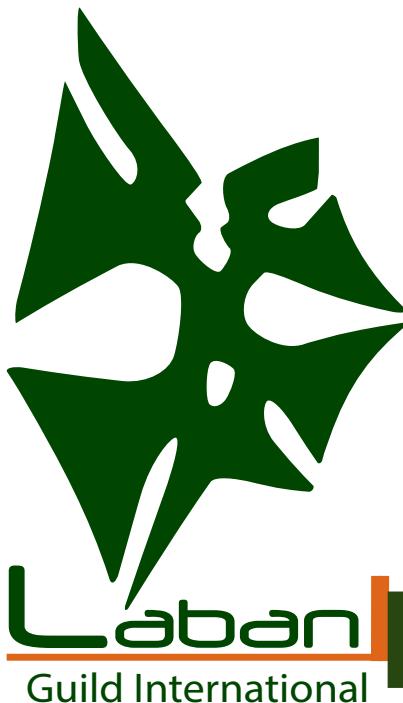


# *Movement, Dance & Drama*





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### Front Cover Image:

Keisha Grant, Artistic Director of Keneish Dance - 'Balance - a cellular dance show'  
Photo by Chris Nash

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## Editor's Provocation

Clare Lidbury

The time has come to consider what is the purpose of this magazine. When I began editing *Movement, Dance and Drama* in 2010 members submitted plenty of material – for example, analyses of their teaching, lesson plans or reviews of productions - the AGMs were reported on, and Laban Lectures printed in full, with each of the three editions per year running to several pages. When the Laban Guild reorganised itself as Laban Guild International (2021), the decision was made to move from three editions to six editions per year with the idea that the magazine would take a newsletter format with subscribers contributing material. The magazine has since had six issues per year but, it must be noted, contributions from subscribers have virtually ceased; recent editions have been bulked out by re-publishing articles from previous magazines.

Now, in the UK, Laban's work plays little part in teacher training, there is much less Laban-based work being taught in schools and colleges, and few, if any, choreographers are producing work deriving from Laban's theories. Part of my role as editor is to invite practitioners/academics to contribute to the magazine but, given the current [lack of] place of Laban's work in the dance field, whom to invite? The one area where Laban's work is still flourishing is in drama – as evidenced in the two online forums the LGI have run in which the majority of the speakers (mostly international) have presented work on their theatre practice; these forums have been reported fully in the magazines.

What is the way forward? Worst case scenario, with so little material to publish, is to admit defeat and cease publication of the magazine with perhaps a dedicated

space on the website given over to reports of Laban-related activities. Less drastic would be to revert to three editions per year in the hope that these would be more new material, or to move to one edition per year as a review. Under our constitution none of these scenarios can happen without consulting you, our subscribers.

Now is your chance. If you want the magazine to continue, we need material from you that you think others might want to read. Perhaps you could review how you have used your Laban training in your work or reflect on how and why you have moved on from Laban's thinking? You could reminisce about your Laban training, consider who was your most influential Laban teacher, or discuss your practice. If you have experience of Laban's work in community dance or dance therapy, please share this with the LGI subscribers, or if anyone is using Labanotation in any context it would be good to hear from you too. If you know of anyone doing Laban-related work let me know so that I can approach them about writing something for the magazine. Don't let your lack of writing experience hold you back in sending in material - another part of my role as editor is to shape and refine submissions into the house style.

The magazine cannot continue in its current format without some input from subscribers. You can send your writing or photographs or any ideas for what you would like to see in the magazine directly to me [c.lidbury1@gmail.com](mailto:c.lidbury1@gmail.com) Now is the time to take the plunge and contribute something.

## The Dance Drama Centenary Project

Darren Royston

As part of the Midsummer Dance Drama Festival at Sanquhar, Scotland, I will be presenting a Dance Drama Day, culminating with a performance in the open-air amphitheatre at the Crawick Multiverse. This will bring together members of Nonsuch History and Dance International Summer Course and some performers being supported by Laban Guild International which will be reported in the next magazine. The focus will be on dance drama works staged by Rudolf Laban in 1923/1924, which are part of the series of centenary projects I am currently researching. Ideas for this ongoing practical research project were first explored at the UNESCO World Dance Congress in Athens last summer (2023), where we began with a workshop on how Laban's interpretation of the Platonic Solids could be used to create dramatic movement and dance.

By using the platonic solids as scaffoldings to create independent movement sequences, we explored

connections to the ancient concept of Physical Elements: Fire, Earth, Air, Water. Plato had proposed in *The Timaeus* the idea that matter was created by certain crystal shapes, for example the element of fire was considered as being made from tetrahedron shaped matter; the cube was used to consider the concept of Earth being stable and fixed; movement in the octahedron scaffold generated suspension of the Air element; and the fluidity of Water was generated by moving towards vectors which could be imagined as creating an icosahedron scaffold.

### The Prologue: *Prometheus* (1923)

One of Laban's early dance dramas was based on the ancient Greek drama by Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*. The mythical story is about how the Titan, called Prometheus, first stole fire from the Olympian gods and gave this power to Humanity. From this primitive taming of Fire would come new technologies,

methods of external communication systems, producing civilisations that would interrelate and become more complex. The Olympian gods feared that skills such as these would make humanity more like the gods themselves, and for this Prometheus is punished by Zeus, the King of Olympian gods. His punishment is to be bound to a rock. He is prevented from moving. Humanity has henceforth continued to adapt this use of fire (now developed into the form of electrical, digital and other energy sources). As an evolving species, humanity continues to develop such technological skills, advancing all the time through history. There may be some dangerous consequences when the fire becomes uncontrollable... when technology advances so fast that it takes over our lives. This theme of the danger of technological advancement has been chosen for the new version of *Prometheus* for the centenary dance drama this summer. Can Humanity really control Artificial Intelligence?

For our preparative dance drama workshop in Athens in 2023, we used the Platonic Solid analysis of movement types to find a physical language for each main character in the *dramatis personae*. Moving with each particular crystal shape in mind could generate movement that would communicate this quality of the element in appearance and behaviour.

The following dance drama scenario developed as *Prometheus* (2023):

Scene 1: Prometheus has been bound to the rock, as his punishment for giving humanity the gift of fire. The rock implies the shape of Earth, being the Cube. Earth Mover performers created movement fixed in cube-like surfaces, fixing body positions within the six faces made by this scaffold.

Scene 2: Hephaestus is the Olympian God of Fire trapped by Prometheus. Fire movers are trapped within the Cube-like scaffold. The erratic movements of these Fire performers, firing off to the four vertices, along the six sides of the imagined pyramid shape, are contained within the grids produced by cube-like shapes of the Earth movers.

Scene 3: The Sea God Oceanus arrives to Prometheus to ask for the release of Fire. Creatures of Oceanus move either in the shape of the element Air (suspended in the dimensional cross) or Water (flowing around the peripheral 12-points of the icosahedron). Their dramatic purpose was to persuade Prometheus to change his fixed bound position, and free the Fire within.

Scene 4: Prometheus releases the Fire. The Earth Movers transform by moving from Bound to Free motion, using movements towards the opposing points of the diagonal scale within the cube to activate the static shapes of their cube-faces. The rhythm within the cube shape changes.

Scene 5: Fire is released as the performers no longer recognise the rigid eight points of the cube scaffolding surrounding them, and now project their gestures into

space, activating angles of the tetrahedron scaffolding. Tilting and turning they have none of the fixed axis that the cube had given them, rather moving themselves in a random sequence to embody different angles in the pyramid shape. The Fire movers were encouraged to extend their movements to the superzones of their kinespheres, reaching beyond themselves, and higher into the space above and deeper into the space below.

A combined finale was then created. Hermes – the mercurial messenger god – communicates this story to the Olympian gods. The performers make movement sequences that alternate between all Platonic crystal shapes: randomly selecting one of the four vertices of tetrahedron, being suspended by the six vertices of octahedron, before submitting to the constant flux between the eight vertices of the swinging diagonals of the cube, and then flowing around the peripheral girdles made by the twelve vertices of the icosahedron.

From this Space Harmony training, certain dramatic characters could be established. The characters remain in an elemental state, literally, as performers were only considering the abstract shapes they made with their limbs and how to maintain these spatial sequences when coming into the same performing space as other groups with different imagined scaffoldings.

#### ***Agamemnon* (1924)**

In 1924, Laban used another work of the ancient Greek dramatist Aeschylus to inspire a dance drama creation. This was the story of Agamemnon, the King of Mycenae, who had commanded the Achaeans during the Trojan War. The Trojan war was being fought because Helen, the wife of Agamemnon's brother Menealus, had been abducted by Paris, son of Priam. King Agamemnon agreed to fight on behalf of his brother. Agamemnon's wife was Clytemnestra, and their first daughter was Iphigenia. When Agamemnon's fleet was delayed going to war by unfavourable winds, the priest and prophet of Apollo asks Agamemnon to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, which he duly did. Clytemnestra resented his action, regarding this as a murder of their daughter. While Agamemnon was at war, Clytemnestra took a lover, Aegisthus, and they plotted to murder the king if he returned alive from the war. These events happened before the drama begins. The main story of the dance drama is the murder of Agamemnon: the story begins when the Trojan war ends and Agamemnon returns home. This is a family drama, focused on the theme of human revenge, and depicting many murders of many characters during the play.

#### **Archival material: the Synopsis**

In the archive of the Brotherton Library at Leeds University there is a synopsis of *Agamemnon Tod*, which is believed to have been used by Laban to create the dance drama with the Hamburg Movement Choir in 1924. The front page of this typed up document credits Jean Georges Noverre (1727-1810) as the author of the synopsis and the text is a translation into German of the synopsis used by Noverre to create his own version, which he categorised as a pantomime ballet in the serious style. Noverre's ballet, called *Agamemnon*

*Vengé*, was first performed in Vienna in 1771. It is a rendition of the entire trilogy of *The Oresteia* by Aeschylus into one ballet, not just the first play in the trilogy which shares the title *Agamemnon*. The ballet includes all the characters of the trilogy, appearing with supporting cast of priests, children, officers and slaves.

This ballet synopsis begins with a list of all the dramatic characters, each person having familial relationships, and the synopsis that follows details the narrative between these characters, explaining how they appear on stage and with some suggestion as to what they would think and feel in each scene. The ballet is in five acts, and within each act there are many numbered scenes, which are signalled when a new character enters, or a new action occurs in the scene. There is no script as such, nor spoken word, nor notation, nor diagrams, nor suggestion of music. The document implies that the story is only to be told through physical action, and for this reason I want to begin by considering the influence of Noverre and the concept of *ballet d'action* on Laban's early experiments in dance drama. This analysis will help us to consider what is important to a dancer who intends to portray a dramatic character.

For the exploration at the 2024 Midsummer Dance Drama festival, we will consider the way that dramatic character can be portrayed through dance and choreographed movement. This will develop the elemental approach used for *Prometheus* into a consideration of movement recognisable in more human form. Qualities of the movement occur in each character and these change when the situation between other characters alters. Moving bodies will represent the named characters in the story, that will transform their movement as the plot develops, following the scenic structure of the synopsis. The notion of the Protagonist (the first actor) and the Antagonist (the force against the first actor) is the dialectic structure that produces tragic drama based on human stories of revenge. In essence, drama is always produced when there is a moment of tension or struggle with another human being, that is, when the protagonist interacts with the antagonist, and vice versa.

#### **Noverre's theoretical model for Laban's Dance Dramas**

As a dancer, prolific choreographer and theorist on dance, Noverre certainly contributed to developments in how dance was performed in his time, and in particular how dance in theatre and opera could be considered as being dramatic, rather than as something unrelated to the story that was being told in words or song. Although the term "dance drama" is not used by Noverre, it seems the notion he termed as *ballet d'action* gives certain suggested rules that Laban also followed in his creative process. These suggestions may be used now in our endeavour to create something more than a simple "divertissement" but a performance that is dynamic with dramatic value.

#### **Ballet d'action: Action in Dance Drama**

Laban treasured his own copy of Noverre's *Lettres sur*

*la danse*, which was the 1803 revised edition. This was a special present from his second wife, Maja Lederer. However, in addition to any sentimental value he may have attached to this book, Laban appears to have revered what was written within these letters. Laban, in 1920, lists the book as recommended reading to his students. He came into contact with this pivotal dance theoretical writing when he was a student in Paris. Noverre had written a collection of fifteen letters in 1760 to consider different criticisms of dance and to explain his own ballet compositions. From these French writings Laban had been introduced to the Feuillet-Beauchamp dance notation system, published in 1700. Indeed, the word "choregraphe" in these letters is used to propose how movements can be recorded in a notation system alongside music. While Noverre sees the value of being analytical, he also warns of performances becoming rigid by notation, with creativity of the dance master being stifled, unless care is taken to stay imaginative.

Letter Thirteen includes Noverre's criticism of the dance history written by Louis de Cahusac (1700-1759) entitled simply *La Danse*, published in 1754. Noverre believed that Cahusac did not consider how dancing had changed historically from the point of view of the dancer physically performing the material. Although Noverre praises the historical development of the Feuillet-Beauchamp system so that dance can now duly be given detailed explanation for instruction (and appears complete with symbols in the 1751-72 *Encyclopédie* by Diderot and D'Alembert), he tells his reader to be cautious: a maker of dances must not simply focus on creating steps to fit the music alone.

I repeat, Sir, and I maintain it, that nothing is more pernicious than a system  
which limits our ideas, or which does not permit us to have any, unless one  
is able to protect oneself from the danger in giving way to them. Enthusiasm,  
taste, imagination, knowledge – these are preferable to choreography [*meaning*  
*the writing of steps in notation, ed.*]. These, Sir,  
are what inspire a profusion  
of novel steps, figures, pictures and attitudes.  
These are the inexhaustible  
sources of the immense variety which  
distinguishes the true artist from the  
recorder of dances.

Noverre's writings offered Laban historical ideas to create new ways of working, and in turn, Laban's interpretations of Noverre's ideas in 1924 will be used to inspire our centenary project.

Like Laban, Noverre also had a father in the army who expected his son would pursue a military career. Noverre too travelled between countries to experience different interpretations of dance and theatre, and although 140 years were between them, Noverre's aesthetic ideas of *ballet d'action* were still a form of inspiration for Laban to find power in the performance of dance as a dramatic art. As John Hodgson surmises from reading the letters in the archives

Laban could warm to the attack on artificiality and frivolity of the dance...

He [Noverre] wanted a closer relationship between movement, music, action and design, leading to a ballet which had an overall shape and structure. He pleads that ballets should be an integrated part of any stage presentation, actively developing the theme and not regarded as mere divertissements showing clever physical skill. True, physical skill was important for Noverre but he maintained that without feeling and expression, the dance would not move the human spirit. The choreography of the new ballet should focus more on character and situation.

### Ballet as “dance with drama” for Noverre

The fact was that Noverre had been greatly influenced by the renowned classical actor, David Garrick, while he had been in England. Once Noverre had taken these ideas of dramatic dance and produced narrative ballets, Garrick would give Noverre the epithet “the Shakespeare of Dance.” Before staging his first dance drama, Laban had also been connected to classical theatre, working as choreographer of incidental dance scenes of Shakespeare’s plays *The Winter’s Tale* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at Hamburg City Theatre. Dancers from Laban’s company performed as dancers in these productions, alongside professional classical actors. In 1922, Laban created *Faust’s Erlösung* (Faust’s Release) working with the city speech choir, performed on the huge arena stage of Ernst Merke Halle. Laban had real experience of creating dance scenes linking to the narrative and the spoken drama of the characters, while adding another level with themes explored through the art of movement alone. He was focused on the relationship between movement, sound and word.

Laban’s detailed synopsis, taken from Noverre’s version and typed for the preparation of the dance drama *Agamemnon Tod*, seems at first long and complicated, as it details every single element that must be created in action. Once the action is performed on stage in real time however, the execution should be rapid, as each new character brings a new dynamic to the scene that moves the action forward, with new reactions, interactions, as situations are resolved, and further tensions are created.

Noverre in his letters supports the idea that themes can be embellished, additions made to plots, or historical situations adapted, to give more power in the new rendition. The work should be created for the spectator to understand and to feel the emotions of the drama and the plot of his Agamemnon ballet makes many additions and changes to the Aeschylus trilogy. In particular, the drama that occurs offstage in the original Aeschylus play as “obscene” - such as the main murder of the King - is now included in the action of the synopsis to be presented onstage. Every

murder is given detailed action to be followed by the performers, acting this out in full on the stage. There is also a discussion of daggers, fights and deaths in Noverre’s final letter, which seems particularly relevant considering that the dance drama includes many other murders in addition to that of the King named in the title.

Writing in 1961, the choreographer Agnes de Mille (1905-1993) called Noverre the “grandfather of the ballet” because “he instituted reforms that have had their full flowering only in our time”. She links these reforms to the concept of “dramatic reason.” de Mille strove to put dramatic reason in her own choreography, particularly when she choreographed the dream ballet sequence in the Broadway musical *Oklahoma!* (1943). Instead of the ballet being simply an incidental balletic interlude, as was the fashion of Broadway shows at the time, her choreography provided key insights into the heroine’s emotional troubles, showing the psychology of the characters through their movement and dance.

de Mille’s offers an analysis of Noverre’s prime concerns for *ballet d’action* which can be read as a useful summary for dance drama, being in pursuit of the same “dramatic reason,” stating that to achieve a unified dramatic theme, the choreography should have:

Unity of design, a logical and dramatic plot.

The elimination of everything unnecessary to the central theme.

The elimination of star turns or solos unnecessary to the plot.

Better and less old-fashioned music. A quicker and more dynamic pace

Simple, clear pantomime.

New and lovely combinations of steps.

Total reform in costume.

Laban did choreograph a danced interlude-for music drama in 1921 when he staged the Bacchanale of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* at National Theatre in Mannheim. Later in 1930, he created the extended Paris version of this dance scene (assisted by Kurt Jooss) for the Bayreuth Festival, working under the direction of Siegfried Wagner (1869-1930) son of composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883). It is a wild ecstatic dance, which conveys the main story of the opera. Although no visual references to the shorter 1921 version have been discovered, I imagine that the earlier version would have followed a similar dance-drama approach of the 1930 version. Existing footage of this version shows dancers in groups sharing similar movement qualities yet without precise fixed body positions usual in a *corps de ballet*; leaders are evident in certain groups directing the travelling movement through the space; solos are created from within the groups with dramatic representation of characters from the story, such as the male troubadours (1:05, time codes refer to the black and white version, see note 9) and the Three Graces

as the servants of Venus (1:42). The choreutic design between dancers is evident throughout, for example with the Venus figure dancing with the Three Graces (3:10), and the way groups are ordered in dimensional gradients when they form a tableau. There is a very clear masculine/feminine divide of the movement when the male/female characters are presented on stage together (4:10) and bodies are lifted by the chorus (5:00). Movement is used to express very extreme and heightened passions. Such elements in this Bacchanale can easily be related to types of action listed in the synopsis of *Agamemnon Tod*.

In 1924, Laban did not present *Agamemnon* as an interlude, but as a full-length work, showing dance drama as an art form that could be given recognition as a complete work, standing alone from the original source of Greek tragedy or Noverre's pantomime ballet. Noverre, in 1760, was addressing the need of reforms in codified ballet and proposing the power of pantomime. By 1920, Laban was considering other ways of using movement and identified the chorus element in Greek Drama as an important element to consider in storytelling through dance. This coincides with Laban's development of group movement activities as part of communal festivals in the 1920s, subsequently leading to the concept of the "movement choir." Laban was "seeking a dance drama which did not use the formal techniques of mime and classical ballet." The mimetic ballistic ideas of Noverre were clearly developed when Laban interpreted them in 1924 using his "studies of space patterns and harmonies."

Next month, during the Nonsuch History and Dance Summer Course, the synopsis of *Agamemnon Tod* will be used to inspire a dance drama at the amphitheatre at the Crawick Multiverse in Scotland. While following the rules set down by Noverre, the movement will create space patterns and harmonies following the Laban approach to interpret the 1924 synopsis. I will report back on how we create "murder in movement" in the next magazine.

*Darren Royston has worked as dance and movement consultant for several theatre companies including the Old Vic, National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal Opera and Opera North. As associate tutor in Dance, Movement and Choreography at RADA, he published his textbook Dramatic Dance: An*

*Actor's Approach to Dance as a Dramatic Art (London: Bloomsbury, 2014). 2024 projects include: The Lord Chamberlain's Men production of Shakespeare's Hamlet (UK national tour and performing at Elsinore Castle in Denmark; The Bangkok Youth Opera production of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas in Bangkok; and Nonsuch History and Dance workshop production of Laban's Death of Agamemnon (1924-2024 anniversary project) in Sanquhar, Scotland.*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Rudolf von Laban, *Die Welt des Tänzers* (Stuttgart: Walter Seifert, 1920).

<sup>2</sup> Jean Georges Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets* (1760) translated by Cyril W. Beaumont, from the 1803 St Petersburg edition (1930), republished (London: Dance Books, 2004), 142. Noverre was born on 29th April 1727, and his birthday is now observed as UNESCO International Dance Day all around the world.

<sup>3</sup> John Hodgson, *Mastering Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 62-63.

<sup>4</sup> Beaumont, vii – viii.

<sup>5</sup> Valerie Preston-Dunlop, Rudolf Laban, *Man of Theatre* (London: Dance Books, 2013), 42.

<sup>6</sup> Agnes De Mille, *The Book of the Dance* (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1961), 96.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 96

<sup>8</sup> The opera opens, after the overture, with this scene: a troubadour called Tannhäuser has journeyed to Venusberg, the palace of the goddess of Love, Venus. Here he wishes to satiate his carnal desires. After this orgiastic scene, Tannhäuser wishes to return home where he has a fiancée waiting for him, the Princess Elisabeth. Following the dancing, he finds he is a captive of Venus. After this scene the drama is told through singing. Using his troubadour songs to serenade Venus, Tannhäuser convinces Venus to release him. Act One ends with him being freed to return home. However, this opening dance scene remains in his memory throughout the following acts of the opera when he is away from Venusberg, and he cannot forget the immoral underworld he enjoyed through the bacchanal dance. The memory of this dance scene could be said to propel the narrative of the entire opera.

<sup>9</sup> Recently remastered film footage of Rudolf Laban's choreography for the Tannhäuser Bacchanale which he re-staged in 1930 is available at

<https://youtu.be/t-mUbkmpcYU?si=0NvJE8Zj.OKcejF9> [original black & white film footage] and

<https://youtu.be/FnnpsiL3aQ4?si=oSSRiXHjLO8MGULO> [colourised version with orchestral music superimposed as audio background]

<sup>10</sup> Sam Thornton, *Laban's Theory of Movement: A New Perspective* (Boston: Plays, 1971), 4.

## SHREW: Protagonist/Antagonist in Shakespeare

*Kelly Wilson*

Using selected scenes from William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, Adaptivity Theatre Company's October 2024 production of *Shrew* utilises Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed to examine the power dynamics between men and women and its effect on their relationships, exploring a variety of issues from courtship to consent.

The Theatre of the Oppressed is a forum designed to promote social change, drawing on Brechtian theatre

conventions combined with the structure of ancient Greek plays. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Boal sought to create a less passive form of theatre in which the audience would go beyond merely feeling sympathy for the characters, but also actively invest in the outcome of the performance. He wanted to create a theatrical forum that was educational, without becoming didactic; an experience which taught people to actively deal with oppression in their own lives and start a conversation about how to create change.

To paraphrase Boal's own words, he wanted to take the traditional 'monologue' of theatre and turn it into a 'dialogue'. Even though the narrative is fiction, the audience learns much from the enactment because the fiction simulates real-life situations, problems, and solutions.

The performance stimulates the practice of resistance to oppression in reality and offers a safe space for practicing making change.

'Forum Theatre' works from rehearsal improvisation to create a scene of a specific oppression. Using the Greek terms 'protagonist' and 'antagonist', Forum Theatre seeks to show a person (the protagonist) who is trying to deal with an oppression and failing because of the resistance of one or more obstacles (the antagonists). The actors in the ensemble perform a play with a scripted core, in which an oppression relevant to the audience is performed. After reaching the scripted conclusion, in which the oppressed character(s) fail to overcome their oppression, the joker (difficultator) explains to the audience (spect-actors) that the scene will be repeated, guided by suggestions that the audience provides to assist the protagonist(s) to overcome their oppression. The actor playing the protagonist will then stand to the side (but remain ready to give suggestions to the spect-actor) and the spect-actor is invited forward to show their solution of the moment, prompting the actors to begin the scene again. This process can continue until all suggested interventions from spect-actors have been performed, then the joker leads the audience in a discussion of the proposed solutions, and perhaps offers even more solutions. Boal clarifies that this practice is not

intended to show the correct path, but rather to discover all possible paths to overcome oppression which may be further examined.

One of the additional challenges of this production will involve the incorporation of original music, lyrics and movement, designed to provide the choral odes present in ancient Greek theatre. These musical choral odes will allow the protagonists to express their inner thoughts and feelings to the audience; the cast and music composer will soon meet to finalise the musical component of the production. When rehearsals begin in September, the last components of movement and improvisation can be incorporated into the performance.

Several small audiences will be invited to attend final rehearsals before the public performances to allow the ensemble opportunities to practice the spontaneous improvisational aspect of the production with time to polish everything before the performances in the theatre.

Watch this space! As spect-actor you too can play a part in Forum Theatre.

*Kelly Wilson, originally from the western United States, worked as a teacher and artistic director, and completed an MA in Theatre in 1999. Kelly was introduced to the Laban Approach while studying for the MA Text and Performance at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London; her MA Thesis considered the use of Laban-based approaches as part of theatre rehearsal and performance practice. Adaptivity Theatre Company is based in Australia. See <https://www.adaptivitytheatrecompany.com>*

## International Day of Dance

*Sara Houston*

As a guest of the Balettakademien Stockholm, I spoke at a rich event to celebrate International Day of Dance. First, the day before, I ran a workshop on soft skills in dance at the Balettakademien. It was aimed at dance artists who lead community groups and the content stemmed from the work I completed with the Empowering Dance project. Empowering Dance was a three-year Erasmus+ funded project that created an online guidebook to help dance artists identify and articulate their soft skills – skills such as taking care of others, empathy, resilience, understanding and appreciating differences, adaptability and flexibility. During the half day workshop we moved and discussed our soft skills in relation to our diverse dance practices and experiences.

On International Day of Dance, 29<sup>th</sup> April, a sold-out event at the State

Theatre was organised by the Balettakademien and the Karolinska Institute. It celebrated in particular the dance group for people with Parkinson's set up by Åsa Åström for Balettakademien's Dance for Health programme. The group performed and there were two talks, one by me



Dance for Parkinson group performing at the celebration  
Photo: Sara Houston

on the international dance for Parkinson's scene and one by Dr. Hanna Poikonen on the cultural brain and her research into the relationship between dance and our brains. The day finished with a tap and double bass improvisation duo who got us all tapping to Duke Ellington.

My visit to Sweden was most enjoyable and it allowed me to reflect on why we celebrate an International Day of Dance. One of the important elements of the day is to experience how others around the world celebrate through bodily movement and for me, this was coupled with meeting a number of interesting dance artists, researchers and people who love to dance who give new perspectives and knowledge on the art form. Whilst many of us tune in to the morning ballet class and rehearsals of the elite ballet companies around the world, there is something extremely special about travelling to another place to share in a joy of dancing, something that we can share together even without the same language.

*Sara Houston is Professor of Dance and Community Engagement at University of Roehampton.*



**13 & 14 JULY 2024**

**Weekend includes:**

- One and half days of tuition accessing movement led by national experts in Laban Movement and Dance.
- Lead tutor Cathy Washbrooke, PhD in site specific dance.
- Access to a variety of Laban sessions your programme your choice.
- Pre-weekend information.
- Light lunch and refreshments during both days.
- Access to discounted hotel accommodation.

## IMMERSE YOURSELF AT OUR LABAN DANCE WEEKEND WITH LABAN DANCE FITNESS

A weekend of dance and movement in Leicester, England. Ideal for those who want to

- experience the joy of Laban Dance
- explore Laban's analysis from body awareness to advance Laban, such as axis and equator scales..
- expand your Laban experience and skills

### How do the programme choices stack up?

#### Example choices

##### **Saturday Session 1 - 2.5 hrs**

Opt 1 - Cathy Washbrooke - Bringing her own perspective Cathy will explore with you the creative development of spatial forms.

Opt 2 - Irene Saunders - Irene will help you use Laban's accents and tensions to add dynamic quality to your classwork.

##### **Session 2 - 1.5 hrs**

Opt 1 Sheila Bryan - A practical session exploring the spatial rings on the Icosahedron with a focus on creative choreography.

Opt 2 Lisa Bigley - Using body flow to develop physical objectives of muscular strength and endurance and flexibility in your classes.

##### **Session 3 - 1 hr**

Opt 1 Cathy Washbrooke - Get creative with Cathy! A session to indulge and dance with Laban.

Opt 2 Jan Shapley - Using diagonals to promote physical objective of flexibility in a mainstream class.

##### **Sunday Session 4 - 3 hrs**

Opt 1 Cathy Washbrooke - Creative session, working together with Laban's axis and complementary equator scales.

Opt 2 Lisa Bigley - A movement study using effort actions with a focus on choreography for classwork.

## WEEKEND PRICE JUST £100 DAY RATE AVAILABLE

If booked before 14 June 2024

Book your space by speaking to our dedicated team. Booking form and detailed programme available on request.

**Contact Email:**  
[kfatraining@emduk.org](mailto:kfatraining@emduk.org)

**Call Lynne on:**  
07946 609493

#### What is Laban Dance Fitness?

Keep Fit Association have promoted Laban Dance Fitness since 1956. Based on Rudolf Laban's Analysis of Movement. We combine with physical objectives to deliver holistic wellbeing classes in the community. Laban was a teacher and choreographer acknowledged as the father of modern dance theory who believed that movement was for all, and that dance should give joy to people through moving together.

Our weekend is ideal for those who want to hone teaching skills for Laban community based dance classes or for those who just want to dance and enlighten the soul!

**CIMSPA**  
Education Partner

QUALITY ASSURED  
ENHANCING ★★

# Midsummer Dance Drama Festival - Sanquhar, Scotland 20-24 June 2024

LABAN GUILD INTERNATIONAL is supporting the appearance of Balance & Monika Koch at this festival  
<https://www.crawickmultiverse.co.uk/our-events/summer-solstice-2/>

Contact: Darren Royston, Artistic Director, NONSUCH HISTORY & DANCE (+44 7702 975 988)

Events include:

THURSDAY 20th June 2024

1pm – 2pm SUMMER SOLSTICE SHOW  
4pm – 5pm FAMILY DANCE WORKSHOP by  
BALANCE (Birmingham, UK)  
7.45pm DANCE PERFORMANCE by BALANCE

FRIDAY 21st June 2024

9.30am – 10.45am EXPRESSIVE DANCE  
WORKSHOP by Monika Koch (Austria)

SATURDAY 22nd June 2024

7.45pm OPERA LABAN PERFORMANCE by Denise Telles Hostra (Brazil)

SUNDAY 23rd June 2024

1pm – 2pm DANCE DRAMA PERFORMANCE  
Laban Centenary Dance Drama project (Prometheus / Agamemnon)

KENEISH DANCE (Birmingham, UK): BALANCE – a cellular dance show

How do your cells regenerate themselves in your body?...



Come see a dance show to learn more!  
This is a ground-breaking collaboration between science and art.

Contemporary dance choreographer Keisha Grant (graduate TRINITY LABAN) has been working alongside Professor Darius Koester, at Warwick

University, with PhD Biology students and professional dancers. Get ready to be captivated by the elegance of cellular dance, conveying a powerful message of healing.

The performance will be presented by five young professional dancers.

<https://www.keneishdance.com/about/>

OPERA LABAN: Denise Telles Hostra (Brazil)  
Denise trained in the art of movement, using Rudolf Laban's interpretation of the architecture of the body. Come see harmony between dance and song, and become immersed with the music of Brazil for an hour-long show.

VIS A VIS TANZTHEATER: Monika Koch (Austria)



UPS AND DOWNS: Expressive Dance and Improvisation Workshop

Using ideas from the European Dance Tradition, rooted in the work of Rudolf Laban. This introduction will include Elements of Movement meditation and focused breath work.

Anneliese Monika Koch is a graduate of TRINITY LABAN, Moscow School of Dramatic Art, Hilde Holger School of Modern European Dance, Bremen University, and has been professor at TRINITY LABAN and Vienna University.

## Creative Dance and Movement in Groupwork

*Helen Lewis*

Article:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1053825920968587>

Book:

<https://rb.gy/69aevc>

## Subscribers' Classes



### **Weekly Drop in Classes**

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.danceandtheatreprojects.net](http://www.danceandtheatreprojects.net)

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)

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

Contact: **Brenda McKee**

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

### **West Dorset Laban Creative Dance Classes**

Move, Dance and have fun.

Wednesday afternoons 2:00 - 4:00pm

£15 per session

Started 20th September 2023

Salway Ash Village Hall, Bridport DT6 5QS

Contact: Wendy Hermelin

Email: [mail@wendyhermelin.co.uk](mailto:mail@wendyhermelin.co.uk)

Phone: 07813 546644

### **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.

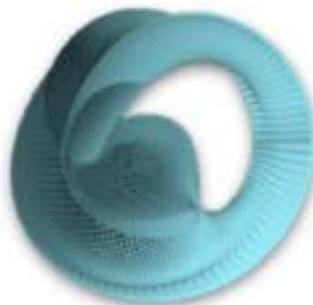
First session free. Then £5 per week on Zoom.

Contact: [movementatelier@gmail.com](mailto:movementatelier@gmail.com)



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization





# LABAN/BARTENIEFF + SOMATIC STUDIES INTERNATIONAL™ (LSSI)

Founded by Janet Kaylo

## Certification Programme in Movement Analysis and Somatic Practice

NEW START DATE:  
July 2025  
Hebden Bridge, UK

### Programme summary

- 500-hour immersive certification programme
- Post-graduate Somatic Practitioner and Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analyst training
- Builds skills for new career path as movement analyst and somatic practitioner; while enhancing current professional work in dance training and performance, dance movement psychotherapy, acting, yoga, Pilates, and other disciplines
- Hands-on practice in somatic movement therapy and education
- Fast-track registration with the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association (ISMETA)

*"The LSSI program gave me the opportunity to be deeply immersed in process, to awaken my personal experience in movement and to develop greater awareness of the movement experience of others. I discovered how working with depth and new perceptual awareness could lead me into further development as a mover, teacher, and person."*

Jasmina Zagrajski Vukelić CMA-SP



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



For more information and application

[www.labaninternational.org](http://www.labaninternational.org)  
[info@labaninternational.org](mailto:info@labaninternational.org)