lisa Ullmann and Rudolf Laban came up to Manchester in the Autumn of 1942. They settled in a flat in a large house in Palatine Road, Didsbury, some three to four miles from the city centre. Most of the houses in this area were mansions built towards the end of the nineteenth century and they had extensive cellars. It was in such a cellar that Lisa first started training a small group of four students. The poor conditions and lack of space were more than compensated for by the wholehearted interest and enthusiasm, and the wonderful team spirit of the dancers and their first display of dances was a great success and much appreciated by the necessarily small audience who were fortunate enough to see it.

For some time before she came north Lisa had been taking courses of varied duration for a number of Local Education Authorities and in many of the Teacher Training Colleges (now Colleges of Education). There was a general interest in "Central European Dance" throughout the country and Lisa's lectures and training sessions were in great demand. Joan Goodrich, a senior tutor at Bedford College of Physical Education, had studied this dance in Germany and a number of her students

were amongst those who sought further training and knowledge from Lisa and Laban. Some also studied at the London Dance Centre run by Louise Soelberg and Leslie Burrowes who had studied under Mary Wigman. Another group of students worked with Sylvia Bodmer in Manchester.

Almost as soon as she arrived in Manchester Lisa was asked by Elsie Palmer, the Organiser of Physical Education for the County Borough, to take an introductory course of dance for teachers and others interested in Manchester and the surrounding area. This was followed by a three year training course for teachers, with the classes held in one of the city schools, two or three nights a week during term time. The course included effort training, space harmony, group dance, compositions, teaching practice in schools and demonstrations with children together with a simplified form of notation. This was, in fact, the first "long term" continuous course of training taken by Lisa, available to teachers. She also carried on journeying over to Yorkshire, Lancashire, the Midlands and London, conducting short courses in each place at regular intervals.

When the war ended in 1945 it was obvious that the demand for dance training was such that Lisa could no longer meet it by travelling to the various places. Students must come to a centre where she could concentrate her teaching.

In the Autumn of 1945 Lisa started looking for a studio in central Manchester. The city had been very badly bombed and driving round looking for a place was a disheartening pursuit. Burnt out basements, half destroyed factory buildings, dingy dark rooms attached to old halls or chapels, all were examined hopefully and discarded as impossible. Finally, one day when driving up Oxford Road from the city Lisa saw a "To Let" notice on a first floor. It was over a garage and not in a particularly salubrious neighbourhood but she went to see it and found a large room with windows all down one side and a reasonably well boarded floor. There were several smaller rooms behind it. This eventually became the Studio, with a large and a small dance room, an office and a somewhat cramped



1946 Early in January the Art of Movement Studio was established in its first permanent home. Above "The Studio", 183/5 Oxford Road, Manchester



1948 Students training as performers seen here in "Backyard Children" choreography by Lisa Ullmann which was included in the repertoire of the "Young Dancers". This group was formed and directed by Sylvia Bodmer as part of the Studio activities.

changing space with a single shower unit. Here Lisa opened the Art of Movement Studio in January 1946 with eight students. On the first morning the first movement task was performed by three or four early arrivals. They went across to a local store and came back with brushes, soap, buckets and floor cloths and they scrubbed and cleaned the whole area before dancing started! Those early days at the Studio were memorable. Students were given dance and dance training by three tutors, each brilliant in their own sphere: Lisa Ullmann, Laban's pupil who had previously helped Kurt Jooss, also one of Laban's former students, to train members for his Company "The Ballet Jooss"; Kurt Jooss, and Sylvia Bodmer, another former pupil of Laban who for many years had directed her own dance studio on the Continent before she came to this country. Then there was Laban himself, a stimulating and inspiring teacher. very strict but with a delightful sense of humour and great understanding of a student's needs. The training was extremely strenuous and very demanding but creative and satisfying. There was no doubt as to the "technique" within the training, but it was always related to dance. Body awareness, effort training, space harmony, group dance, dance drama with the ever varying changes in relationships

between individuals and groups, provided a rich and stimulating programme, supplemented also by other subjects in the curriculum such as music and musical accompaniment, percussion, notation, movement observation, National and Period Dance, structure and function of the body, optical improvisation and Art.

By the Autumn of 1946 the number of students had much increased. Living conditions were not easy at this time. No government grants were available and students had to pay for their tuition, accommodation and their food. Rationing was still in force. Some would have fared ill but for the kindness of Mr. Fowler at the corner shop opposite the Studio. He invariably produced a bottle of milk or eggs or a little butter when the need was urgent. One student who started at this time should be mentioned. Geraldine Stephenson paid for part of her tuition by accompanying classes on the piano and being generally useful at the Studio. She eventually joined the staff and still teaches part-time at Addlestone.

The work of the Studio soon became known. Displays of dance were given at regular intervals at the Studio and later to larger audiences in nearby Halls. Demonstrations were given in schools and at the Whitworth Hall of the University. Links were

established and students performed at the Library Theatre and with the Unnamed Drama Society. Contact was established with Joan Littlewood and her Theatre Workshop. Geraldine Stephenson assisted Laban with his work at the Northern Theatre School in Bradford where he co-operated with Esme Church. Sylvia Bodmer formed a group with advanced students named “The Young Dancers”. They prepared dances for theatre performance and their varied programmes shown at the Manchester Library Theatre and elsewhere were very well received. In 1947 a group from the Studio entered an international dance competition in Copenhagen.

The programme was well received and the Studio was awarded a Diploma.

In 1948-49 a “Supplementary Course” for teachers was started at the invitation of the Ministry of Education (now the Department of Education and Science) and students were for the first time able to receive some financial assistance from the Local Education Authorities, to study for one year. In August 1949 the Studio was recognised by the then Ministry of Education as efficient for the purpose of providing courses of educational training. In 1950 a one year “Special Course” for experienced teachers was inaugurated by request of the Ministry to help teachers to prepare themselves for posts of higher responsibility.

Additional premises had to be found for the increasing numbers of students, some of whom came from other countries such as Scandinavia, America and Holland. A neighbouring hall in Oxford Road and a somewhat dingy room in Shetford Road were used. A very pleasant house and garden in Fallowfield were rented and this made a valuable addition to Studio premises for a year until demolished for development purposes.

Of the visiting lecturers who came to assist the staff, mention must be made of Albrecht Knust who had for many years collaborated with Laban in notation. He came over from Germany and took courses in notation both for the students and for those interested from the area. Adda Heynsen, the well known composer of music for modern dance, who had worked with Laban and many of his pupils, came to give courses on the relationship of music with dance and on improvisation for dance accompaniment.

Throughout the eight years of its development in Manchester, the Studio had close links with the Manchester Dance Circle. This was founded in 1943 with Sylvia Bodmer and Lisa Ullmann as artistic directors. Students attended these recreative sessions and so had experience of recreative dance and movement choir with large numbers of participants. Geraldine Stephenson, who was

particularly gifted in dramatic movement and dance drama shared the teaching with the artistic directors.

The outstanding characteristics of the Studio throughout the early years of its development were the sustained interest and enthusiasm shown by the students and the excellent spirit that enabled them to surmount their manifold practical difficulties. The large sphere of Laban’s interests and his continually widening activities were reflected in the work of the Studio and it became clear that Manchester was no longer the most suitable centre for the establishment of his work and ideas; a much larger and better equipped centre was needed both for the Studio and for research. In 1953 therefore, when the opportunities arose, it was decided to move nearer to London to a permanent home both for the Studio and for Laban’s work in general. Through the generosity of a donor, the premises at Addlestone were given and in October 1954 the Laban Art of Movement Centre was established by Deed of Trust to provide education in the art of movement.

The Centre includes:

The Art of Movement Studio
The Research and Development Department
The Extra Mural Department.

The buildings which were formerly a school for choir boys - were situated in an estate of sixteen acres. The surroundings were beautiful with lawns and gardens adjoining the house. Two studio rooms were available and to these in 1956-57 a large saltarium (known as the Old Saltarium) was added. It was designed under Laban’s direction by a contemporary architect. In 1962-63, thanks to the generosity of Mrs. Loeb, one of Laban’s former pupils, the Upper Saltarium was built and in 1965-66 yet a third one, known as the Lower Saltarium. All three studios were especially designed for an artistic activity such as dance and are beautiful and delightful rooms to work in. The adjacent house contains Lisa’s flat and rooms for staff and others. A smaller building across the main drive and known as “The Chalet” provides accommodation for a few students whilst the majority of them live in ‘digs’ in the vicinity. There are also several huts for formal lectures and for painting, sculpting, designing as well as a modern office block which has replaced the old “Art hut”. One part of the College building which originally had a flat roof was transformed into a library. This was designed by Michael Leonard, a well known modern architect who had also studied the art of movement at the Studio. The Laban Art of Movement Guild donated the major part of the furnishing equipment and all this together completed an interesting and agreeable room which holds a good though small collection of books, gramophone records, sheet music and many kinetograms.

Since moving to Addlestone the scope of the work



The New Saltarium

at the Studio has been increased and widened. Students come to study Laban’s principles of the art of movement from all over the world - America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Rhodesia, Brazil, France, Switzerland, Scandinavia, Israel, Iceland, Korea, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are some of the countries from which students have come. The Courses in the art of movement have been greatly enlarged. They are fully described in the syllabus and include an Introductory Course as well as two year and three year full training courses. The Course for intending teachers which has hitherto been conducted in conjunction with Trent Park College of Education and is now to be run in co-operation with Whitelands College is approved by the Department of Education and Science and the London Institute of Education. It leads to recognition as a qualified teacher and Teacher Licentiate of the Art of Movement Studio. A one year course is run in association with Chelsea College of Physical Education. Students who are particularly interested in dance spend the second of their three year course at the Studio. The two courses for serving teachers which were inaugurated in Manchester are still an important feature of the Studio, one a Supplementary course for those who wish to specialise in the subject and the other a Special course of advanced study in movement and educational dance.

Outside activities figure prominently and Lisa and her Staff are constantly in demand for courses, lectures, demonstrations and productions. Through the Extra Mural Department regular short courses of training and recreative dance are held in London and at

the Studio all through the winter months. There is an annual Summer Course which is attended by many students from overseas and an average of five hundred people take advantage of the Extra Mural Courses during any one year. It is only possible to mention a few of the many events and festivals in which the Studio, both staff and students shared. In 1963 Geraldine Stephenson produced with the students “The Mask of Teilo” in Llandaff Cathedral. This was an immense task with over forty members of the cast. The masque was specially commissioned for the festival with music especially composed by William Matthias and played

by the English Chamber Orchestra.

The performance was an outstanding success so that Geraldine was asked once more to produce the dance drama for the Llandaff Cathedral Festival in 1964 in which the majority of the students took part. In 1965 Lisa took a group of students to Cologne to give a demonstration of the art of movement at the Fifth Congress of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Women and Girls. The demonstration included studies based on effort sequences, movement with a spatial stress illustrating “space engenders form and form engenders space” and a dance composition based on the interplay of two contrasting groups of people. In this same year under the direction of Geraldine Stephenson students took part in the Welsh National Festival at the Albert Hall. Demonstrations of movement choir work have been given at Wembley Pool at the Central Council of Physical Recreation Festivals of Movement and Dance. By request, members of the staff have been to America, Canada, Sweden, Tunisia, Switzerland, France and other countries to lecture, demonstrate and teach various aspects of the art of movement including notation.

Because the Studio is within easy reach of London the students have many opportunities to see plays, hear concerts and visit dance companies which come to perform in London. Pearl Princes, the American dancer and educationist, visited the studio and talked to the students. Robin Howard of the Contemporary Dance Theatre, Dame Marie Rambert and other distinguished personalities of the dance world have also been to see and discuss the work.



1960 Kinetography made easy by Lisa Ullmann.

In the twenty five years of the Studio's existence many people who are now in responsible posts, mainly in educational institutions, have received here their training in movement and dance. Through them the work has been carried into most Colleges of Education and has made its mark in the field of physical education. Many have developed their knowledge and experience on their own lines and thus the understanding of movement and its possible value in different fields is steadily widening.

Geraldine Stephenson has developed her work in connection with the theatre, television and education. On separate occasions she was Director of Movement for the York Mystery Plays and she has choreographed the dances for many productions in the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre. On television she recently choreographed the Court dances for the series "The Six Wives of Henry the Eighth". In 1970 she was Director of "Kaleidoscopia Viva" a production with five hundred dancers in the Albert Hall, to celebrate the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Laban Art of Movement Guild. She also teaches at the Studio. Veronica Sherborne studied the needs of mentally handicapped children and a film "In Touch" has been made of her work in movement with the children and with her students. Warren Lamb has developed his own method of movement observation and assessment for managerial selection and training. He has written a book Posture and Gesture on his research. Marion North has concentrated on

the observation of movement of babies and young children and her book is to be published shortly. Valerie Preston-Dunlop is Principal of the Beechmont Centre in Kent for the study of Kinetography. She is an expert in Labanotation and Valerie is also well-known for the development of Motif Writing. She is a distinguished member of the "International Council of Kinetography Laban". The Council was formed in August 1959 when leading exponents of movement notation from many countries met by invitation of the Trustees of the Laban Art of Movement Centre for the first world conference on Kinetography Laban. Lisa Ullmann who had initiated and organised the conference regards kinetography as an integral part of movement education and all her students study it. Gerald Bagley and his wife Tonya who both trained at the Studio in Manchester have formed the British Dance Drama Theatre. They have a small company of dancers and plan their performances for schools and Colleges. They travel over many areas in this country and through their work they have enthused many child and adult audiences and interested them in the art of movement. Geoffrey and Kenlyn Sutherland both exstudents and ex-staff of the Studio have been working for a few years now in South Africa. Geoffrey has been acclaimed not only as a dancer and actor but particularly as a choreographer and director of theatrical productions.

A history of the Studio, though only brief and general, would not be complete without mentioning the many



1955 Students cheer Laban on his 76th birthday in the Studio grounds at Addlestone.

festive occasions. One of these which stands out particularly was in December 1949 when Laban had his 70th birthday. The Studio was then still in Manchester and many people had come from near and far, even from abroad, to celebrate the occasion.

The normally drab Studio rooms shone in festive brilliance and up the narrow staircase at the back came a long procession of students, friends and staff each carrying a little gift for Laban which they presented to him. There was then much dancing,

singing, drumming and feasting. It was fortunate that the wooden floor boards only separated the party from a repair garage which was closed at night, and not from other people.

In the summer of 1958 at the age of 78 Laban died in Weybridge. He left a rich heritage of papers, notes, drawings, his investigations, thoughts and findings. Through the Centre's Research Department, some of the Studio staff have been busy sorting and cataloguing these - a tremendous task which will yet take a considerable time to complete.

The Studio plays an essential part in the Laban Art of Movement Centre. Through the work of the students the art of movement is developed, assessed and its principles applied and revalued. Moreover it is not only through the training courses provided that progress is made, but through the

constant interchange of ideas between all those who have studied or are interested enough to follow up some aspects of Laban's work. All those who have or who are working with Lisa must realise the immense contribution the Studio has made to the dissemination of knowledge and experience of the art of movement throughout the country these twenty-five years and everyone looks forward to further expansion and development.

Myfanwy Dewey was an HMI for the North West and together with Elsie Palmer was instrumental in helping Lisa find the Oxford Road Studio.

There are tributes to Miss Dewey by Lisa Ullmann and Sheila McGivering in 'The Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine' May 1977; available in the Magazine Archive on the LGI website.

Subscribers' Classes

Weekly Workshops

Led by **Jenny Frankel**

Taking place on 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.laban@gmail.com

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Phone: 07813 546644

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Led by **Viv Bridson**

Every Sunday at The Place (16 Flaxman Terrace WC1) from 11.00 – 12.30.

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.

Up to £10 – pay in Studio

www.dancetheatreprojects.net

Contact: danceprojects@btinternet.com

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Contact: **Brenda McKee**

Email: brendamckee@btinternet.com

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Online - Mondays 6pm to 7:15pm (GMT)

"Behind the visible, behind outer events, lives a hidden force, almost lost, hidden deep within ourselves a forgotten landscape reveals itself and within it we find a dance poem" – Laban

You are warmly invited to join us for a virtual celebration of Life through the Art of Movement. We will dance, improvise and create, guided by the poetical expression of our internal truth, our hopes, visions and dreams.

Suitable for beginners and advanced students.

First session free. Then £5 per week on Zoom.

Contact: movementatelier@gmail.com

Workshop led by Alexandra Baybutt

18 March, 6.30-8pm in Elephant & Castle for Independent Dance (<https://alexandrabaybutt.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7af725bbcc79827225a22e6a9&id=22ec0f940b&e=0283ccaf58>), 'Monday Night Improvisation'. Dancing....yeah.

All welcome.

Email: alexandrabaybutt@hotmail.com

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Educational, Scientific and
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Founded by Janet Kaylo

Beginning July 2024
Hebden Bridge, UK



Certification Programme in Movement Analysis and

This 500-hour immersive certification programme is a post-graduate Somatic Practitioner and Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analyst training offering new career paths as a movement analyst and somatic practitioner, as well as supporting current careers in dance training and performance, dance movement psychotherapy, acting, yoga, Pilates and coaching.

The programme deepens capacity and skill to expert level in movement analysis and other somatic approaches including hands-on training to establish work as a Somatic Movement Therapist/Educator. It can be applied to movement direction for actors & dancers, rehearsal direction, and working as a movement specialist and therapist, as well as existing therapeutic work.

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Programme faculty members include Janet Kaylo, Amy Voris, Charlotte Darbyshire, Zrinka Šimičić Mihanović and Amanda Peñaloza-Banks



For more information and application

www.labaninternational.org

info@labaninternational.org



1965 For the second year students take part in the big Festival production at Llandaff Cathedral. At both occasions Geraldine Stephenson directed the choreography.