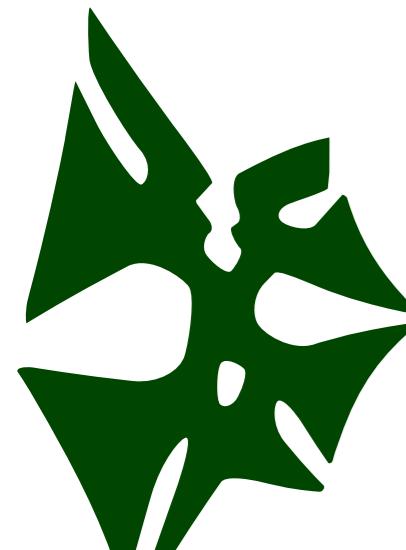


# *Movement, Dance & Drama*





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Guild International

Registered Charity No. 266435

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

**Movement, Dance & Drama** is published in England and is distributed worldwide. It is free to all subscribers to Laban Guild International. Individual annual subscriptions for printed copies for UK addresses £40; affiliated groups UK £54; individual Europe £52; world zones 1,2,3 £58; groups Europe £76; world zones 1,2,3 £82. Online rates: individuals £20 groups £40. Library and institute subscriptions on request.

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### Cover

Images from 'A Vision of Dynamic Space' edited by Lisa Ullmann  
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### Advertising Space

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

Please contact:  
magazine@labanguildinternational.org.uk

ISSN 2754-4125 (Online)  
ISSN 2046-3065 (Print)  
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www.labanguildinternational.org.uk

## Editorial

One finds interest in Laban's work in unexpected places. Recently, while attending 'Tango by the Sea' my husband asked someone to dance who turned out to be Eileen King (née Cornell) who had trained at Chelsea College to be a PE teacher in the 1960s and went on to work extensively with the Keep Fit Association. We spent a pleasant hour or so discussing Laban's influence in our work, her time at Chelsea College and the lecturers whom she encountered - including Lorna Wilson and Gordon Curl who, amongst many things, was a previous editor of this magazine.

Remembering the past is important – see for example the review of Maddy Tongue's book on Helen Lewis and the obituary for Rene Sakula, both fervent Laban practitioners – but so is allowing the past to inform the present, which Katia Savrami's article on Laban's influence in contemporary Greece and the report on the current activities of the Laban Guild International hubs do admirably. In the future (dance) historians will be informed of the past because of what we publish now – why not submit your story of engagement with Laban's work and contribute to that collective memory?

## Laban Guild International Hubs Report, May 2023

Compiled by Darren Royston

how an awareness of Aristotelian philosophy can support an approach that integrates body and mind for the actor. The Making of the Actor project furthers this research to propose new methods and tools for the education of the actor-dancer on an intercultural and international level.

In 2022, Darren Royston, supported by Laban Guild International, gave a workshop at The Making of the Actor symposium in Marathon. Based on historical research of the movement of the ancient Satyr plays, the sessions considered ideas of dance drama using a Laban movement approach. Moments in the narrative were identified to create different spatial structures and dynamics. Other workshops in the 2022 event explored combined Laban-based approaches using dance, architecture, acting techniques and concepts of rhythm and dynamics in performance.

Following this event, further collaborations are developing. Kiki will present a workshop on 2 June 2023 at the Theatre Arts Department, the American College of Greece, entitled *On Aeschylus' Agamemnon: Reading in Terms of Movement*. The students will explore dramaturgical analysis as a living process of performance production through reading the play text.

Rudolf Laban was inspired to create dance drama by several plays by Aeschylus, and The Moving Actor Hub will be exploring these early works in future studio sessions.

*Prometheus* (Rudolf Laban, 1923) was based on Aeschylus play, *Prometheus Bound*. *Agamemnon's Tod* (Rudolf Laban, 1924) based on *The Death of Agamemnon* from *The Oresteia*. The Greek Tragedy trilogy was followed by the satyr play *Proteus*,

## Trustees Report May 2023

The Trustees continue to meet regularly by Zoom. At the last meeting we discussed how little interest had been shown in the planned Zoom meeting for subscribers. Although a few proposals for discussion were submitted these were more appropriate for discussion at Hub meetings. Thus, the meeting on Saturday April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, was cancelled. We would like to take from this that subscribers are happy with the work of the Trustees, however if there is anything you would like to raise with us please use the Trustees email address to do so.

At meetings Trustees discuss Hub activities, applications for financial support for Laban-related activities, and keep abreast of Laban work offered by other organisations. If there is anything Laban-related you know is happening that subscribers may be interested in or to which you wish to draw the attention of the Trustees, please get in contact using [trustees@labanguildinternational.org.uk](mailto:trustees@labanguildinternational.org.uk)

which will also be considered for a new dance drama. There are plans for further developments in Athens in the following years using Laban's works to inspire new creations by actors and choruses. The project will use the model of using professional dancers and actors as leaders within the amateur movement choir who will train at different workshops. Performances are being scheduled to connect to the centenary anniversaries of Laban's own creation.

We are pleased that the Municipality of Athens has agreed to support a further symposium of the Making of the Actor in July 2023. The theme for this year originates from an idea developed in Plato's book *Philebos, the Protagoras*. In this text, Socrates asks whether humans need the arts to live a fulfilled life. British philologist Stephen Halliwell expanded this discussion in *Amousia: Living Without the Muses* (2012), and recently there has been a discussion of ethical issues concerning the wellbeing of students learning the performing arts, considering their mental and physical health. Now the focus is directed to those instructing such courses, who come from a training as performing artists, but may be restricted in their own creative output in their role as pedagogues. This symposium hopes to propose models for a working environment that allows the artistic life to be maintained, developed and sustained. There are two main areas of enquiry. Firstly, do artists as teachers (and teachers as artists) have a way to contribute to the community, and how does the social and political environment impact that? Secondly, how can artist-teachers take on a political role, contributing to the elimination of all the forms of oppression and discrimination, thus participating in building a better world for all?

This symposium will be collective and energise each individual by creating art together. There will be workshops in dance, theatre, and music, with invited schoolchildren, students, members of cultural organisations and local residents joining certain sessions. There will be formal and informal discussions at lunches and dinners, as well as events created so that everyone can have fun together. The results of this creative collaboration will be presented in the form of a performance on the last two days of the conference and will be filmed.

Anyone from Laban Guild International who is interested in joining the event should send an email to [info@themakingsactor.com](mailto:info@themakingsactor.com) or call +30 6977507248.

The weekend before the symposium, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> & Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, Athens, Greece, there is a **specialist workshop** "Working with the Physical Actor" given by Paul Allain, based on the work of Jerzy Grotowski. Paul Allain is Professor of Theatre and Performance at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. As well as working as a Movement Director and actor trainer for institutions such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre, he has published extensively on actor training and contemporary performance processes as both author and editor in books, DVDs, articles and online, with a particular focus on

contemporary Polish theatre and Suzuki Tadashi. Paul is a specialist on Jerzy Grotowski and Gardzienice Theatre Association, with whom he has collaborated extensively. He has been awarded the Witkacy prize as well as a medal by the Polish government, recognising his services to promoting Polish culture overseas.

#### Workshop Details:

If we start with and from the principles and practices of Jerzy Grotowski, we have only the body in space. Minimal perhaps, but for theatre and performance, this is already more than enough: the body is always with others, performers and spectators, in motion and inhabiting its own and other spaces. It has extraordinary capacity once organised and trained. This is the Physical Actor. We will begin with training and voice and body exercises and then examine how to progress from group exercises into action, physical and vocal, in a given space. This space can be determined by the participants, but they must prioritise key physical principles such as alignment, grounding, awareness, resonance and focus. Participants will then use these tools and approaches to work towards short performance etudes.

Students do not necessarily need prior theatre or performance experience but must have a desire to explore practically and to move their bodies and work with their voice. Students need to learn off by heart in advance a short 1-minute soliloquy in their mother tongue (or English if confident enough) which they can then use in the training. This should be from a classical text – play, story or poem and – have a poetic rather than domestic or daily dimension. Basic and ideally intermediate English language competence is required of all students.

#### Provisional Schedule & Fees for Workshop:

The workshop will comprise intensive practical workshops (2 x 5 hours over two weekends)

Fee: 120 euros

Send your application to

[kiki.selioni@cssd.ac.uk](mailto:kiki.selioni@cssd.ac.uk) and  
[info@themakingsactor.com](mailto:info@themakingsactor.com)

#### Theatre Workshop on Cunard Queen Mary 2 cruise

*Miss Littlewood*, the Royal Shakespeare production with book, music and lyrics by Sam Kenyon, is currently performing on Cunard's flagship, Queen Mary 2. First produced in 2018, the musical is about Joan Littlewood, and Theatre Workshop. Joan had first been introduced to Laban's approach to movement as a student at RADA, and later became a student of Rudolf Laban himself. When Littlewood asked Laban to assist her in her new theatre company, it was Jean Newlove who undertook the job and became the movement director for the company.

Sam Kenyon has explained the new development of performing the musical on board a cruise ship: "In December 2021, Pippa Hill, the Head of the Literary Dept at the RSC, contacted me with a curious proposition: would I consider editing down my full-length musical, *Miss Littlewood*, which had premiered

at the RSC in 2018? This would be for a new contract between the RSC and Cunard, who were looking to expand the nature of the theatrical entertainment on their flagship vessel, the Queen Mary 2. I approached this new iteration of my Joan Littlewood show with alacrity – there is little more I enjoy than editing and snipping. All sorts of things had to go, but since we were introducing Joan and her work to new audiences, 'The Theatre Workshop Story', a repeated chorus explaining the nature of the work of Theatre Workshop – Laban, Stanislavsky, devising – was absolutely essential, as was the *A Taste of Honey* sequence, and the 'Theatre Workshop: Lovely War reprise'. See (<https://open.spotify.com/track/4AuB8YzkZDSbD81kYCHuP3?si=2b0e00bd63dc494f>) for my descriptions-in-song of those productions originally choreographed by Jean Newlove. I was lucky enough to interview Jean back in 2013 and her spirit and approach to text and movement continues to inform my show in all its iterations. The RSC-Cunard partnership is going down a storm (figuratively speaking) and will continue until at least the end of 2024."

Sam Kenyon also researched the use of Laban's work by the actors of Theatre Workshop. He writes: "We danced the words first, then spoke them." This was how Murray Melvin introduced me to the work he had done with Jean Newlove and Joan Littlewood as a member of Theatre Workshop. When Murray went into further detail about his preparation for *A Taste of Honey*, in which he played Geoff in the 1958 premiere, he told me that they never discussed Geoff's sexuality. Apart from anything else, this was the time of censorship and the Lord Chamberlain, so Jean, Joan and Murray applied the simplest of Laban rules to everything Geoff did: indirect movement. "This softened Geoff," Murray explained, as he (apparently) effortlessly handed me a book...indirectly. Barbara Young, meanwhile, told me how, after an orthopaedic operation long after her stint with Joan and Jean, used her Laban training to get out of hospital. When she turned her nose up at crutches, the nurse asked: "How will you walk?" "I won't," said Barbara, defiantly, "I'll glide." And she did. For more on this see [www.samkenyon.com](http://www.samkenyon.com)

#### Creative Practice Hub

Hub leader: Alison Curtis-Jones

Rudolf Laban and those working with him initiated experimentation, new ways of working, and intense training. This Hub is for dance professionals and postgraduate students of performance who will enjoy the challenge of developing the Laban approach in new areas.

The Hub aims to generate new artistic ideas, to reach a high level of dance technique performance, to enhance professional artistic practice, to devise and create choreography using Laban Principles, to use choreological study for creative purposes. Events will be organised as a forum for exchanging embodied knowledge by those with extensive training in movement and dance and to consider diverse ways to approach established ideas, encouraging projects that are collaborative and interdisciplinary (including music,

sound, visual arts and the spoken word)

#### Opera Hub

Hub leader: Denise Telles

This month there will be a gathering of opera singers, dancers, and musicians in Rio for preparatory talks and practice, so that a regular course of international workshops can be set for the forthcoming year. The working title "Playing Around Laban: Moving Music with Dance" has been developed from Denise's own work in using the cube to create movement for her vocal performance. The areas to be considered are (1) Sound and Movement (2) Music and Dance (3) Opera and Musical Theatre performance. Research is currently being undertaken to uncover the many musical works that Rudolf Laban and Kurt Jooss were involved with, considering the notations to music scores, and the incidental dances in opera and theatre which were created by the dancers of Laban's schools. Areas of Rudolf Laban's early work will be analysed, such as the Tanz-Ton-Wort Triad used as a syllabus for training at the schools in Germany, and the development of opera choreography, aligning to changes to staging Wagner's opera and other classical music, including Mozart, Beethoven, and Handel.

#### Space Harmony Hub

Hub leaders: Olu Taiwo & Vicky Spanovangelis

Themes: Living Architecture, Spatial Structures, Sacred Geometry, Harmonic Principles

The Space Harmony Hub is a place of gathering to explore and create new ways of interpreting Laban's philosophy-practice of Body-Space relations, Movement and Architecture in the wider context of 21st century new social realities, technology embodied practices, arts, culture, and design. There is opportunity to explore integral principles of Laban, in new social organisations, political, cultural, artistic practices, research and knowledge paradigms. A new awareness, particularly after the post-pandemic situation, has opened a whole new way to understand what it means to be currently living as a human being. Movement as Laban says, is the basis of all things – everything moves (*Choreutics*, 1966), where stasis is an illusion. All the cosmos is a ceaseless stream of movement in continuous flux. In this sense vibration, dynamic equilibrium, balance, and resonance are crucial in this new lab of exploring living architecture, spatial structures, sacred geometry, and harmonic principles as starting to point to interrogate and invite a new curiosity of embodiment, movement, and space in the 21st century.

#### Movement Choir Hub

Hub Leader: Susi Thornton

See the **Re-claim, Re-shape, Re-make** report by Maddy Tongue in this magazine

#### Notation Hub

Hub Leader: Raymundo Ruiz

Ellen Goldman's article on Paul Klee and motif symbols will appear in the next edition of the magazine

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### UNESCO International Dance Day

A full report will be given in the next edition, including a report of James Batchelor's Ausdrucktanz project and details of performances in Melbourne, Australia and Bangkok, Thailand.

## Laban's influence in contemporary Greece

*Katia Savrami*

Through this article I would like to express my gratitude to Valerie Preston Dunlop and Marion North (former director of the Laban Centre), two of the brightest and distinguished educators and mentors who have shaped my attitude both as a dance practitioner and later as an academic.

Often, the problem with notions of history and education in dance is that every human society approaches them differently, mainly according to its cultural heritage. Thinking back, I was trained in dance, in a certain way, in Greece, but what I realised later was that there was a system of beliefs that were transmitted through dance in Greece which were related to the Greek values of technique, creativity, aesthetics, ethics and morals, and that this education was very different from the education in dance I received at the Laban Centre in London, United Kingdom. My postgraduate and PhD studies helped me to understand that, although we all talk about similar things, our practices, and the values we transmit as educators, also through our idiosyncratic characteristics, can differ significantly. Historical developments as well as educational practices are related to the social and cultural reality in which we live and to its internally differentiated structure of functional relationships, which may interfere and conflict with other social and cultural realities. In this way, dancing bodies explore, enhance, and transform their kinaesthetic awareness, thus creating new symbolic configurations by being, moving and interacting with the world.

In the current moment of choreographic language evolution, dancing bodies are agents that open up new crossroads between the self and the world by moving, performing and thinking. To understand and discuss this physical discourse, one needs to reflect on the different social, cultural, and political realities that human beings experience as global citizens and on the many worlds that dancing bodies inhabit. Moreover, one also needs to know and appreciate the significance of dance in its specific context.<sup>(1)</sup> Having been engaged in dance for my entire life, initially as a practitioner, dancer educator, choreographer, and later as an academic, I am particularly grateful to my teachers and mentors at the Laban Centre with whom I have shared my passion for dance, developed my physical and mental skills, and found my own stride for initiating the most exciting and creative professional journey I could imagine. It is interesting to mention that in Greece 'The Laban Centre' was established in 1991, within The Moraitis school, as an educational program affiliated then with the BA on Theater Studies, London UK. The

### The World Arts Embodiment Forum (April 2023)

As part of this Forum, Darren Royston attended online at the Laban Team Rio seminar "Artistic Performance as Research" curated by Regina Miranda and Ligia Tourinho. A full report will follow in the next magazine, including an interview with Juliet Chambers-Coe.

collaboration lasted for few years but end due to financial issues from the Greek side. As dance studies in Greece are not autonomous at university level and a validation for a BA course suggested by the public educational sector in my country is not included in any political program, many young dancers went to the UK and studied at the Laban Centre from 1987 to present. However, the first generation of graduates from London have significantly contributed to the development of various aspects of dance and theatre, practically and theoretically, in Greece. I mention a few colleagues here just to show the multiple influences and distinct professional pathways that they follow: Maria Koliopoulou (BA) on choreography-Proxima dance company - and teaching students with disability; Mariza Vinieratou (Diploma and MFA) as a teacher of Choreography; Nina Alcalay (MA) in dance education and movement therapy; Zoi Dimitriou as a fellow researcher at the Laban Centre UK and choreographer collaborated in teaching and performing in Greece; Dr. Kiki Selioni, who has developed an outstanding international network on actors training by bringing together professionals from various institutions and countries, under her research project entitled "The Making of the Actors"; and Professor Maria Koutsouba, who established Laban notation for documenting movement as a tool for analysis, at the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science.

Focusing on my latest research work I would like to mention also how Laban studies helped me to design my project. I am particularly interested in the function and role of the Ancient Dramatic Chorus and how it is approached nowadays by choreographers.<sup>(2)</sup> My background in Laban's principles gave me the toolbox to initiate my research and the 'pair of spectacles' (in Preston Dunlop's words) to continue this project creatively. For example, one of the main principles, was the communal thought, in Movement Choirs were: "The whole group dancing together is an experience of heartbeat, common rhythm, a great belonging. Everyone experiences the build up of energy which this dancing engenders."<sup>(3)</sup> These ideas and notions are included in the dramatic chorus, but they are structured within the specific context based on the Aristotelian principles of Tragedy.<sup>(4)</sup>

I would like to conclude by borrowing from Pina's Bausch words: "dance, dance otherwise we are lost" although we are not, is a statement which can be interpreted by all of us, subjectively or objectively

through experiencing and embodying the current global cultural and socio-political situation.

### References

1. Savrami, K. (2019) *Tracing the Landscape of Dance in Greece*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing
2. See Savrami, K. (2016) *Ancient Dramatic Chorus through the Eyes of a Modern Choreographer*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge scholars.
3. Laban Lecture, Choric Art: Charting the History of the Movement Choir, Anna Carlisle.
4. Sifakis, G. (2001) *Aristotle on the function of Tragic Poetry*, Crete: Crete University Press.

## **Helen Lewis: Shadows Behind the Dance by Maddy Tongue**

*Pamela Harling-Challis*



Maddy Tongue's book, *Helen Lewis: Shadows Behind the Dance*, is a biography and history of modern/contemporary dance in Northern Ireland shaped by dance artist, teacher, and choreographer Helen Lewis, who arrived in Belfast, Northern Ireland from former Czechoslovakia, post Second World War. Before the war, Helen Lewis studied, choreographed, and taught dance as an assistant to Milča Mayerová at the School of Dance in Prague. Mayerová had trained in Germany with Rudolf Laban. The first part of Lewis's life is detailed in her memoir *A Time to Speak* (1992) and tells the story of her experience of living through the Holocaust. Within, there is mention of dance and its influence on her survival.

Tongue's book is a companion to Helen's memoir.<sup>(1)</sup> It flips the focus on to Lewis's life in dance, her education, training, and choreography, and the re-emergence of dance as the major passion in her life after the Second World War and post-birth of her children in Belfast. It is about the time where teaching, choreography, work in theatre, became the centre of her artistic life. *Shadows Behind the Dance* includes reference to Lewis's experience of the Holocaust presented as a subtle and deep influence on her artistic intention and practice. Lewis utilised the application of Laban's principals to structure the formal and dynamic content of her choreography. These two books, memoir and biography, like a drawing, together present both negative and positive space, where light creates shadow and gives form.

Maddy Tongue, from Belfast, studied, performed, and choreographed with the Belfast Modern Dance

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Group, formed by Helen Lewis in 1962. She danced, worked creatively, and was a friend and colleague of Lewis for some five decades. Tongue's personal and professional relationship is deeply embedded in the writing of her book. On the surface, *Helen Lewis: Shadows Behind the Dance* is a biography of a dance artist, and a history of dance. However, the book is much more. If the reader looks deeply and analytically, it is an example of a way to approach dance history in its broadest sense: a thick description. It is a history of individuals, institutions, cultural transformation; a way to credit the often un-credited work of so many in dance, through the naming of dancers; it is a collection of art, poetry, drawing, and writing by Lewis's colleagues and family, all examples of how dance informs and stimulates beyond itself. The book is a primary and secondary resource for research, and a model for developing and presenting a body of work about dance history. At the heart is dance as an art form.

The narrative in *Helen Lewis: The Shadows Behind the Dance* exposes the positive, creative way individuals can cross borders, local and international, and share and influence creativity in, through, and with each other, contributing to cultural richness. The contextual story is pertinent to today's conflicted world. The narrative also includes a view into the future through Tongue's crediting of all those who contributed to the creative process of Lewis's biography, which in itself has taken many years to come to completion. Each individual is a node and the nodes are connected in a multiplicity of ways, each with their own narrative. (2) There are many more narratives that can and will

emerge. At the heart of this collective creative activity is dance.

#### References:

1. See also 'For Helen, dance was life. Pure and simple.' Available at <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/2023/01/19/for-helen-dance-was-life-pure-and-simple/> See also 'For Helen, dance was life. Pure and simple.' Available at <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/2023/01/19/for-helen-dance-was-life-pure-and-simple/>
2. A sample dance node connection is a direct relationship of teacher and choreographer to dancer, a line to follow, linking

## Re-claim, Re-shape, Re-make

### Maddy Tongue

On April 1st Cambridge University celebrated the closing days of its annual festival. Bigger and better each year it has become a combination of the Cambridge Science Festival and the Festival of Ideas. Numerous events include talks in various university departments, walks, family science weekends, exhibitions and dance.

The dance event was curated by *Changing Perspectives on Performance*, an international research network looking at the practice of theatre, dance, film and performance that emerged during and after the Covid 19 pandemic, with an interest in artistic and academic practices that evolved through abrupt changes and differing conditions. Called *Performing Activism: Re-claim, Re-shape, Re-make*, the Cambridge day was a platform exploring embodied forms of protest and resistance with movement and the body as agents for social change. It was a collaborative performance project between dance scholar and choreographer Eva Aymami Rene and theatre maker and scholar Naz Yeni, and a wide range of performers gathered at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge for an exciting and ambitious day.

Eva and Naz welcomed the performers to the university and the day started with a workshop led by Eva, an experienced performer and academic. The large group of professional and community artists began to explore political ideas and identities that are communicated through the body. For some it was a first experience of having to adapt to work with strangers of various ages and abilities whilst also quickly responding to the movement demands, but what an exhilarating start to the day for everyone. This was followed by a rehearsal period allowing the various groups to gather in different spaces to rehearse and adapt their material ready for performance.

The public were admitted to the afternoon performance which started with Eva and her partner, Romaric Masson, dancing a duet with professional ease, exploring the need for close physical contact after the post-pandemic isolation. There were twelve items on

the past to the present, a narrative of international travel, a dancing treat with inspiring words, and a brief advertisement for something from Dublin, 2023: Rudolf Laban (Germany) > Milča Mayerová (Germany) > Helen Lewis (Czechoslovakia; Belfast, Northern Ireland) > Jane Mooney (Belfast Northern Ireland; England; California USA; now in Belfast) è You can see Jane Mooney dancing here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rs-KBtJZStA>

*Helen Lewis: The Shadows Behind the Dance* by Maddy Tongue, Belfast: The Irish Press, 2022. £28, ISBN: 978-1-8382018-9-0

the programme, including presentations from various groups interspersed with short dance films of protest from around the world concerned with climate change and man's relentless destruction of our world.

Of particular interest to Laban members were two items. The first, called *Waiting*, was presented by the Laban Creative Dance Collective from the east of England which grew from an exploration of 'shadow moves', the small unconscious movements that lead to larger intentional movements and feelings. The dancers observed and took on each others' shadows and meandered into improvised interpretation.

The second was *Reclaim: Our Chalk Streams* by The Movement Choir Hub LMCP - Hazel Francomb's group from Cambridge, together with a group led by Maggie Killingbeck from Hitchin, and a threesome composed of Janet Lunn, Catherine Butler and Susi Thornton came together to dance about the desecration of the Chalk Streams in the Hitchin area. I saw for myself the first tentative steps the Cambridge group took with Hazel as she explained, coaxed and encouraged them. There is a need to look beyond the surface of the dance, and gradually, as their bodies absorbed the movements, the dancers recognised that depth, and once the threshold was crossed the dance began to flow.

This Movement Choir Hub combined performance opened with a poem emphasising the pollution of the streams during which the dance began, as Hazel's piece with Cambridge Mature Movers depicted a healthy living flowing stream. Then Maggie's dancers from Hitchin added uncertainty and finally Janet, as a free water spirit, was destroyed by Susi and Cath before the whole cast walked slowly onstage to mourn the state of the water. One response "You danced the story we all need to hear!"

There is a plan to work further on this in early summer and film it for the Global Water Dance movement (see <https://globalwaterdances.org/>)

## In Conversation with Rene Sakula

### 'Dance a Spiral'

headquarters of the SS officers. It was a palatial building and the groups I taught from the camps were able to overcome their feelings about the purpose for which the Rundhaus had been used by almost re-creating themselves. Surprisingly, they did not dwell on and explore their seemingly hopeless experiences of the past, but presented images of a more hopeful future. Some of them lived to fulfil their dreams, others did not. At this time I had not heard of Laban, so when I did meet him I was very excited by his ideas, which seemed to reinforce my own instinctive feelings as to how movement education could be used in a variety of situations.

On my return to England from Germany I trained as a Secondary teacher and whilst at College in 1948 represented Britain at the 'Lingiad' (an early celebration of gymnastics with music) in Stockholm.

At my first post in Hackney, I was inspected by Ruth Foster, who talked about Laban and his work and encouraged me to go to Manchester for an interview and in 1949 I did. I remember rain, a small and rather dingy studio and meeting a man with a very perceptive gaze. It was far from a formal interview: my impression was that he was not just interested in Performance, but in the ability to make connections. Laban asked me to "Dance a spiral" and then to "Draw it on the blackboard"! This was an unfamiliar way of linking subjects at that time. One of his basic tenets was the linking of the Arts and for years I have been teaching Laban based classes, encouraging students to make these kinds of links. In training Surrey keep-fit teachers for a demonstration at the Albert Hall, I introduced the concept of a more creative approach to the work.

To give myself a firmer grounding, I embarked on a course of study at Goldsmith's College (Diploma in Education with special reference to children under 13) and subsequently completed a BA Hons with the Open University in Psychology, Education and the Arts, graduating in 1982.

Throughout my life I have been coming across people who have shed light upon Laban's principles of movement and dance in education, in industry, in theatre and in therapy. We were so lucky that Rudolf Laban came to England from Europe just prior to the second World War instead of going to America, where many of his artistic contemporaries settled. His influence has been enormous and continues to flourish.



I was especially privileged to have met Rudolf Laban in Manchester and to have attended many of his courses in London and one very special summer school at Dartington Hall, Devon, where I experienced the dynamism of Laban and Lisa Ullmann's teaching and a memorable evening in the "Barn": a music lecture by Imogen Holst (Gustav's daughter) and a solo danced by Geraldine Stephenson. It was in 1949 that I was interviewed by Laban for the early one year serving teachers course and, having been accepted, the Principal of the school where I taught felt it incumbent upon me to stay and complete my last year as a probationary teacher. Little did I realise that I was missing the chance of a lifetime! However, married and four children later, I was able in 1966 to do the one-year course at Addlestone, Surrey, where the Art of Movement studio had moved from Manchester. It was one of the happiest years of my life but it was only the start of a gradual unfolding of my understanding of Laban's theory.

Prior to these events, I had worked in day nurseries, and, at the same time, trained at the then LCC College of Physical Education in Chelsea, London, as a Recreative Leader in Further Education. This was wartime and I travelled for miles to teach classes in the blackout, sometimes with bombs falling around me. I thought nothing of it. There is no substitute for enthusiasm. I worked for many years in the southern counties until I joined a relief team to work with Refugees in Germany.

In 1945 I was sent to Belsen Concentration Camp, Germany. Apart from my other duties, I used movement for rehabilitation purposes. My assistant welfare worker, who was herself a refugee, said that she would always remember the movement sessions at the Rundhaus (Roundhouse), which had previously served as the

# Obituary: Rene Sakula, 1925 - 2023

David Sakula and family

Rene Sakula, to all who knew her, was an incredible force for life. She was a Laban devotee, helping to disseminate his work and knew many of the early Laban practitioners in the UK such as Geraldine Stephenson, Hettie Loman and Sally Archbutt.

Rene was born in 1925 in the East End of London. Her mother was from Poland, her father from Ukraine. She was the youngest of three children in a Jewish working-class family, but Rene always said that, despite the lack of money, she felt no lack of anything else. She enjoyed primary school and, as it was known then, central school. With the outbreak of war, Rene left school at fourteen and refused to be evacuated, so she endured the air raids, sleeping on the underground platforms.

Rene excelled at sport in her teenage years, especially netball and high jump, and she was a table tennis champion for the Maccabi's, a youth club. At 14, with no qualifications, Rene took office jobs. At 18, she decided to train as a nursery school teacher, much needed to help mothers who were working in munitions factories. While working as a nursery teacher, she trained as a Recreative Leader at the London County Council College of Physical Education in Chelsea, which enabled Rene to teach in LCC evening institutes.

When the war ended Rene volunteered for relief work at the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons camp with the Jewish Relief Unit from 1946 to 1948. This was a formative period of her life where, as well as distributing clothing, opening nursery schools and helping to 'normalise' people, she ran movement workshops with camp survivors in the Rundhaus, a palatial building in the grounds. Max Munday, one of her great-nephews, wrote his thesis "Utopianism, Memory and the Body, and the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp" (2018) focusing on Rene's dance work at Belsen – see: <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/622768/1/Max%20Munday%20dissertation%20with%20title%20page%20%282%29.pdf>

When she returned to England, Rene gained a place on a teacher training course for primary teachers. In 1949, while a PE teacher, Rene spotted an advert in the newspaper and travelled to Manchester to be

## New LUTSF Award Announcement:

### ***The Anna Carlisle Dancer in Training Award***

LUTSF (Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund) is proud and excited to announce that we are launching a new award for 2023. The Anna Carlisle Dancer in Training Award is offered on an annual basis to support a dancer in training, who is undertaking their studies in the UK. The award is named in honour of our outgoing Chair Anna Carlisle who has made an incredible contribution to the work of the Fund over recent years.

Applications for 2023/2024 will be open from 1st until 30th June 2023.

The award period will be September 2023 - September 2024.

For more information and to apply, please visit our website and read the FAQs via this link: <https://lutsf.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=cc5e9ca380df5c049ebad41e&id=23da54c76e&e=0ce229edf6>

## Subscribers' Classes

### ***Adult Movement and Dance in Belfast***

Contact: **Brenda McKee**  
Email: [brendamckee@btinternet.com](mailto:brendamckee@btinternet.com)

### ***Weekly Drop in Classes***

Led by **Viv Bridson**  
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  
Contact: [danceprojects@btinternet.com](mailto:danceprojects@btinternet.com)

### ***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](mailto:jennyfrankel.laban@gmail.com)

### ***Online and in person classes from Alexandra Baybutt***



#### **Expanded practices for musicians**

We are holding some online workshops on Sundays in the lead up to our longer workshop. All welcome, not only musicians – we have some past students from the Laban/Bartenieff programme I teach in the Netherlands join us to explore voice <https://playasyouare.weebly.com/>

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/>



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

***One to one bespoke movement coaching*** (<https://alexandrabaybutt.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7af725bbcc79827225a22e6a9&id=5959043b6e&e=0283ccaf58>) and research continues: clients see me online and in person for a range of questions and interests.

***Zoom sessions with Anneliese Monika Koch***

***Expressive Dance and Improvisation with Elements of Modern Laban Practice***

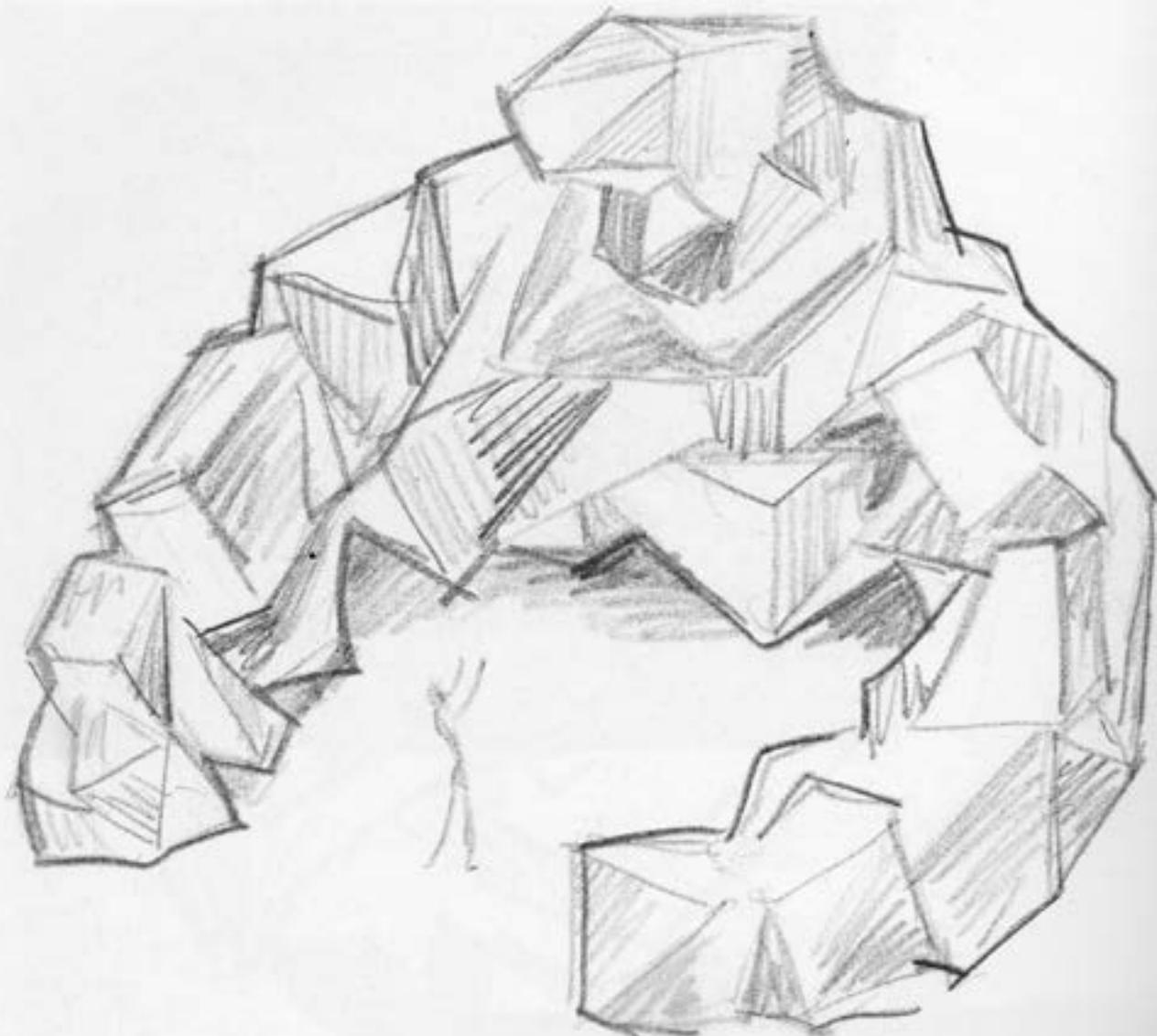
Online - Mondays 6pm to 7:15pm (GMT)

"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](mailto:movementatelier@gmail.com)



We must remember that the form of a movement is not one line only; it is not an arabesque or a curve, and also not a single broken or curved surface as we may see on a crystallized mineral, but a cataract of forms, as if a heap of jewels or precious stones had been poured out vehemently, glistening, jumping, breaking. And more than this: it is as if the single forms would grow and shrink, swallow each other or give birth to new ones, changing their shape in a continuous transformation.

In trying to catch the principal directions and curves of such a cataract, we are able to come nearer to grasping its general form and its structural meaning. Connecting qualities emanate from the understanding of the structural value which lead to the understanding of the expressive value, and finally to awareness of the language of movement and dance.