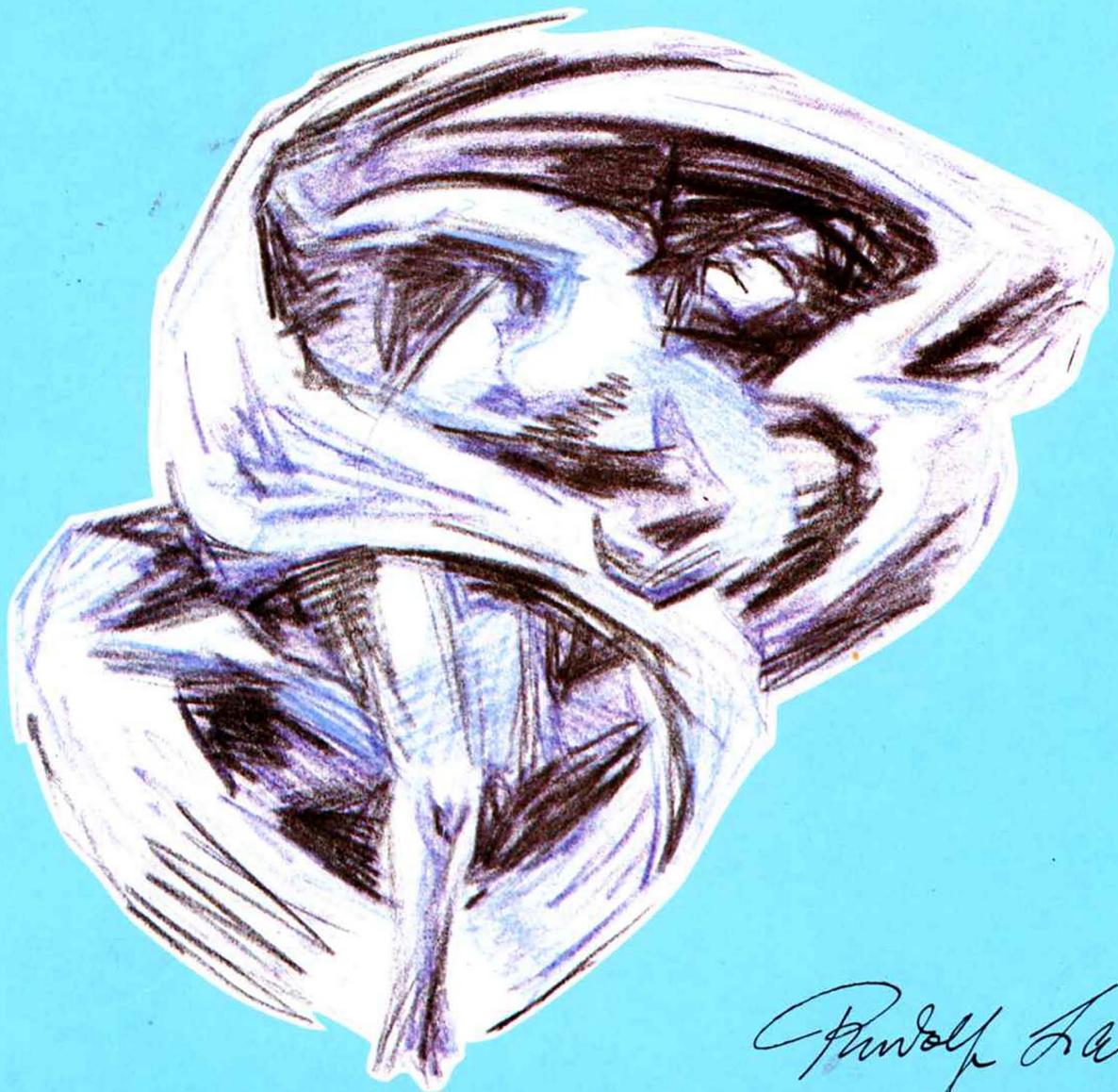


A VISION OF DYNAMIC SPACE

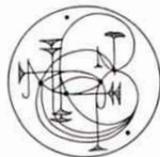


Rudolf Laban

A VISION OF DYNAMIC SPACE

Rudolf Laban

Compiled by LISA ULLMANN



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PREFACE

For many years I have been urged by people, who have become acquainted with Laban's concepts of movement and dance, to share with a wider public some of the material from his Archives which I am holding. Since this is rather extensive, both in amount and range of topics, I found such a proposition daunting and difficult to deal with. However, when I discussed the matter with my friend and publisher Brian Davis I was much encouraged by him as to the feasibility of making a selection. For this I am most grateful to him, but particularly for his final help in designing the layout and producing the book.

Together we agreed that we wanted to show some of the many facets of Laban not only in his work but also as a man. This was then my guideline in compiling the material for the present publication. The selection I have made is entirely personal. I have endeavoured to give the public, at least to a little extent, a picture of the whole man, in the pursuit of his studies and when generally absorbed in the world around him.

At first, I intended to present only sketches and drawings, non of which were intended for publication, but noticed then the need for words, not in a directly explanatory sense but to open another way to the perception of the world of movement as Laban saw it. Most of the text used has been extracted from unpublished writings which came into being mainly during the years 1938–50, a few I have translated from *Die Welt des Tänzers* which was published in Germany as early as 1920 (pages 22/23 top section, 37 middle section and 52). The poetic musings (pages 68–70) are my translation of Laban's original German version which he wrote around 1939 at Dartington Hall. It is only a section of the first part of a quintet.

At the end of the book I have listed the pictorial images. The descriptions which I have given are intended to indicate in a general sense only the particular order and confluence of the spatial elements contained in the images. I hope that, together with the text, they may inspire the reader and add to his awareness of movement and space. It is an interdisciplinary venture in which art, science, religion, philosophy and physical experience come together. May it be a pleasurable journey, artistically, creatively, aesthetically and humanly stimulating. I devote this volume with grateful reverence to the memory of my teacher Laban.

With my sincere thanks I should like to acknowledge the help and advice I have received from my friends Ellinor Hinks, Mollie Davies and Sylvia Bodmer in the preparation of this book.

Lisa Ullmann

Addlestone, Surrey
January 1984

Mastery of movement

I am not interested in a wide spreading of my personal methods of mastering movement. I am interested in the possibility that a very great number of individuals should share my outlook on life, which is a dynamic outlook towards harmony between men. (i.e. Balance between the claims of the individuality and the community. Loyalty to an ideal against narrow prejudice and selfish privileges.) I do this, because I not only feel, but have experienced, that there is a source of strength, in this outlook, a strength, which is markedly human i.e. a monopol(y) of man.

As to my methods of mastering movement, I am ready to convey them to everybody who thinks them suitable for all the manifold purposes in which mastery of movement might play a practical role: education, industry, recreation and, as I think, science. My methods might be developed, or better forms might be found; the outlook on life, however, which is connected with the striving after the mastery of movement, remains fundamental as long as the human race exists.

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V. i. e. Balance between the claims of the individuality and the community

fighting is an ideal against narrow prejudices and selfish prejudices.



I am proposing in my life-work such a complete change of perspective that I am almost afraid to write it down.

A perspective of what? Of human nature and life.

My new perspective is not a vague speculation, it is an experience which I feel compelled to communicate because it might turn out to be a help rather than a nuisance – if it is well understood and well applied in practical behaviour.

This perspective is at any rate in certain accordance with modern thought and science; I do not, however, intend to make this clear here or to give to what I have to say some scientific clothing. There will perhaps be others who would like to do this, others who have more knowledge and more authority in this field.

A perspective is in itself nothing scientific, it is rather a vision. A vision, as I have said before, which is an outcome of experience and designed to have a practical use.

It has often been said that I intend to reform in all the fields of human activities in which I have been working – such as school and home education, industry, the art of the theatre, medicine and social organisation.

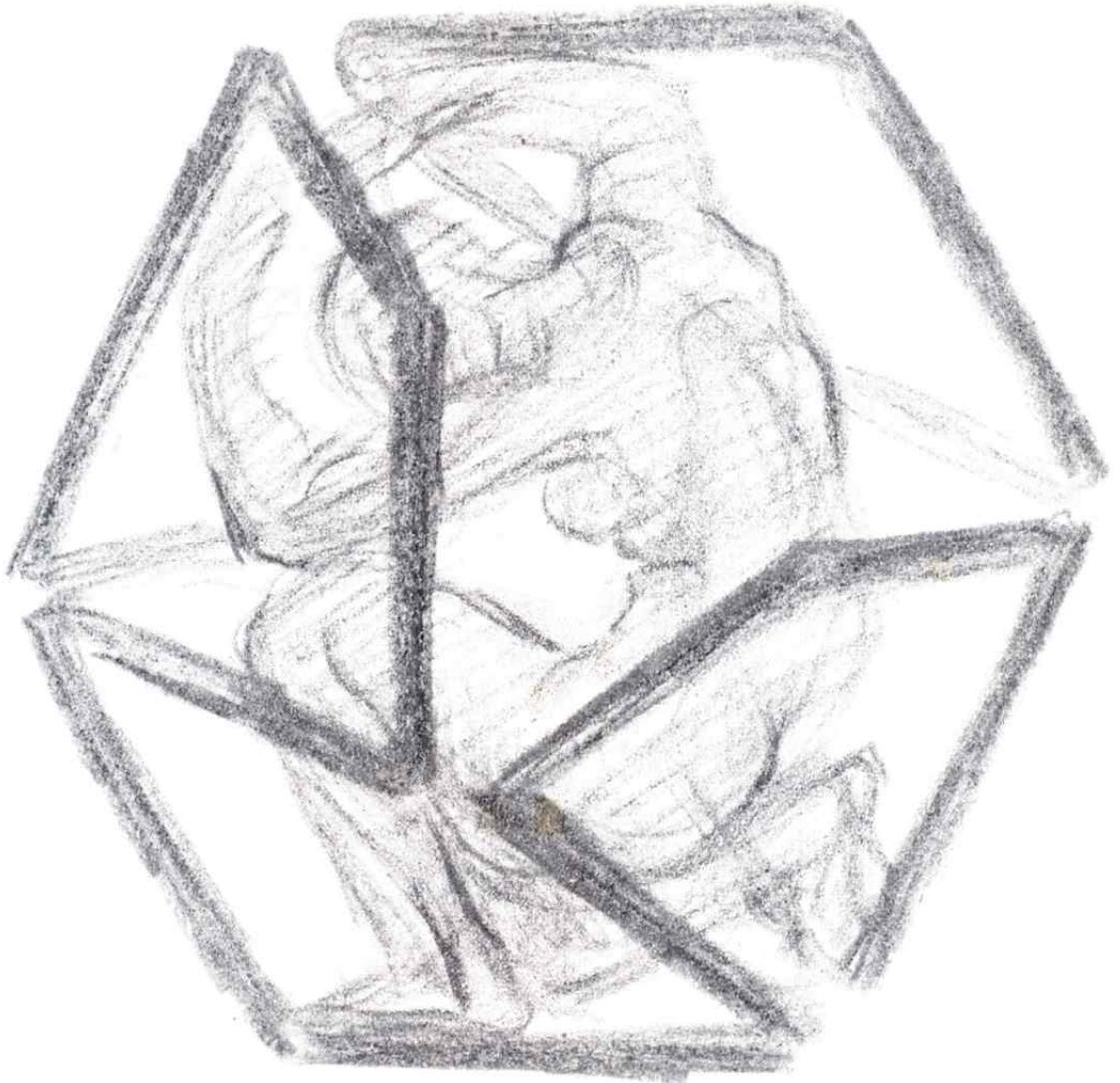
The truth is that I have advocated and experimentally tried to pay more attention to human movement – bodily and mental – which is obviously at the basis of all human activity. Movement research and movement education have been neglected in our time and some failures of our civilisation are surely influenced, if not produced, by this neglect.

But in changing these omissions into a more lively interest in the role movement plays in man's life and art no direct innovation in the general conduct of man's activities is needed. It is the present methods and procedures of Education, Industry, Theatrical Art and Therapy as they have developed through centuries which can be made more humanly efficient if attention is paid to the hitherto neglected or misused movement factor.

Changes in the general outlines of any of these Arts of living might in time arise, and have in fact happened whenever there was increased interest in movement. But these changes belong to an evolution which cannot be planned. They develop in the frame of a plantlike growth of which we are not the creators but only the gardeners.



The body is capable of moving in all spatial directions with certain limitations.

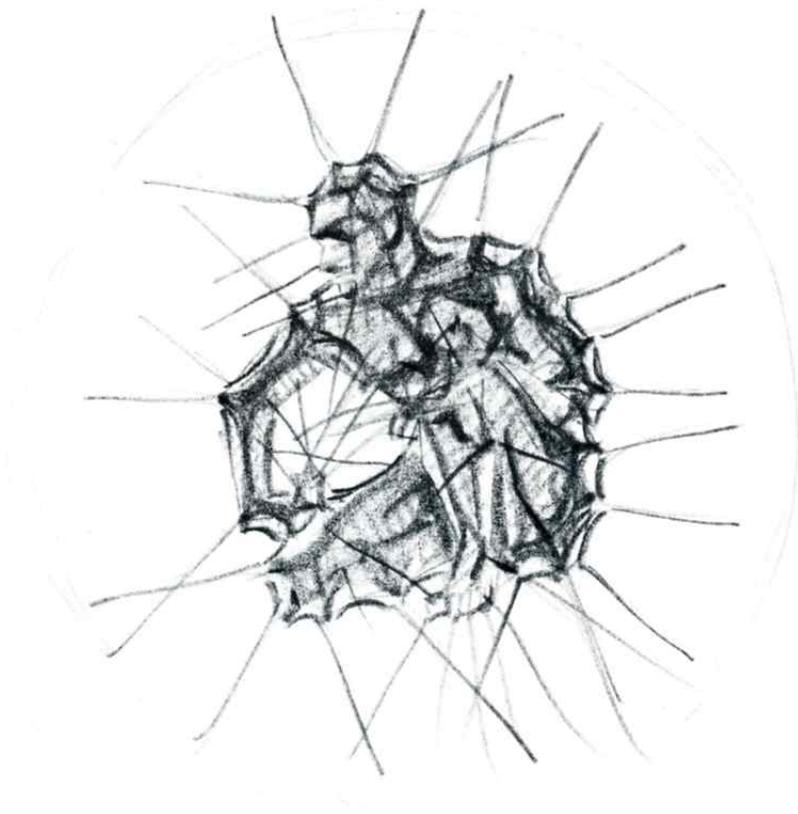


... Throughout life there is a continual stretching of the body upwards. This is the line of growth which is most apparent. It is also the muscular response to the action of gravity...

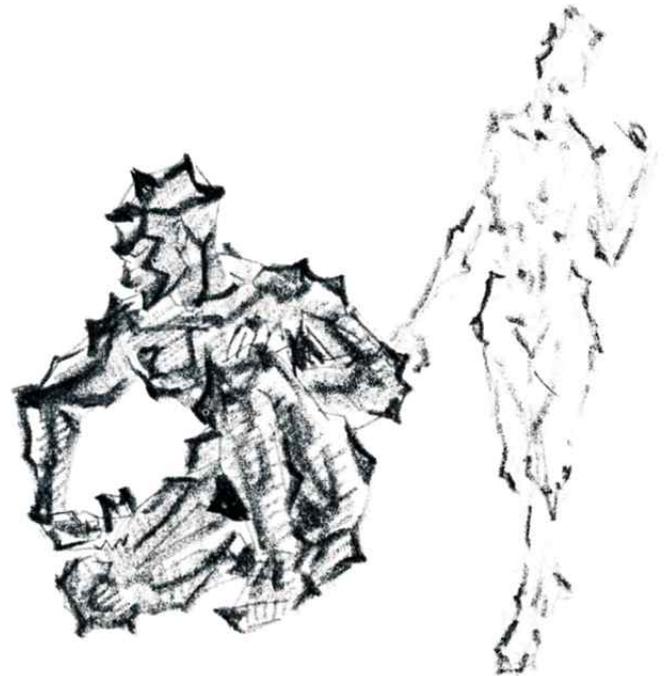
Man is able to fill the space around him with his movements and positions, or he can restrict himself to straight lines through space neglecting the many extensions of space and using only one at any given time.

There is a kinship between the several directions of space which together form a configuration.

Configuration is simultaneity. Its parts appear (timelessly) side by side.

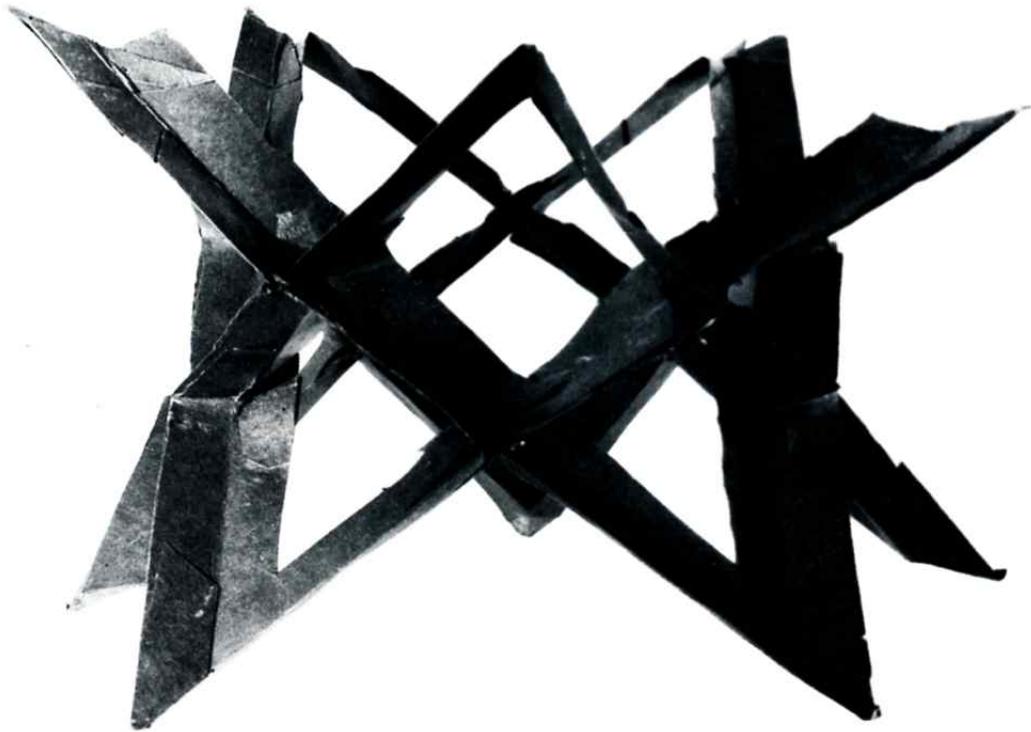
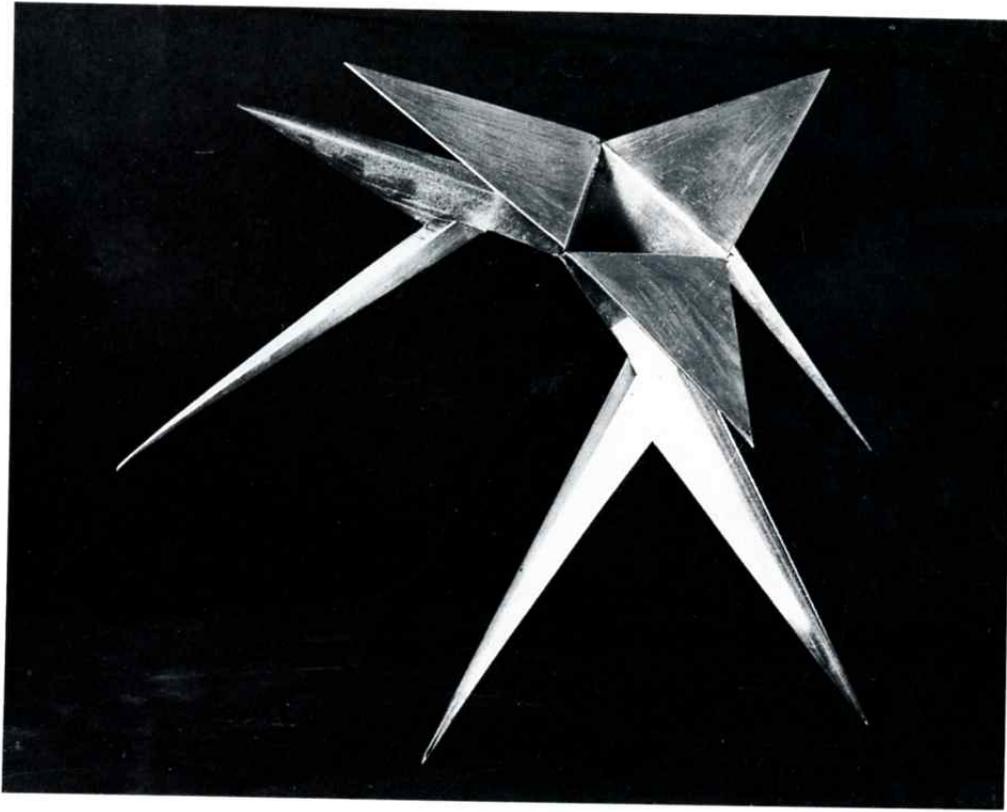


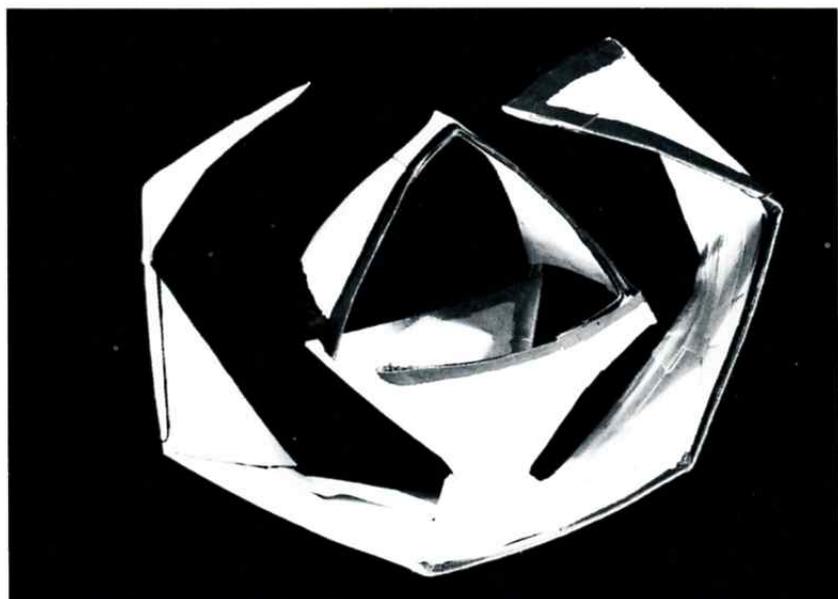
If we investigate the emotional and the volitional content of man's gestures we are now able to take an entirely new angle for an approach to the understanding of the mystery of doing and dancing. In trying to reach this

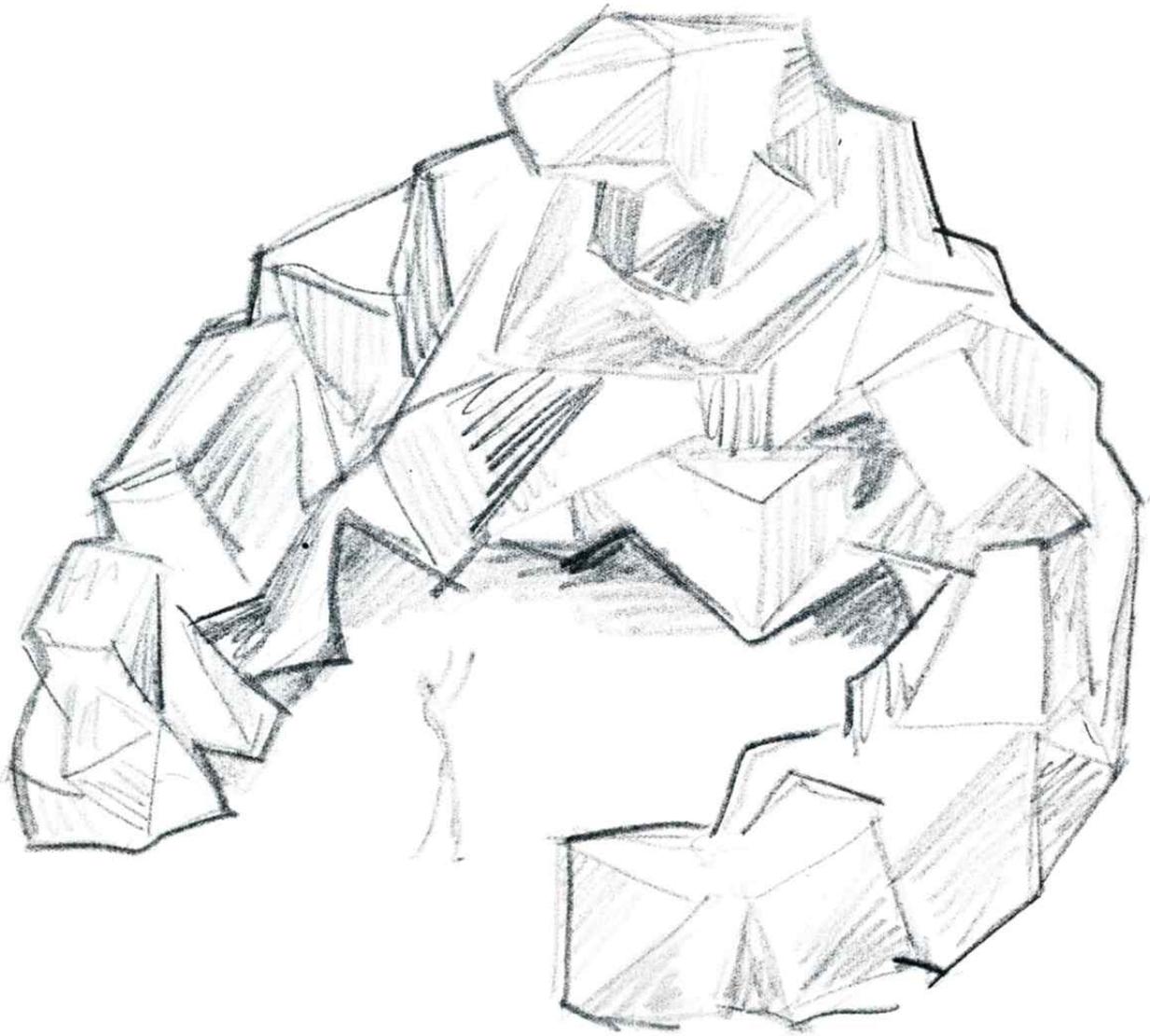




very remote goal we must content ourselves for the time being with the clarification of our conceptions of space, time and energy. We must try to turn to practical use the relics and ruins of the traditional views of the world. In reducing matter to a play of radiating and circling sparks, science has, of course, abolished a great many illusions but at the same time a door has been opened for a new and simplified view of the universe...

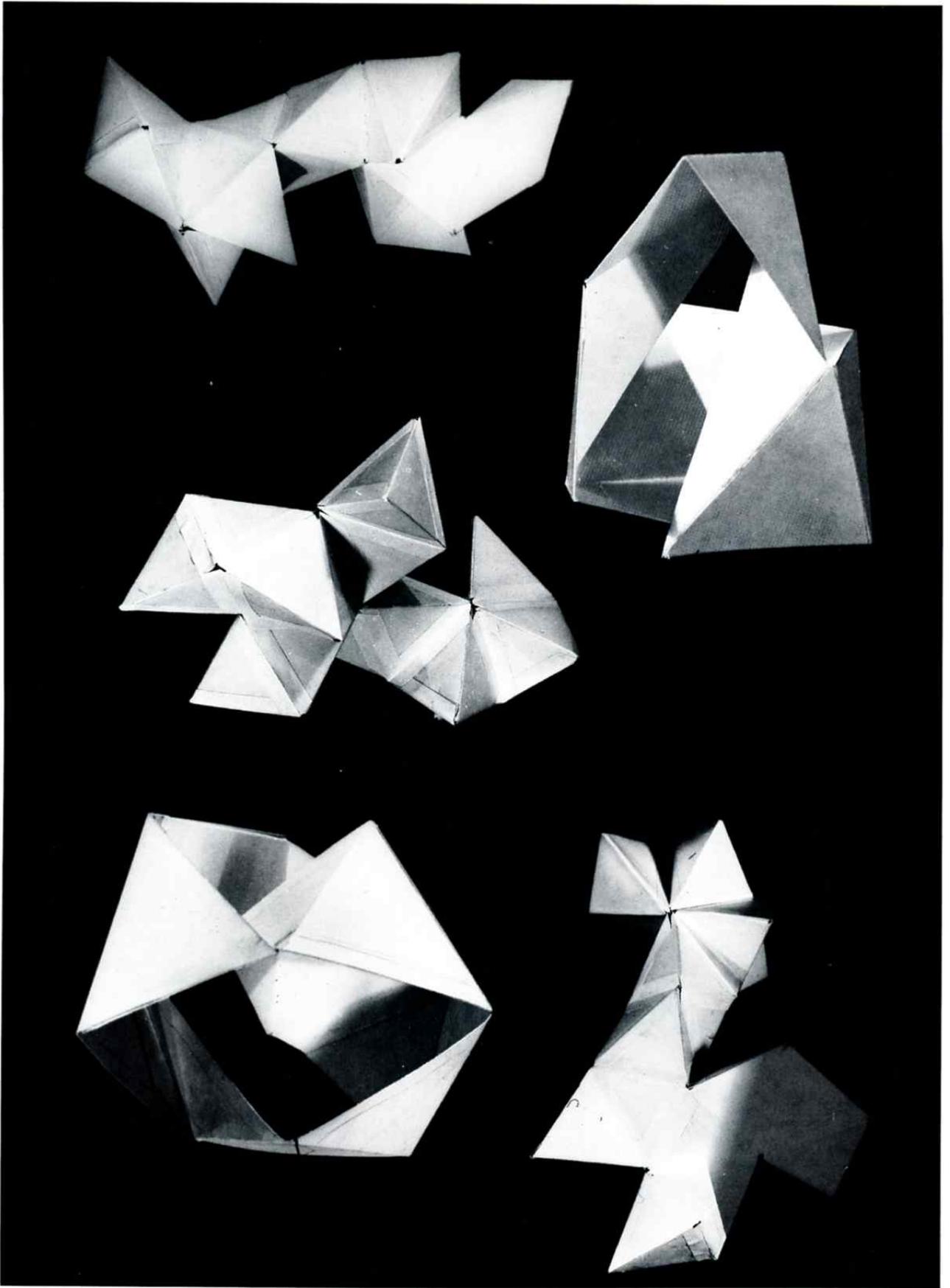






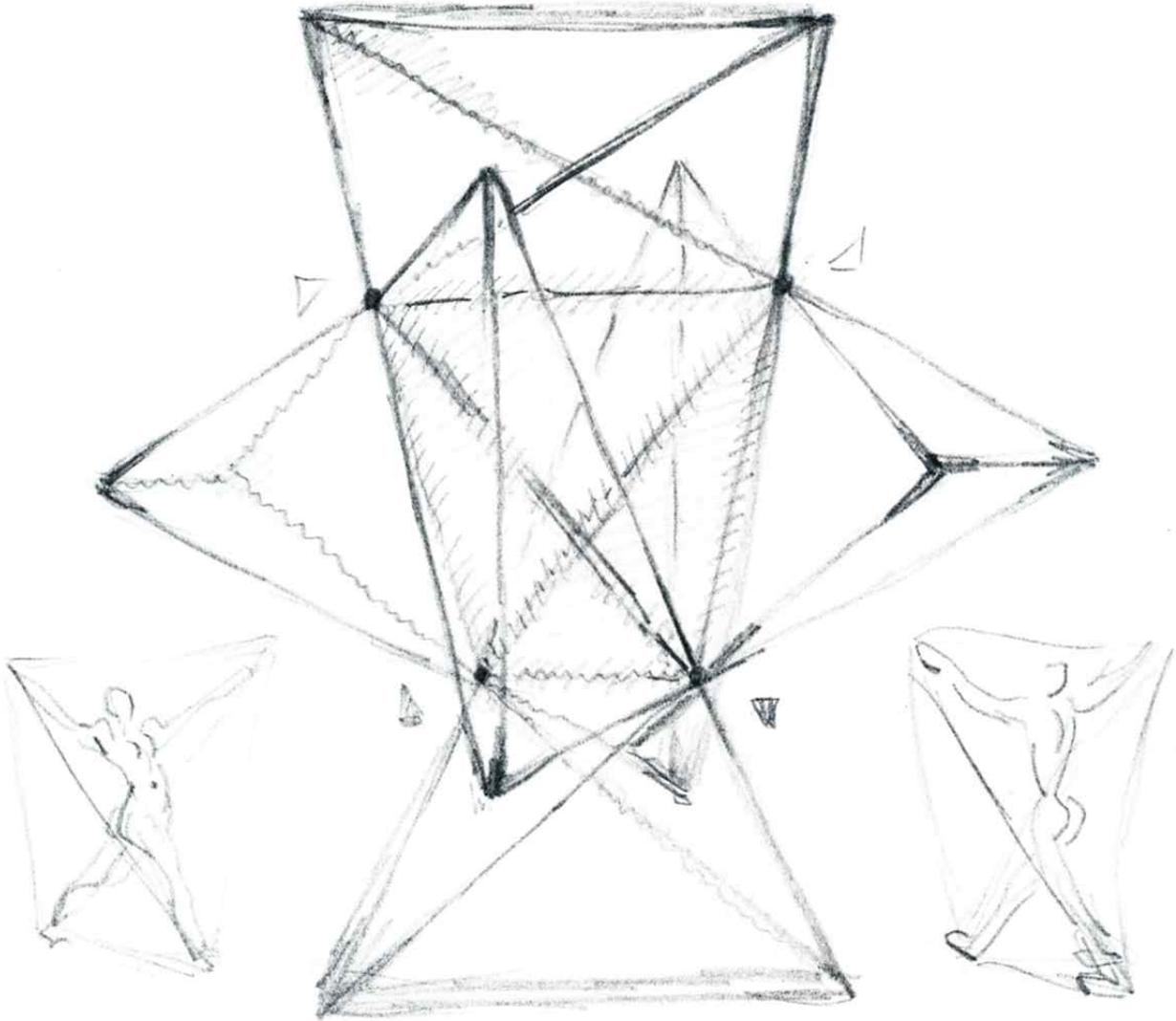
We must remember that the form of a movement is not one line only; it is not an arabesque or a curve, and also not a single broken or curved surface as we may see on a crystallized mineral, but a cataract of forms, as if a heap of jewels or precious stones had been poured out vehemently, glistening, 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.



The moment has come that we call into consciousness the fluid nature of space.

The first thing we learnt consciously about space was time, its measure in space, the distance, the straight line. But now we have to realise the curvature of space. Its measure is rooted in the multi-dimensionality of space.

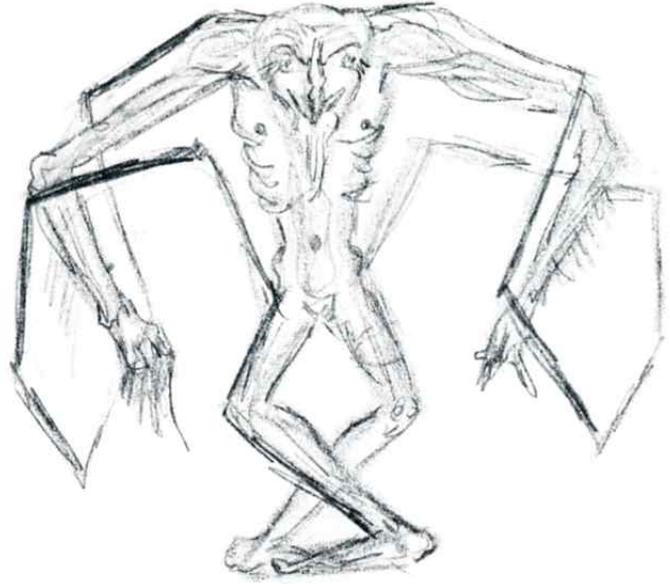


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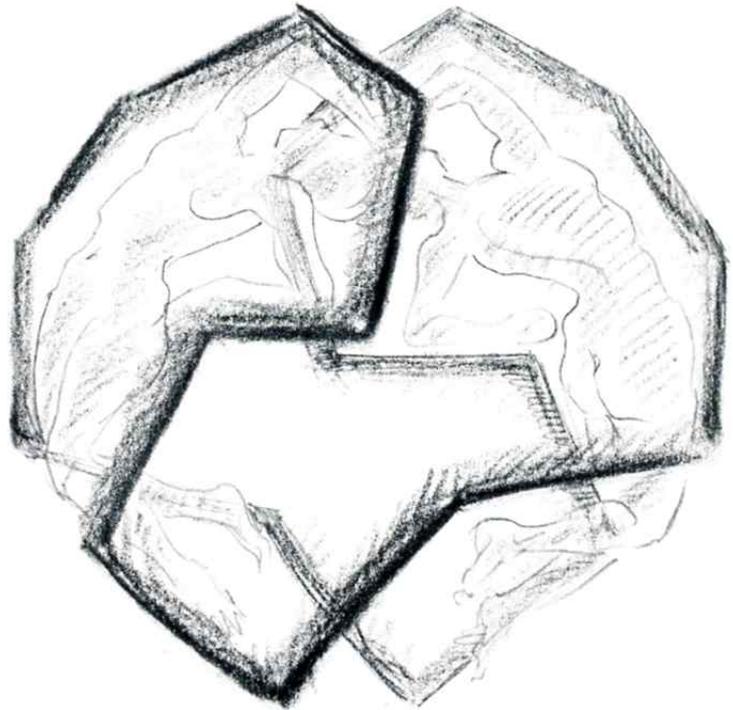
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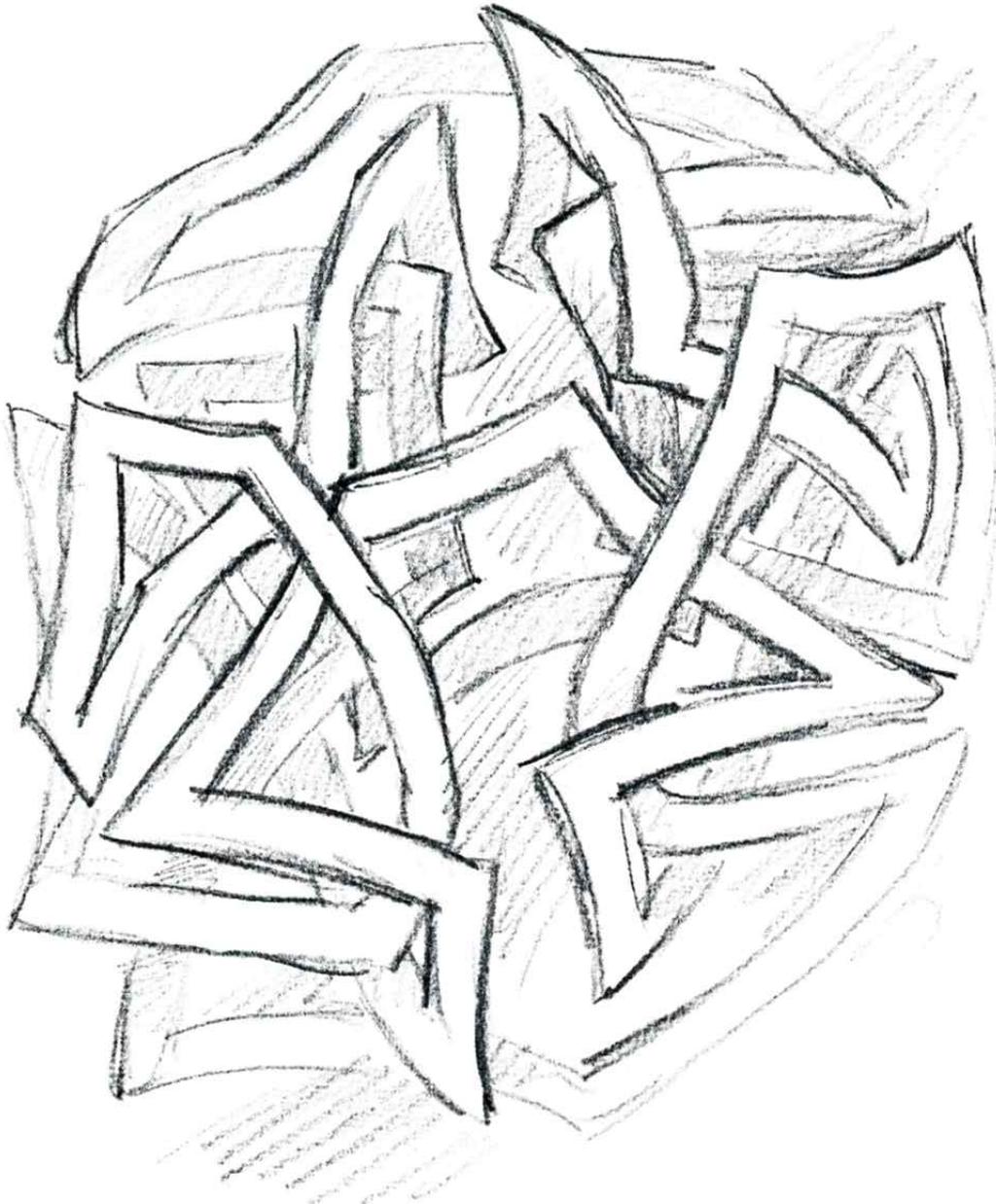


In our primordial memories still slumbers knowledge about the nature of space (instinctive knowledge) but we have lost or at least weakened it through exaggerated cultivation of time (causal knowledge).

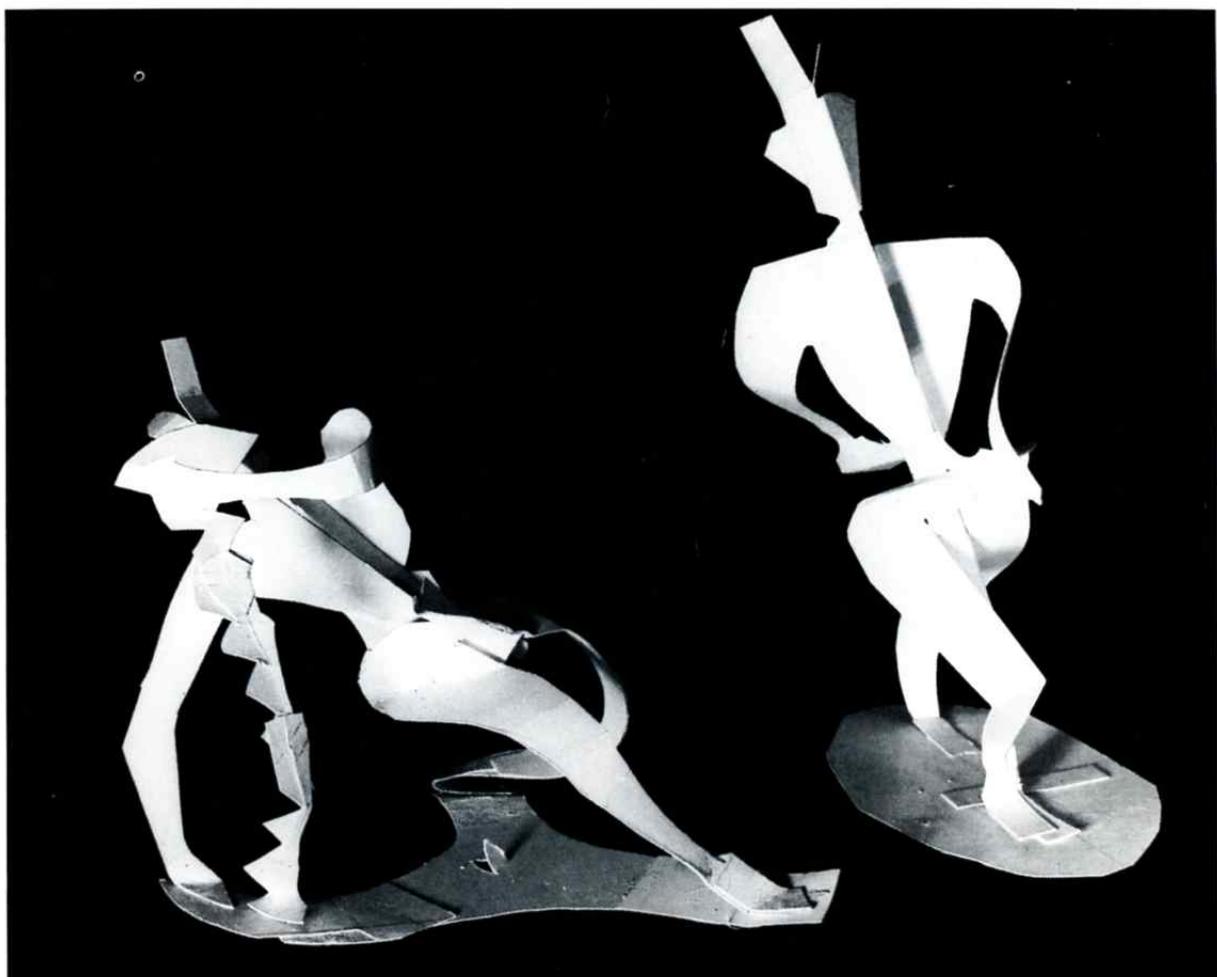


Until now only geometry presented us with a cognitive image of space. Beyond that there remained nothing but awe for its endlessness and fluidity. The prospect of contacting and physically experiencing the essential nature of space was therefore closed to us. Today, a new conscious unfolding of awareness has opened up concrete ways – (which will surely also re-awaken our instinctive power).



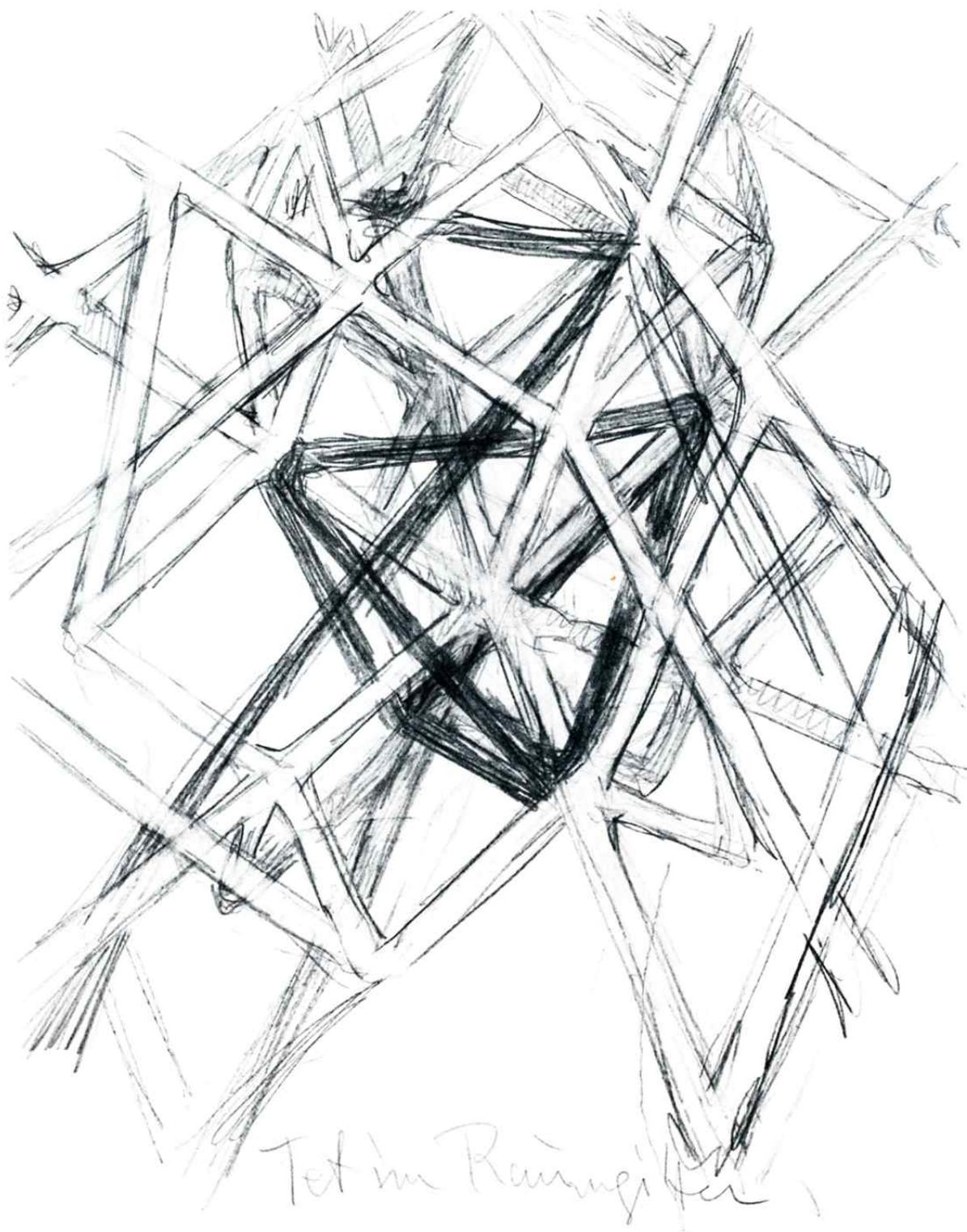


Dispositions and sequences of the metamorphic occurrences in the condition of elasticity proceed along refractions of different kinds such as chemical or thermic, etc. Briefly, the physical, organic, biologic, psychic

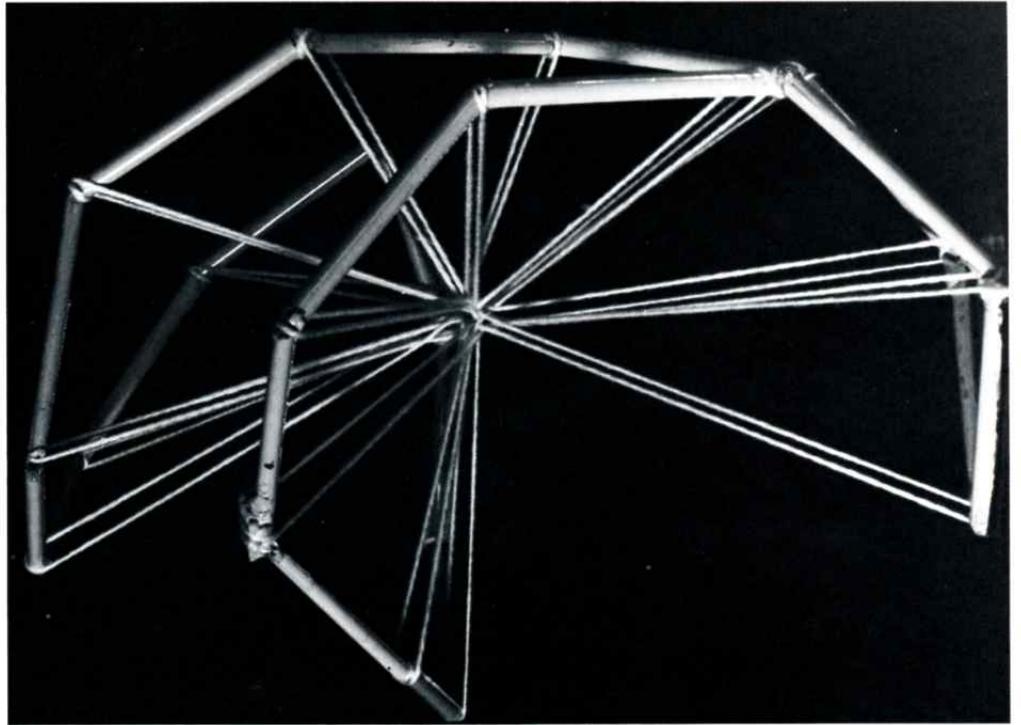


refractions reflect a uniform urge toward elasticity, a condition which we can recognise but not explain. How and why it operates cannot fully be answered, but only intuitively experienced and looked upon with astonishment.

The fundamental feeling which leads us to establish harmonious values is our sensibility for contrast and balance. If something reoccurs repeatedly, we feel the moment of repetition as a point of rest in the flux of appearances. The similarity of experiences brings to our consciousness the primary contrast between stillness and stir, between stability and mobility. The instant of recurrence is an inner and outer momentary pause in the dizzy-making flux of happenings, in the eternal whirl of events and their relations.



The investigation of movement is still in its infancy. One says that movement is a discharge of energy, one speaks of gravitational force, the fall. One says that each shift of weight is a consequence of a levering action, which requires a fixed support. One knows that matter, according to its specific weight, is deposited around the centre of the earth, one



knows the changes in an aggregate caused through heat and cold and thus of the specific weight of matter. Yet, one has never observed movement itself, one has almost entirely ignored the dance-like formative element in the moving energy, and thus missed an important clue about the nature of the play of energy. One regarded form as an aesthetic or mathematic factor and did not consider the content of its dance-like act with its formative powers and its space-rhythmic tensions.

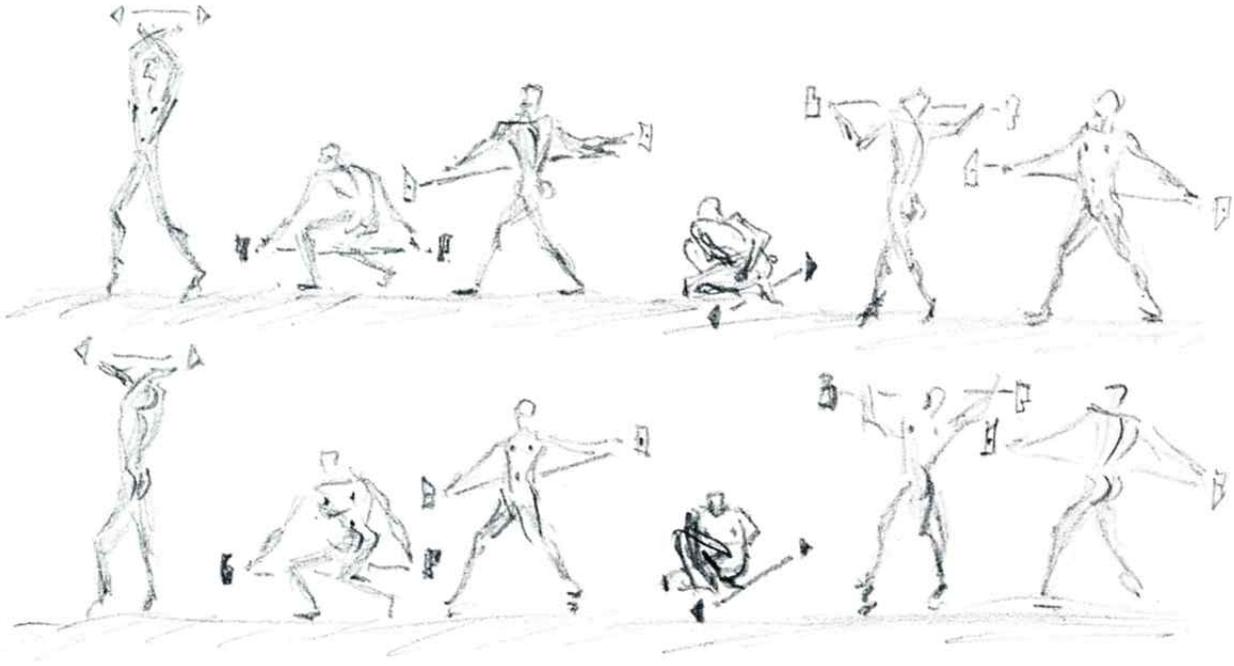
Besides the motion of bodies in space there exists motion of space in bodies. . .

Flow is in its primary form the sensation of nearness versus remoteness (the distance) in time as well as in space.

Tangible manifestations are always spatial and rhythmical. Fundamental forms of universals are the knot, the circle (spiral) and the lemniscatic band (a twisted band circle which has no clearly distinguishable inner and outer surfaces).

Universals are neither mental nor material. They are changeless, perfect, eternal, timeless and, for our senses, exist only through their effects on mental or material appearances.

Non-universals are all other forms, so also those of living beings. . .

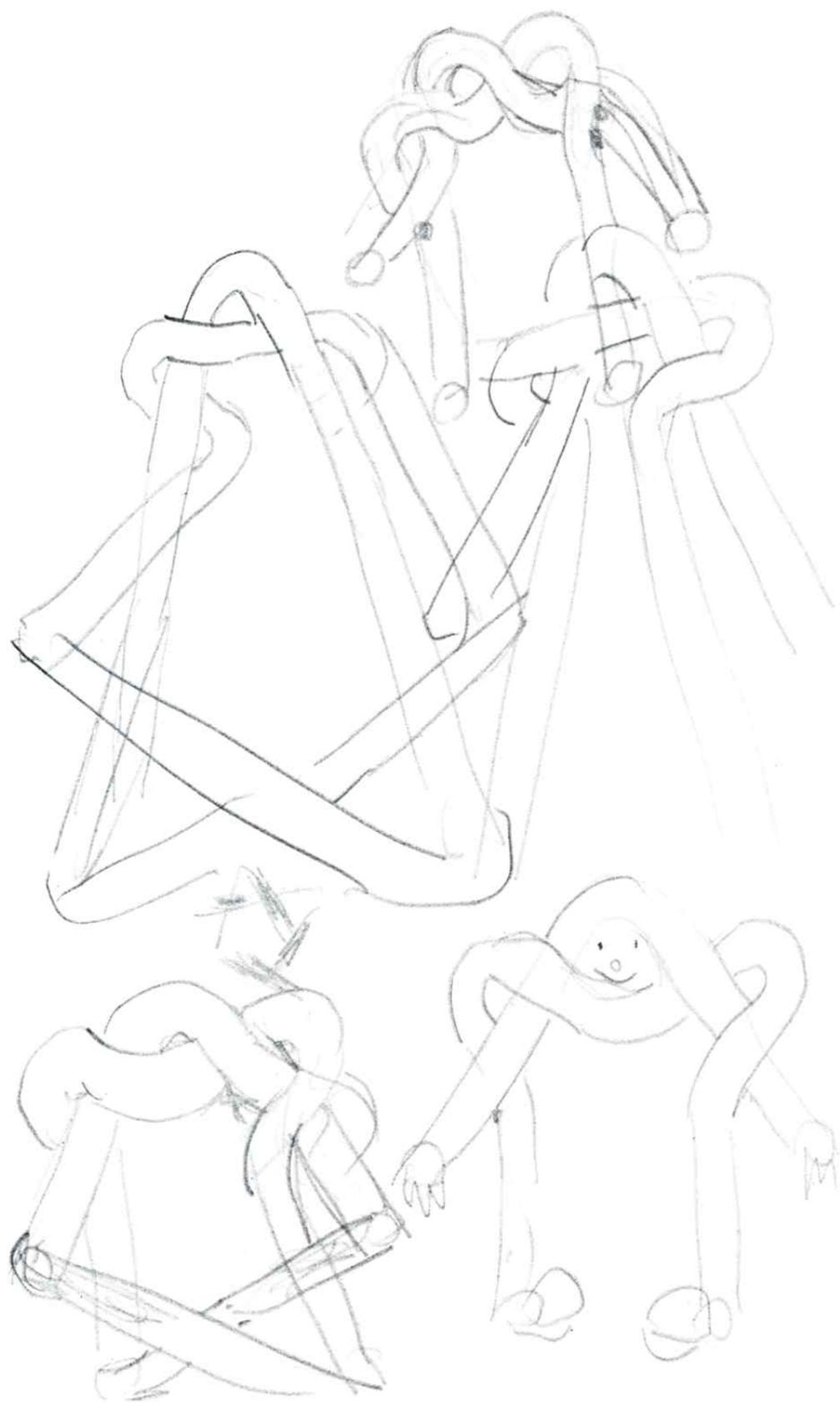


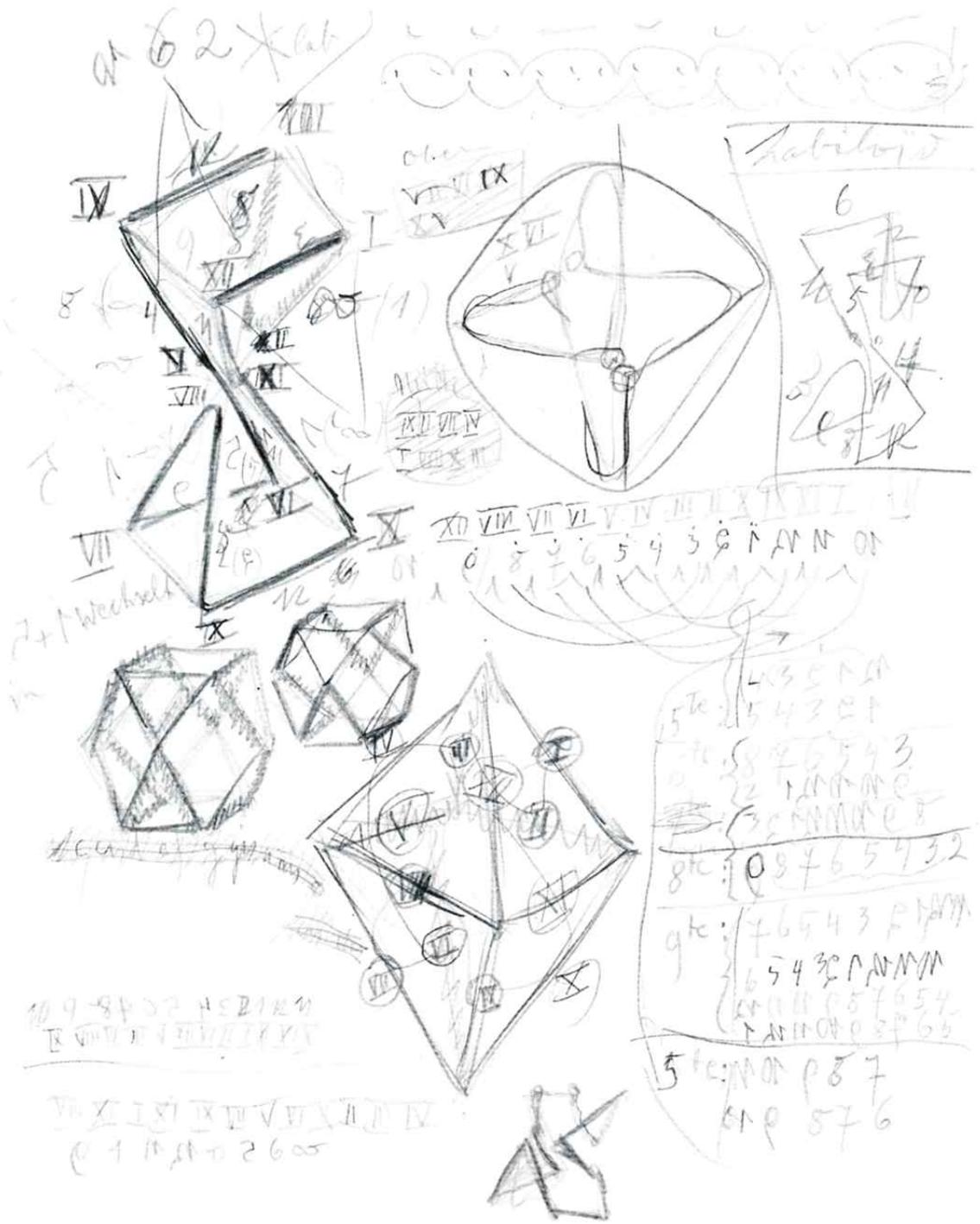
The flow of effort from the weightless, timeless, spaceless centre to the matter shaped and moved around is the binding link which carries life.



H, A, sch - Schlange in ①

The laws of metamorphosis can be observed in the path of recurrence.



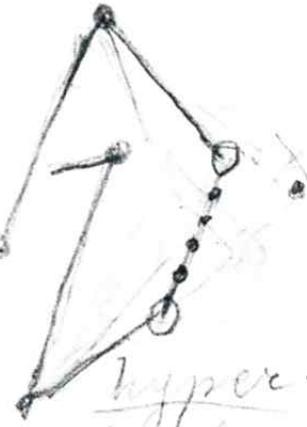
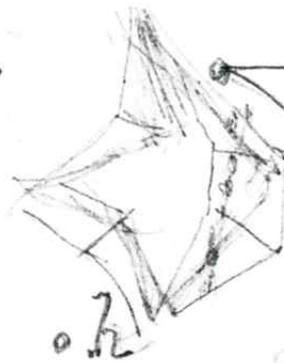
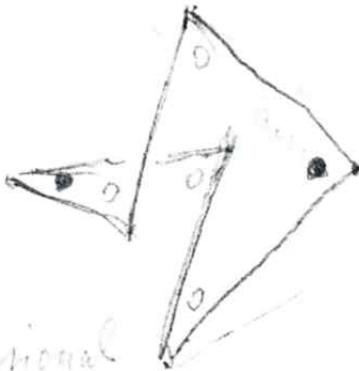


Reason is only a link between phenomena.

dimensional Crown

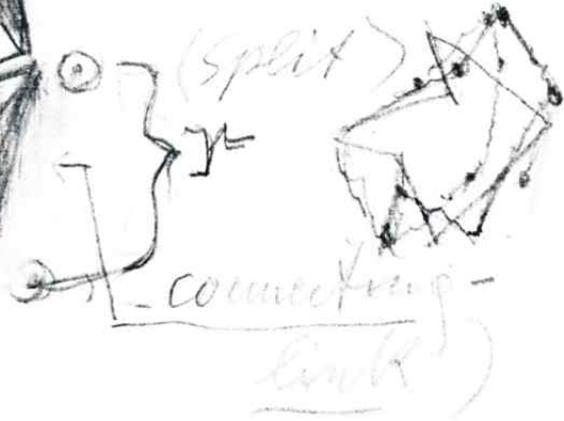
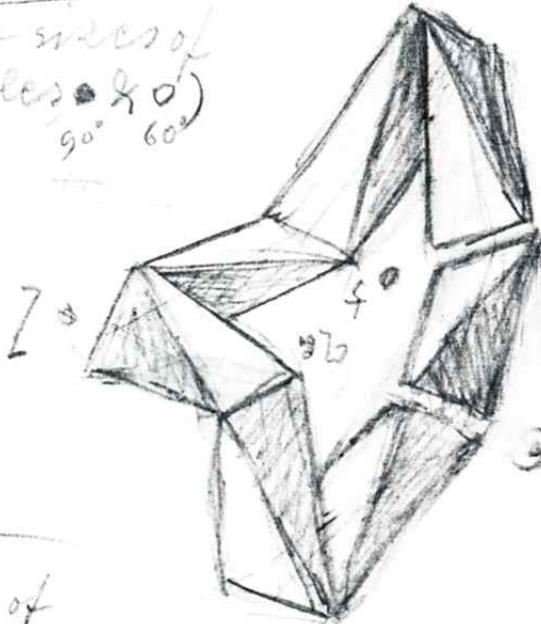


Space indicator,



dimensional Snake
(two sizes of angles 90° & 60°)

hyper-dimensional snake
(room-ring)



Joining of Seven moving solids

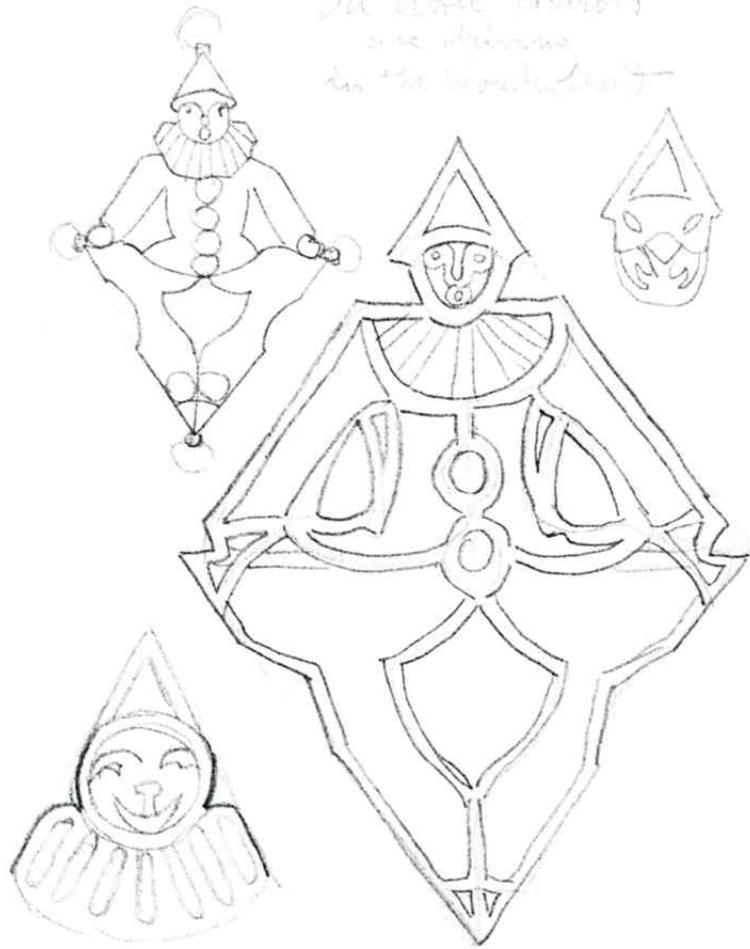


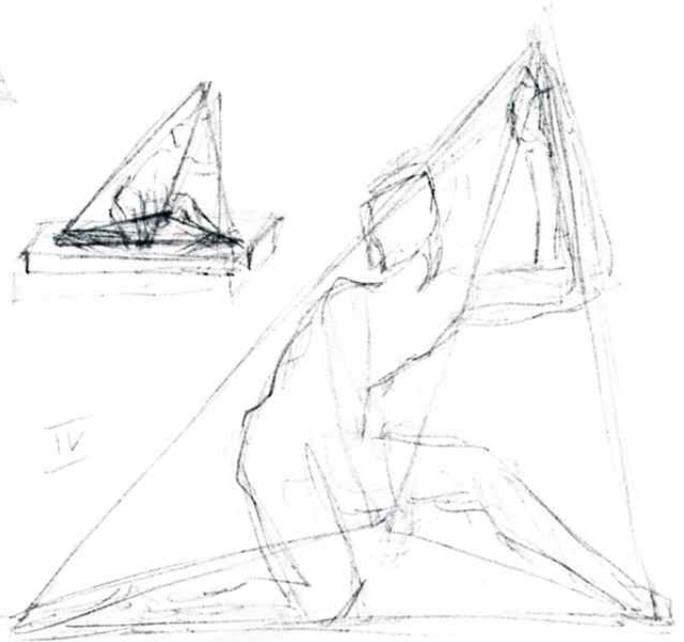
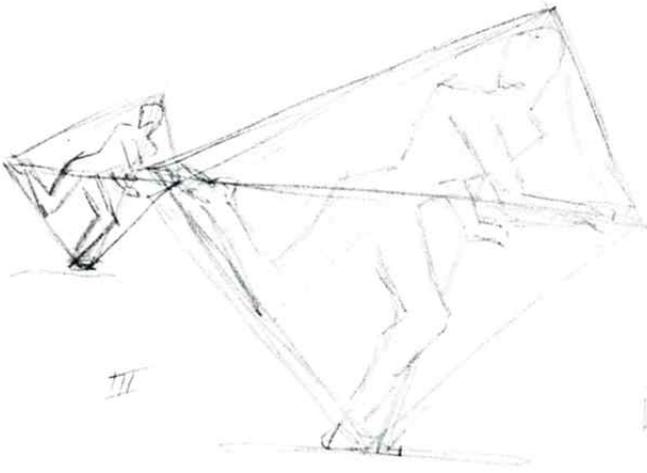
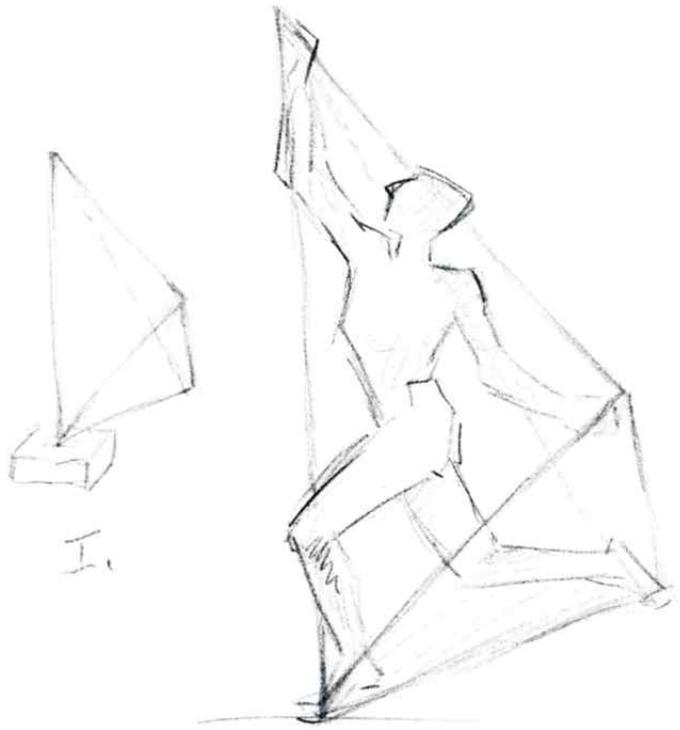
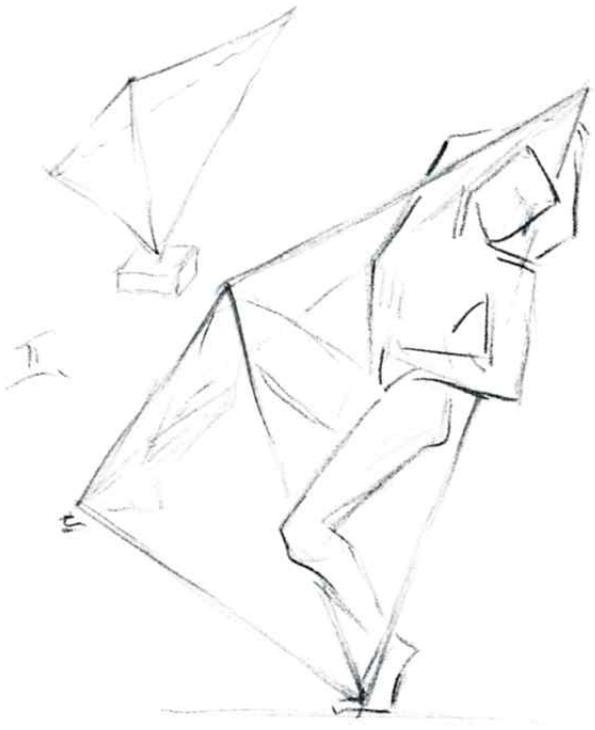
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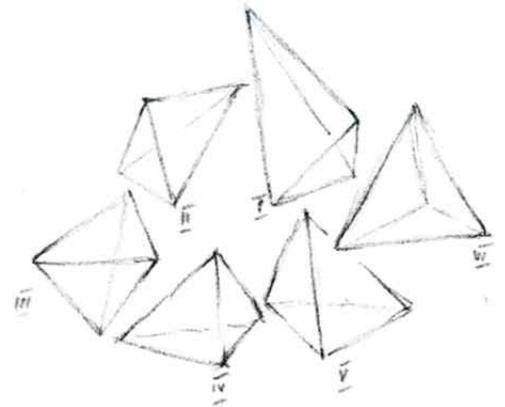
Movement-Indicator,

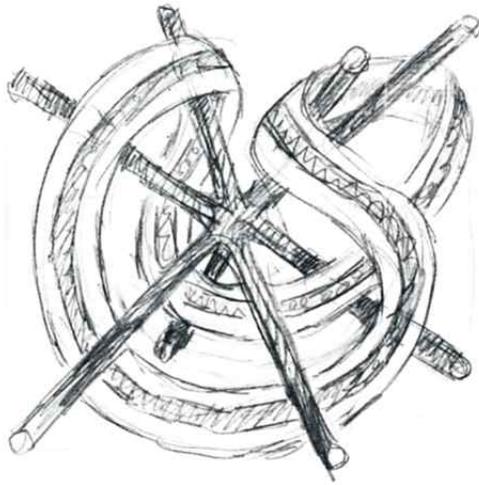
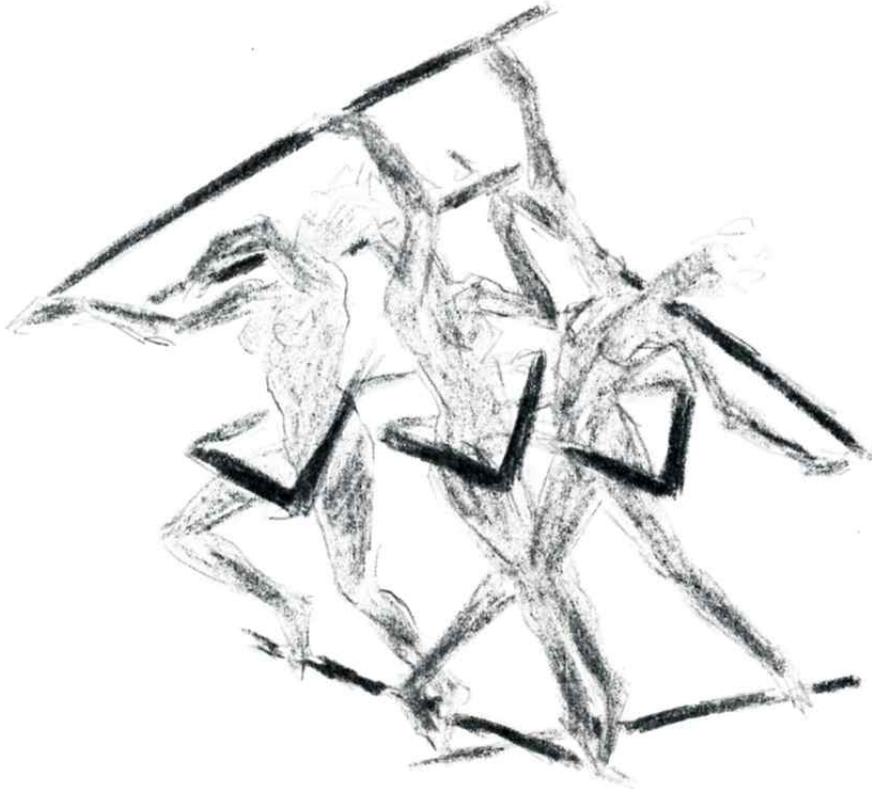


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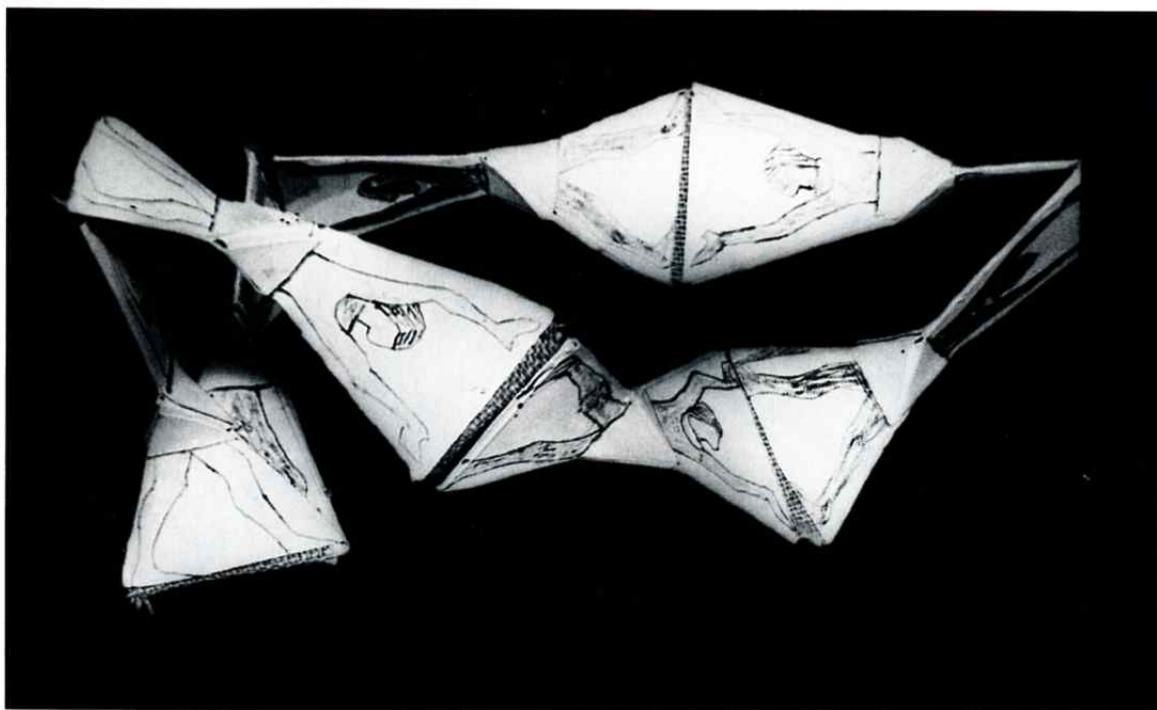


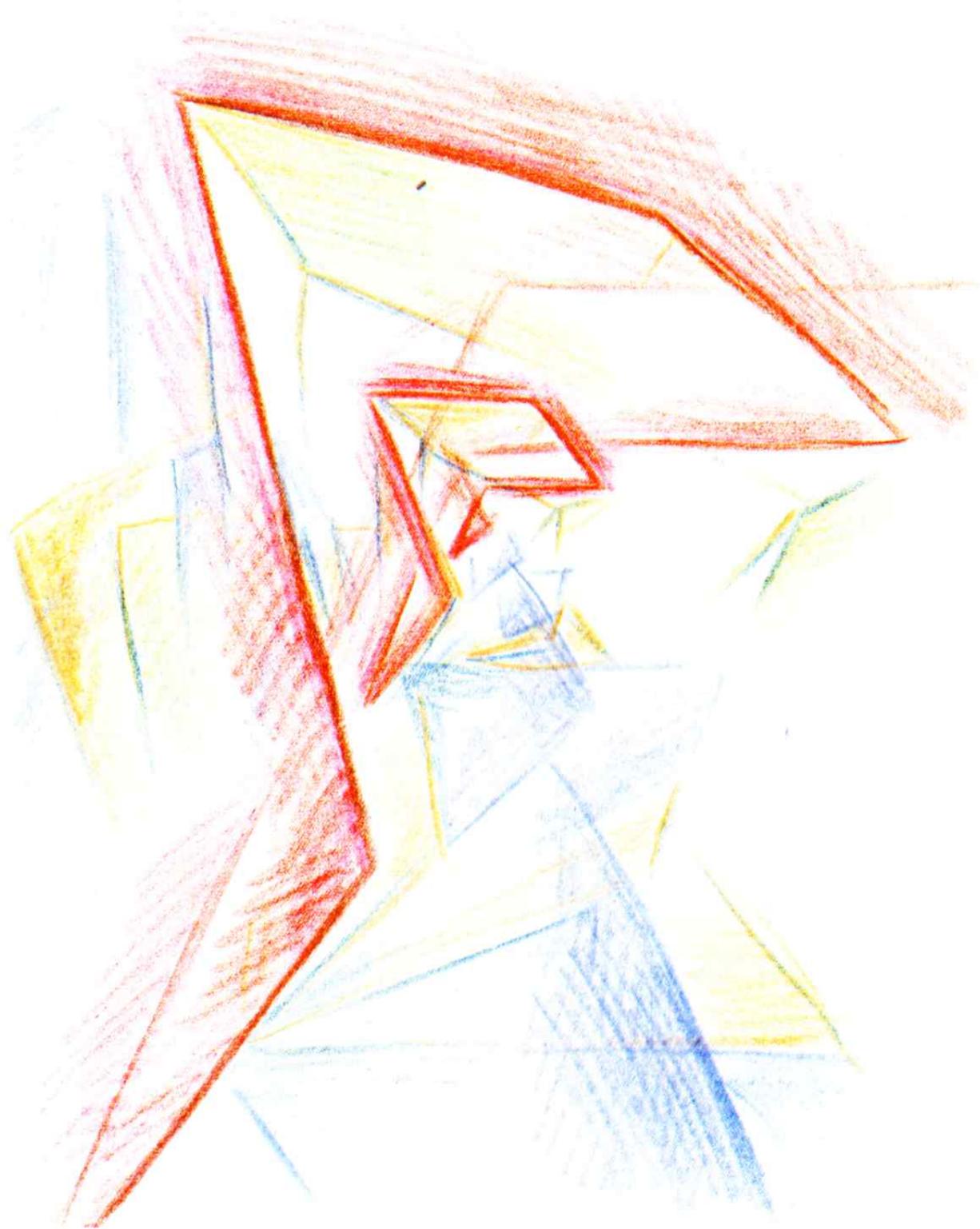


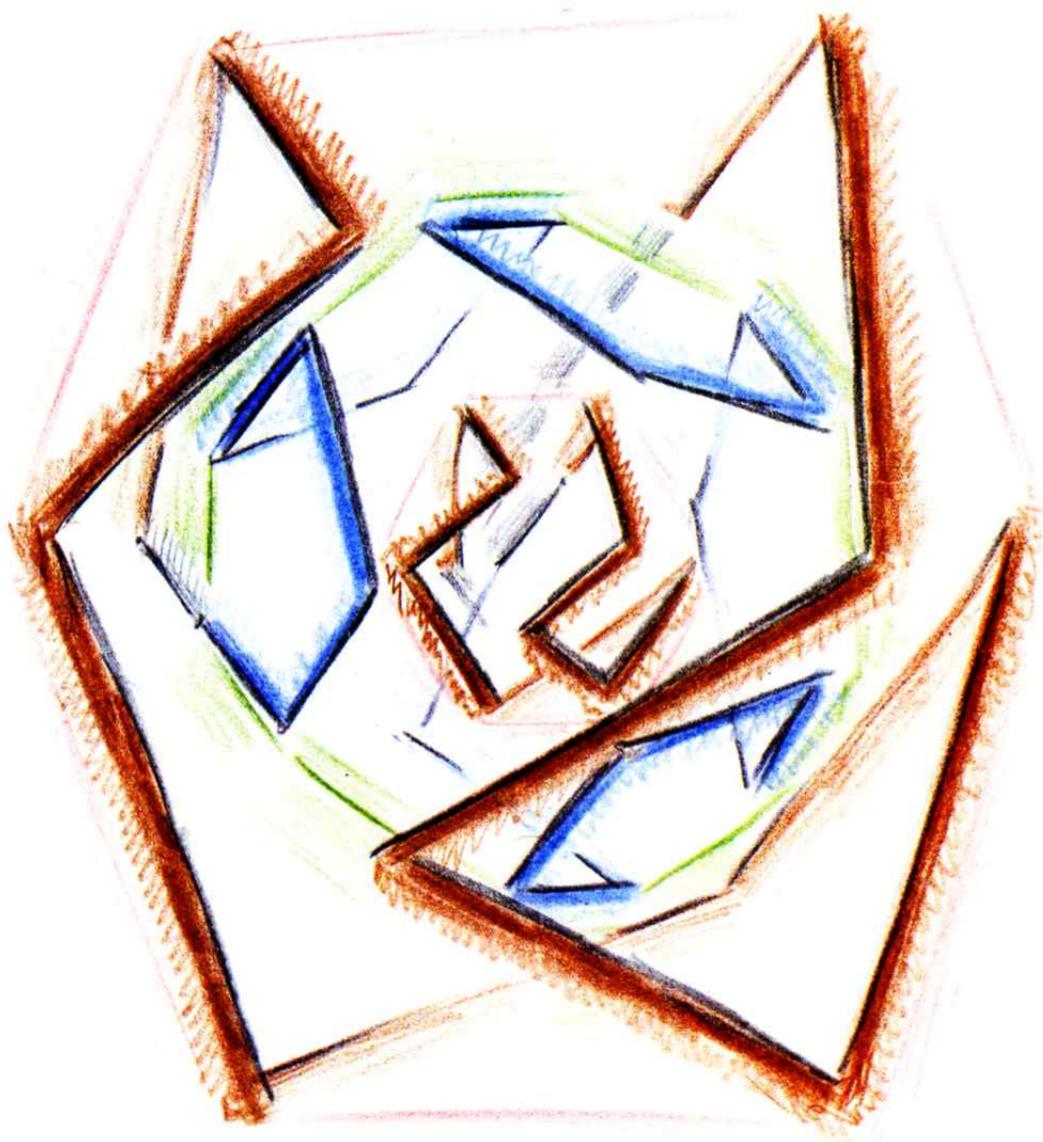




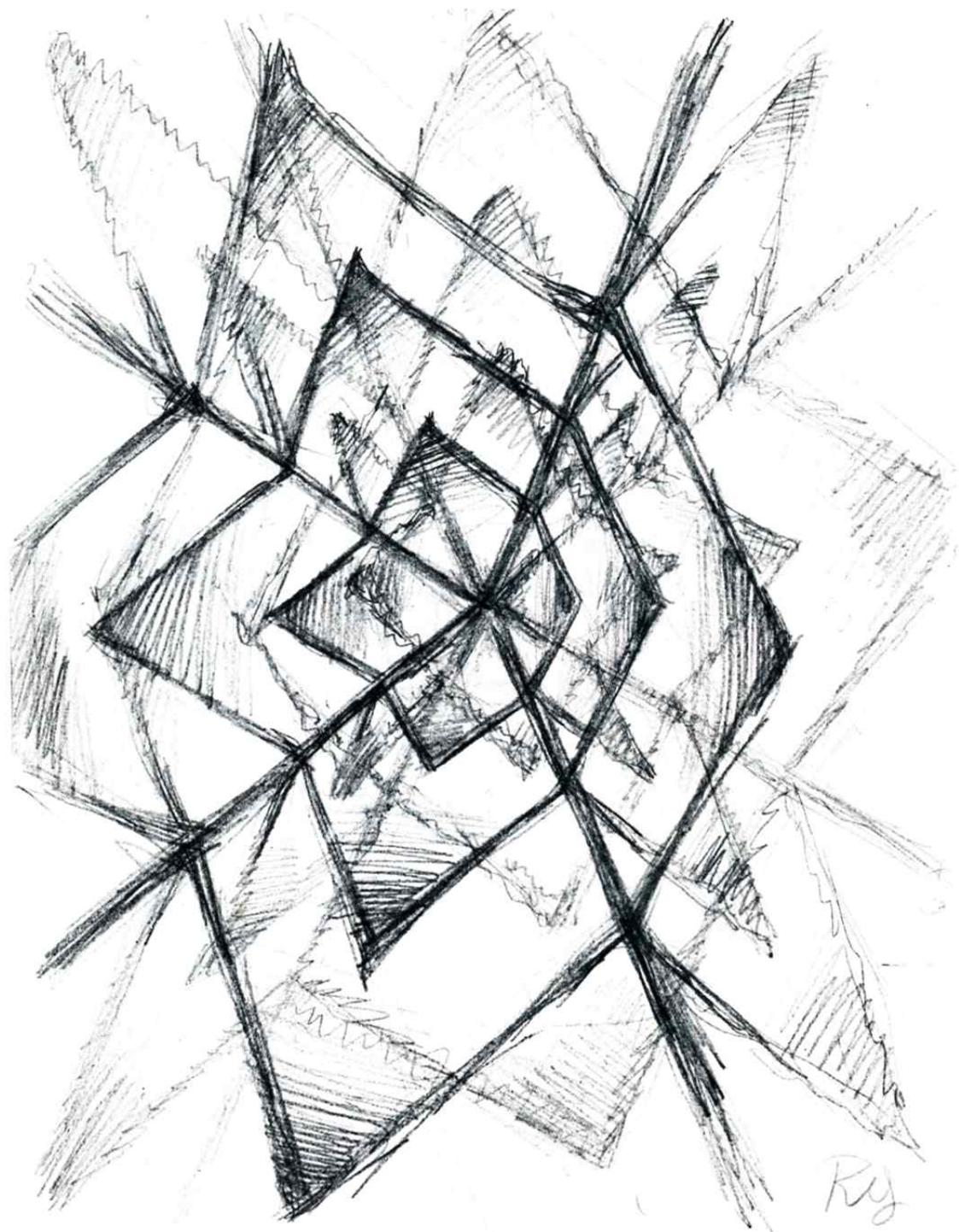
Protein Katischer Schwanz
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Mass (form) is solid space, – movement is plastic freedom, – freedom is choice in the chaos of the nothing.



Movement shows the difference between space and time, and simultaneously bridges it. Therefore movement is a suitable medium to penetrate more deeply into the nature of space, and to give a living experience to its unity with time.

Space is a valuable symbol for the Whole in which we are rooted, especially since we know that time and energy can be understood as its derivatives.

Let us take this mental image, which is essentially a conception of the artist, as the basis for some investigation of the deeper lying riddles of existence.

Progressing constructively, which is a principle of artistic creation, we begin with the spreading in space of tangible structures. However, we choose the trace-forms of motion. Trace-forms can be taken as the temporal and transient unfolding of energies in space.

The projection of trace-forms on to the surface of a limited or personal space is dance. The doing and dancing of our bodies becomes therefore the symbol of a happening in space...

The artist has, more or less consciously, an immediate awareness of the spatial constituents of inner agitations as well as of the spatial combinations contained in bodily gestures. This awareness becomes visible – or audible – in works of art, and is considered in terms of proportionality and harmony.

One can differentiate:

Conformity or parallelism involves the repetition of same elements expressed in the structure of forms as well as in their sequence and relation.

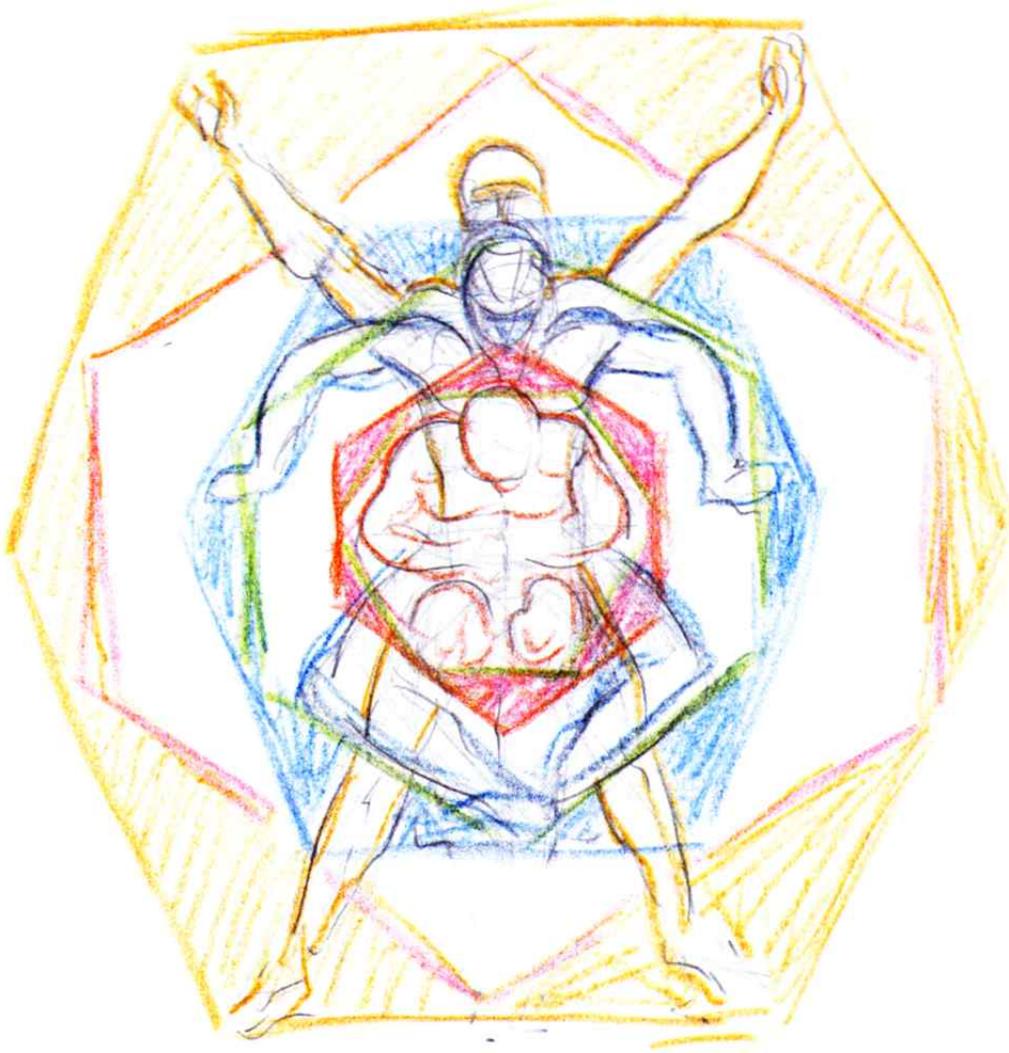
Symmetry presupposes disparity of form while retaining a common measure. This most simple kind of harmonic relation has the effect of being immobile; it is a symbol of rest, of rigidity.

Proportionality distinguishes itself from symmetry by an increasing mobility. The similarity of the parts is cancelled and the units of measure one to the other are not equal but differentiated in a lawful manner.

Symmetry and proportionality can work together and create nuances of movement ranging from an almost complete stillness to a most lively stir, while the identity of the external form of the single parts gradually disappears more and more.

Simple movements require little bodily effort and allow great mental control. Large complicated movements require great physical effort and allow little mental activity.

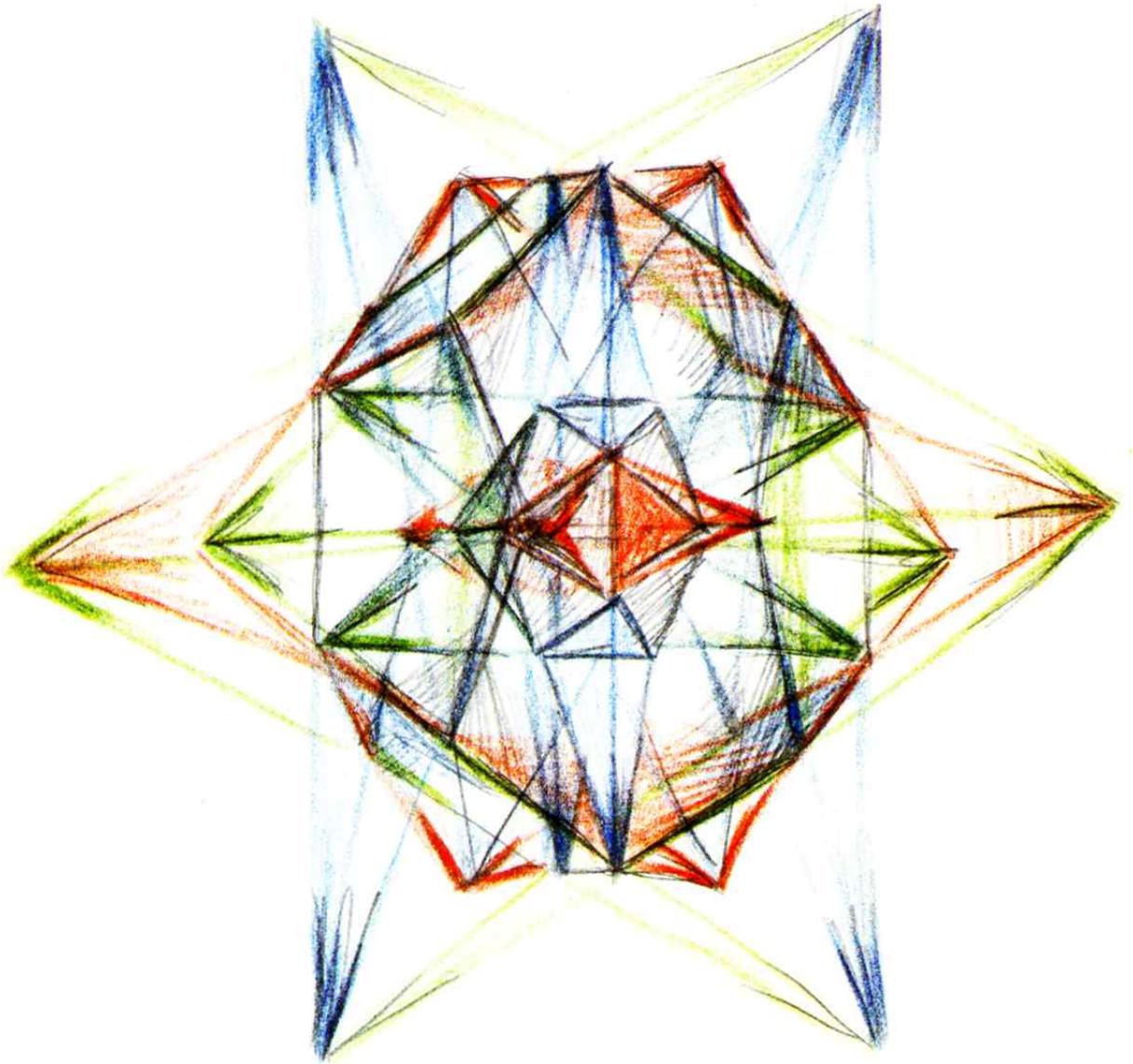
Movements employed in our doing – including physical exercises – have a regenerative or at least stimulating effect. The movements employed in dancing are – in a deeper connection – more intensely rooted in space, in its elasticity, its equilibrium and its pattern building power.



We can, perhaps, assume that human beings when dancing have always had an intuitive notion of the dynamic structure of material existence as discovered by science today; for the astonishing similarity between this vision of existence and the actual spatial feeling of a dancer is undeniable...

We can compare the trace-forms of a person's movements with the trace-forms of electronic tracks, and find an interesting relationship between them.

It becomes possible to grasp with our intellect that old prophetic dream of mankind, the unity of mind and body. As both have one and the same motion with only slight variations, we can draw a parallel between this universal happening and dance. The hostile dualism of matter and mind can no more be taken for granted and the study of the awareness of unity in dance gains a hitherto unsuspected reality...



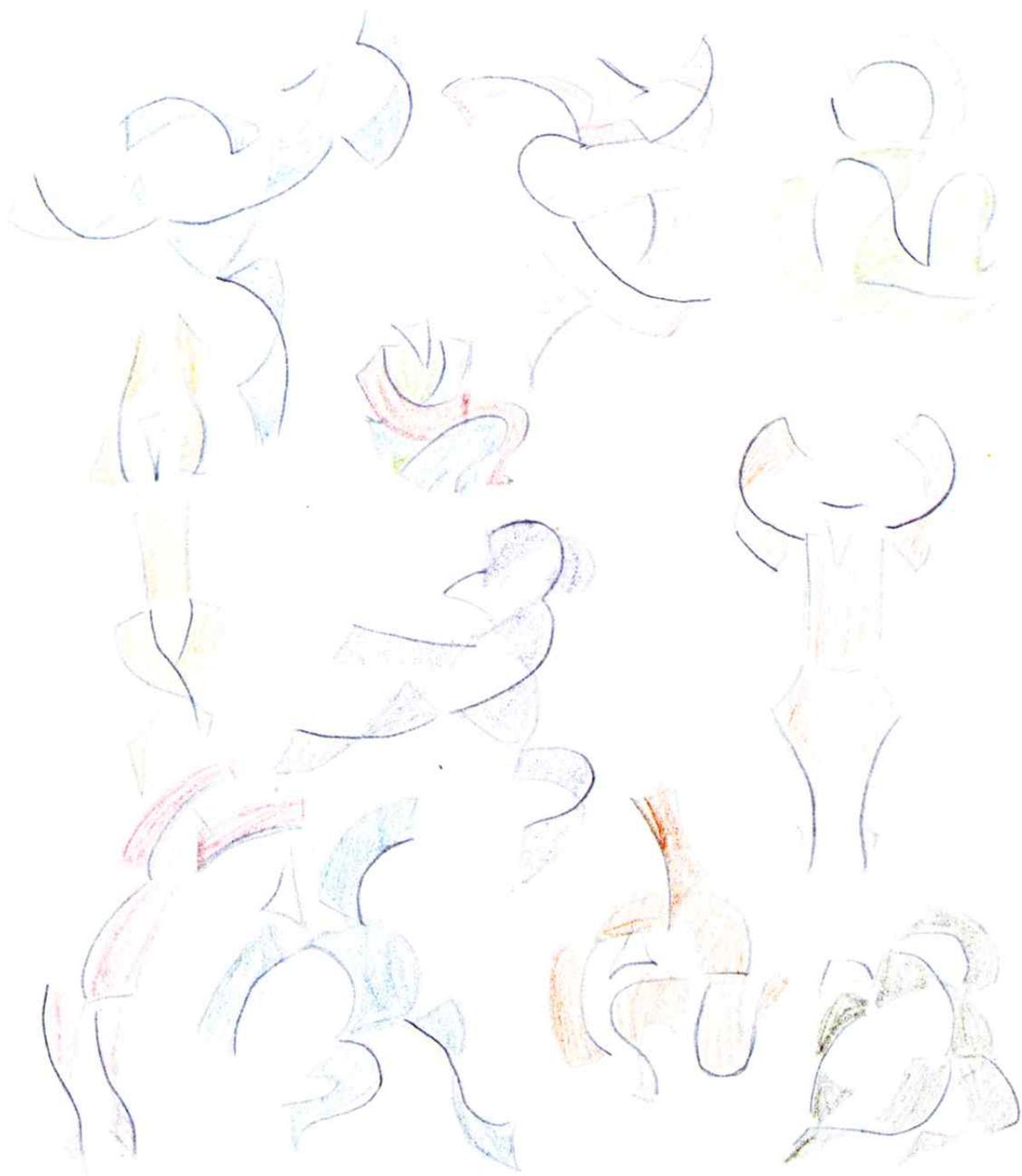


The irrational side of living finds its main mirror in art, in the realm of imagination and the sensations of harmony, which must be admitted to exist, but, in terms of causal rationality, cannot be explained.



The discovery that Man continually lives in two different media, one in which all happenings are causally determined, and the other in which the happenings are a-causally connected, leads to the necessity to become aware of the nature of the difference between the two media and of the ways of coordinating this double stream of life.

The study of the medium of causally determined happenings – or the rational side of our living – is well advanced and governed by rules and methods of science.

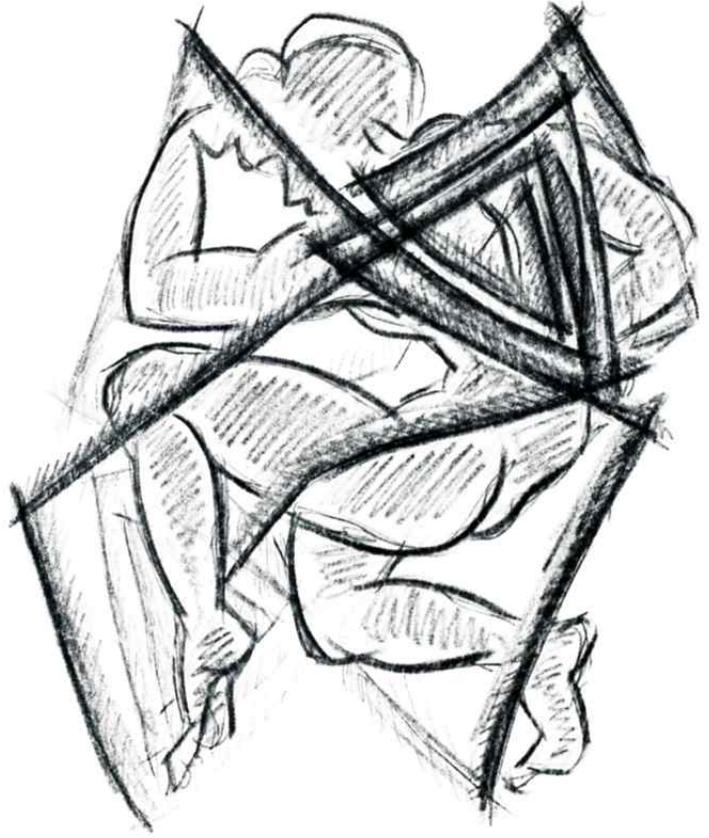


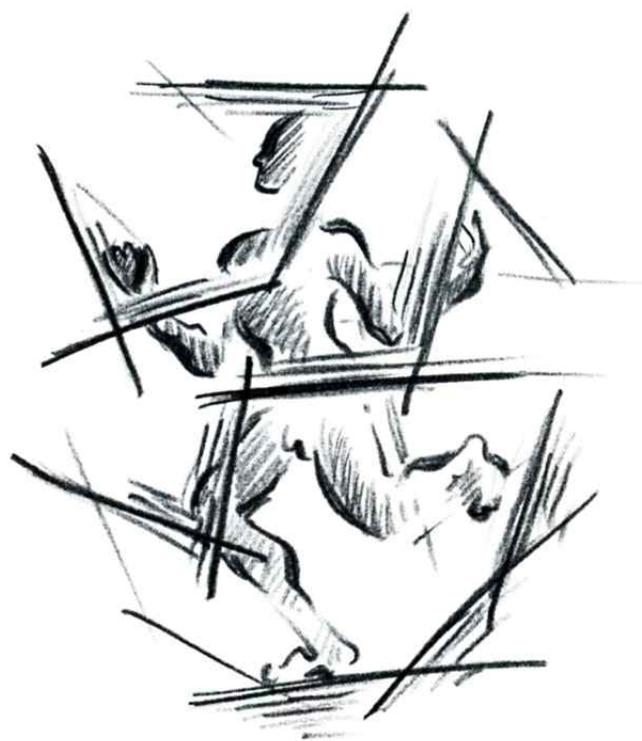


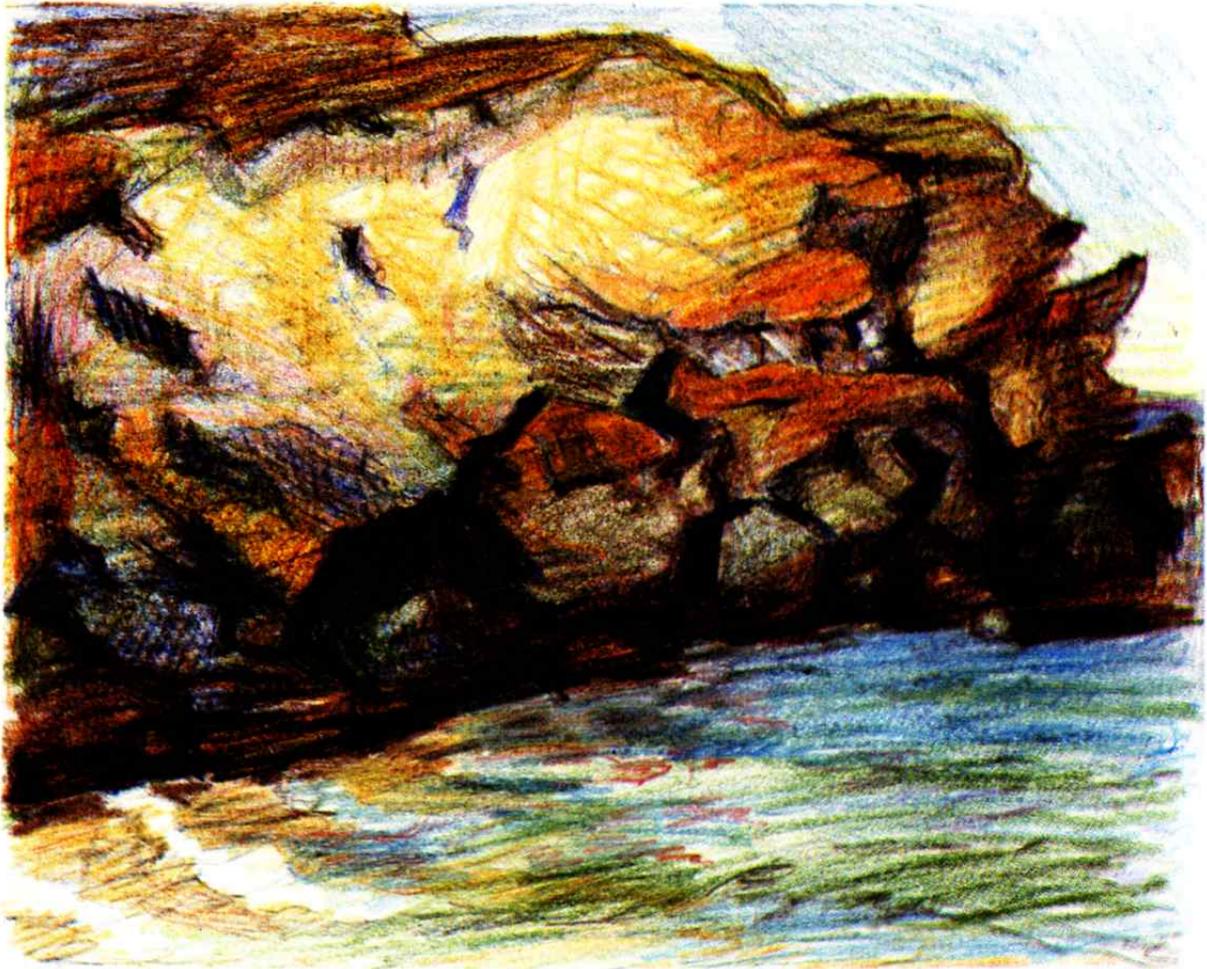
As movement is a feature in which all qualities of the mind . . . are strongly represented one may say that to study harmony of movement is perhaps one of the best ways to deal with the nature of harmony itself . . . Harmony exists between things which have a certain relation or kinship to one another. Things which have no kinship are opposites and can only become harmonised by intermediary steps leading from one opposite to another.

Harmony, therefore, does not mean only the selection of smoothly running space-patterns but harmony means that even the most disturbing combinations of movement elements are chosen purposely and characteristically in a way which is based on the feeling and knowledge of their kinship . . .

The conciliation of movement patterns and of that which the dancer has to say with these patterns, along with the physical necessities of bodily structure and function, are the most important features of the real harmony of movement.







There exists a writing of God. It is the happening in Nature. Everything that is awakened to transient existence, that which becomes, grows and vanishes, is word and letter of this writing. Becoming, growing, withering, vanishing, these metamorphoses of existence speak about the deeper sense of God's writing in Nature. We can get nearer this deeper sense only through movement which is embedded in her utterances. This movement consists of a flow which we can feel as well as comprehend. Art gives us images and rhythms which help our feeling to perceive more clearly the dynamic happening in God's writing.



Dance and its effect on the spectator is an entity transcending verbal interpretations although the bodily and mental functions used in it are perfectly describable in terms of space-pattern and rhythm, just as music is described in terms of sound-pattern and rhythm.

Words are packings and not the goods.

... but we must never forget that in our second innocence we shall not be striving toward fulfilment with a dancing body only but also with a dancing mind – which reveals in its spatial reality an exact counterpart of all the radiating patterns in the dance of electrons. Real space is not merely the interval between terrestrial bodies and objects but is, what scientists called “empty space”. It is full of mysterious paths of motions and provides an inexhaustible field for research into motor activities such as apparent in doing and dancing.

The force which leads to collision, and that which invites to nestling create three form structures: the peak – the slope – the ridge. These are no abstract concepts of lines, planes or polyhedra but concrete bodies which are tangible, graspable, visible. The rotating, undulating trace-form of these forces is engraved into them or projected out of them as moulds, grooves, humps and ridges.

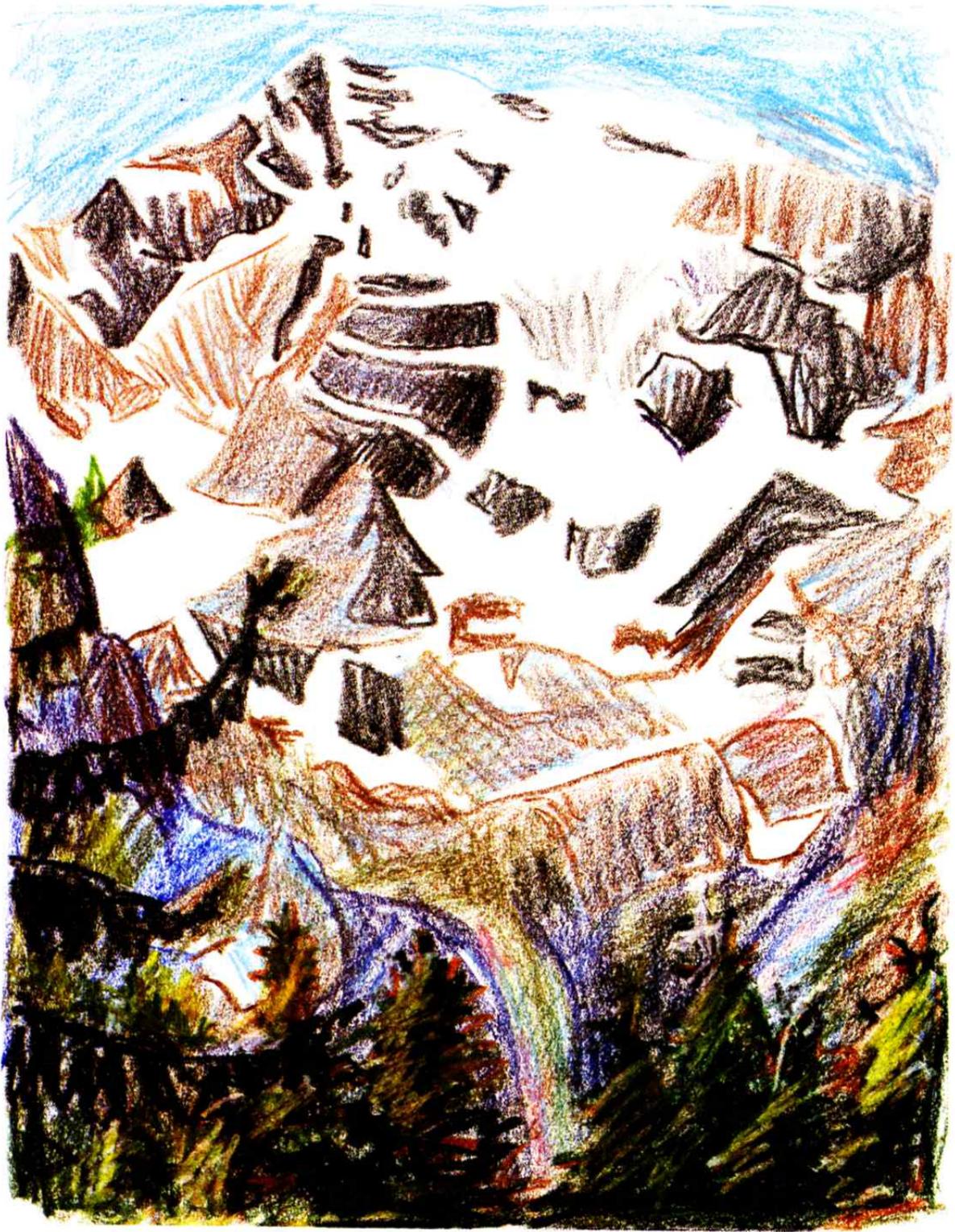
The harmony of forms is important. To study and master it is not only the concern of artists but also of all people and races. Since such a consideration leads to a spiritual insight it should be pursued in all schools and places of worship.

The flight of intuition – which is dance in which we trace otherwise invisible sequences of the streaming of space-time – connects us in a special way with reality. A certain assurance awakened in us may lead to a more complex functioning of our transient mechanism and to a clearer conception of some fundamental laws of harmony and the interrelations within the communities of living beings...

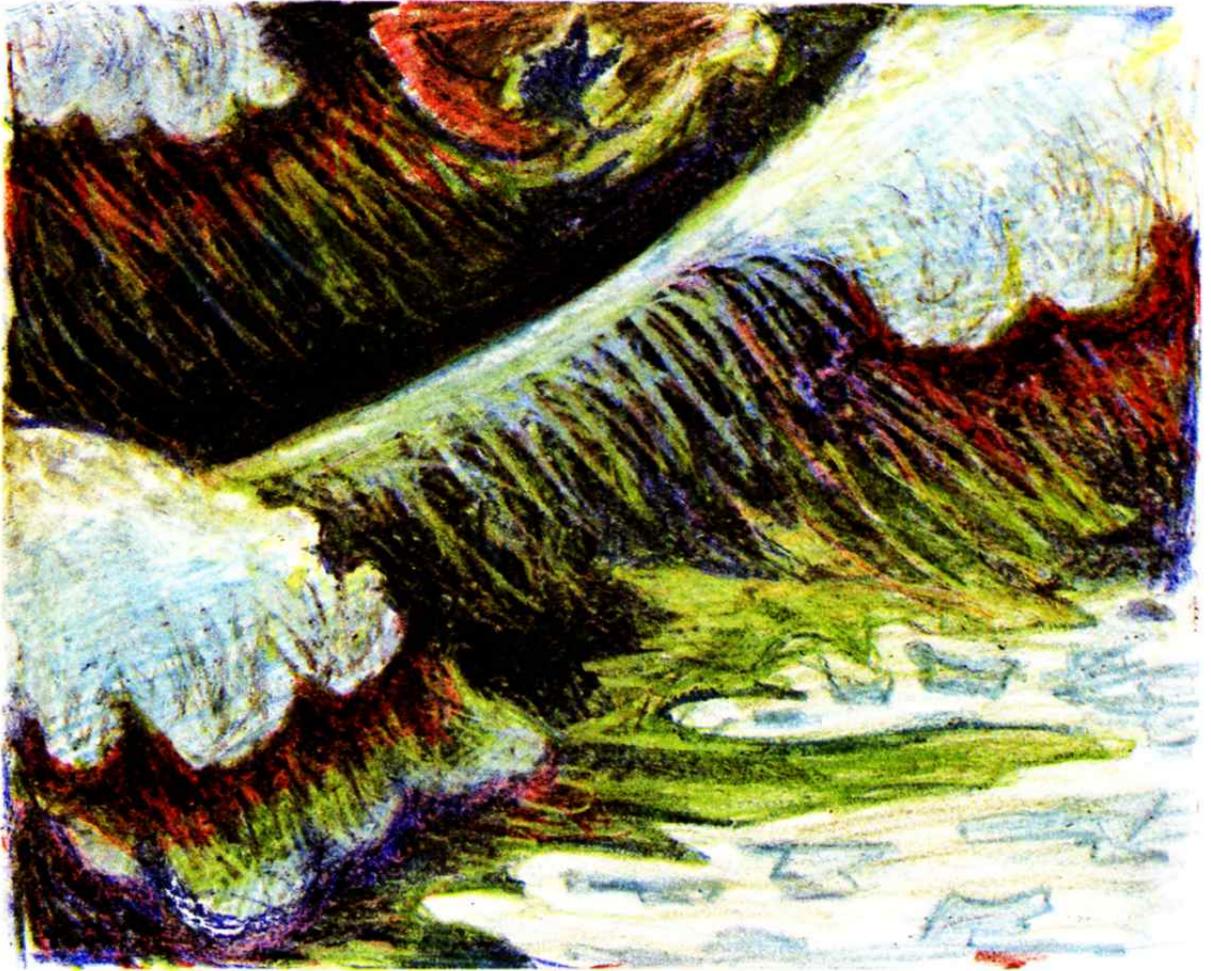


"Now!" —

"We make a dunce-dream!"

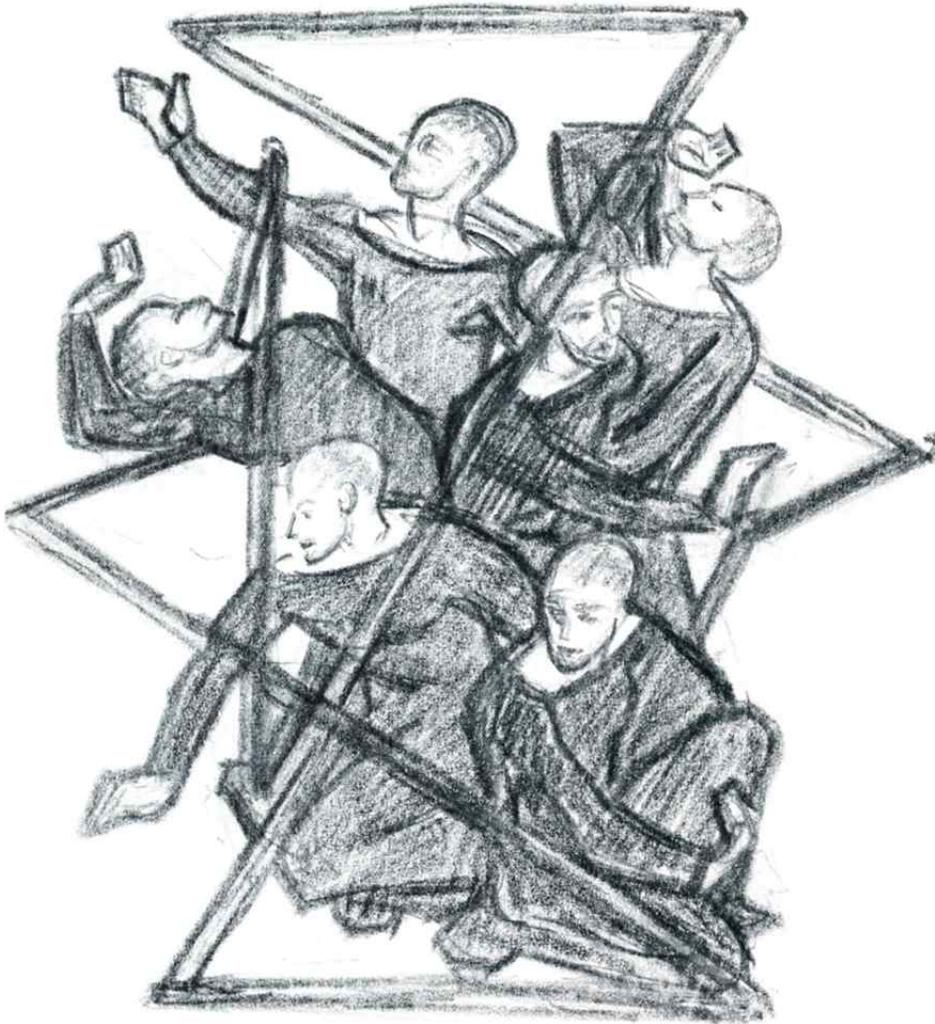


The shapes which rhythms take on in dynamic space are astonishingly manifold but nevertheless, there is a formal rule, an austerity, so to speak,



in their configurations which makes them similar, or even identical to those wonderful patterns which life produces and science unveils. To mention but a few, the marvellous atom and molecular patterns of carbon compounds, or the starlike scintillations of electric currents during an electrolytic process, have all parallels in dance movements. . . . The open book of the inner stirrings and eddies which are shown in our movements, is the source of inspiration and knowledge of the universe about which we are speaking here.

The vision of the world as an arrangement of rhythmical vibrations on a vast scale, of waves and dynamic streamings, might prove to be a powerful incentive for future choreographers.

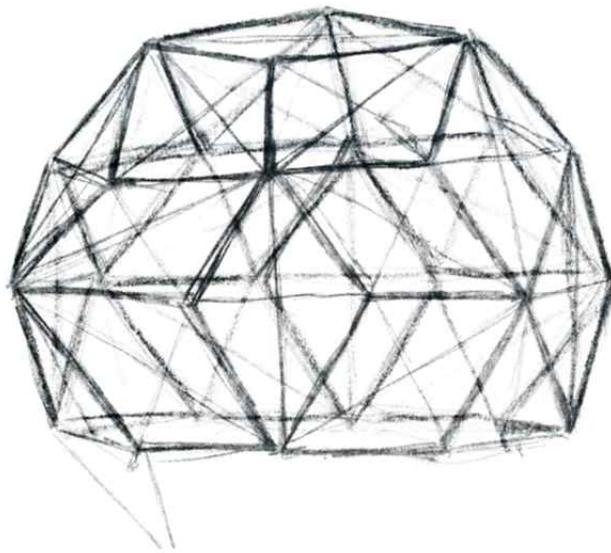
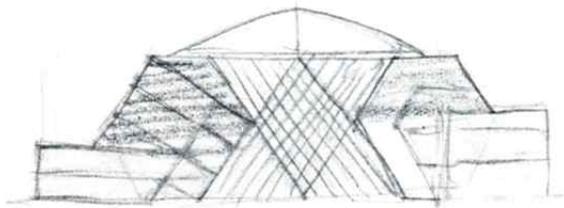
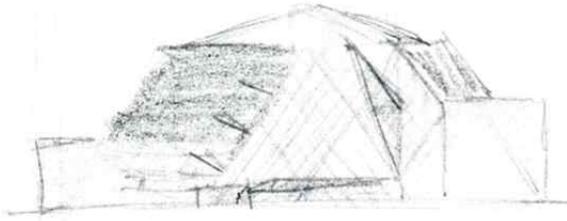
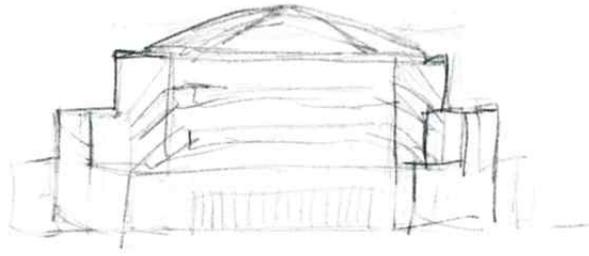


Solo dance is a duet between dancer and his environment, or dancer and his inner world. The former is subjectively real and the latter subjectively ideal. More concrete is the play and inter-action between people in which rhythms of fleeing and following, of sympathy and antipathy, appear simultaneously and therefore more powerfully.

In dance, the capacities of acting, feeling and thinking unite in a concrete form of spiritual expression.

Spatial directions combine into tensions and sequences of tensions which are no mere symbolic thoughts but rather chords of bodily gestures endowed with expressive power and conscious intent.

A person is a unified play of thought and action.





... an urge was borne, the urge to contact space that is invisible. This urge which tends into space is the pleasure to move. All movement tends into space, both the space around us and the space within us.



... The primary pleasure of dancing is the contact with space pure and simple. The essence of pleasure is touch, and beauty arises when the soul is able to return to its first contact with the silent space. It is a home-coming in which the dancer contacts space. Space loses its shapelessness, it finds its embodiment in shape. The hands caress a shape of space in writing it in the air.



Extremes are diverging expressions of a common trait.

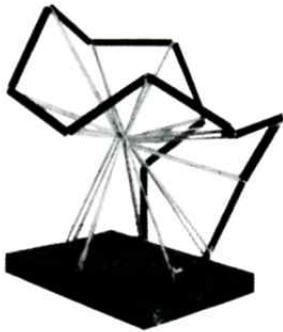


Rudolf von Laban

The real polar space qualities are:

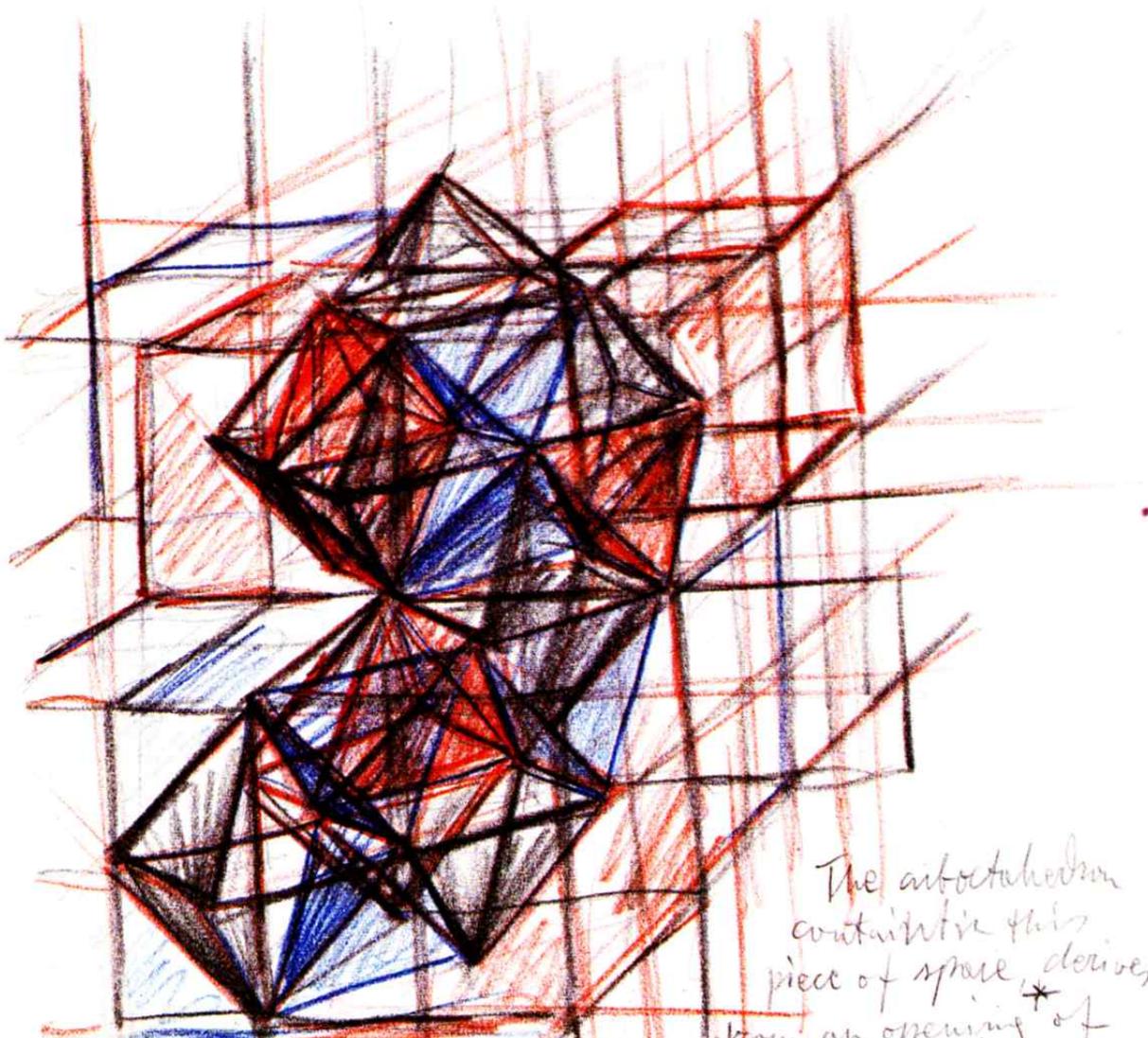
- centrally accumulated – our hereditary gift, or what we have acquired and assimilated.
- peripherally surrounding – which is acquirable, or projected to the outside and dissimilated.

Space modalities are the directions in which communication between centre and periphery take place. Their extension ranges between narrow and wide distance.



... There exists only one centre and one periphery but many directions in which communication can take place. The periphery provides directional incentives and attracts or impresses, while the centre is directionally passive and is attracted or impressed. But one could also say the centre projects – creates qualities which are stimulated and elicited by the periphery.

The centre which is the starting point can be placed anywhere in space.

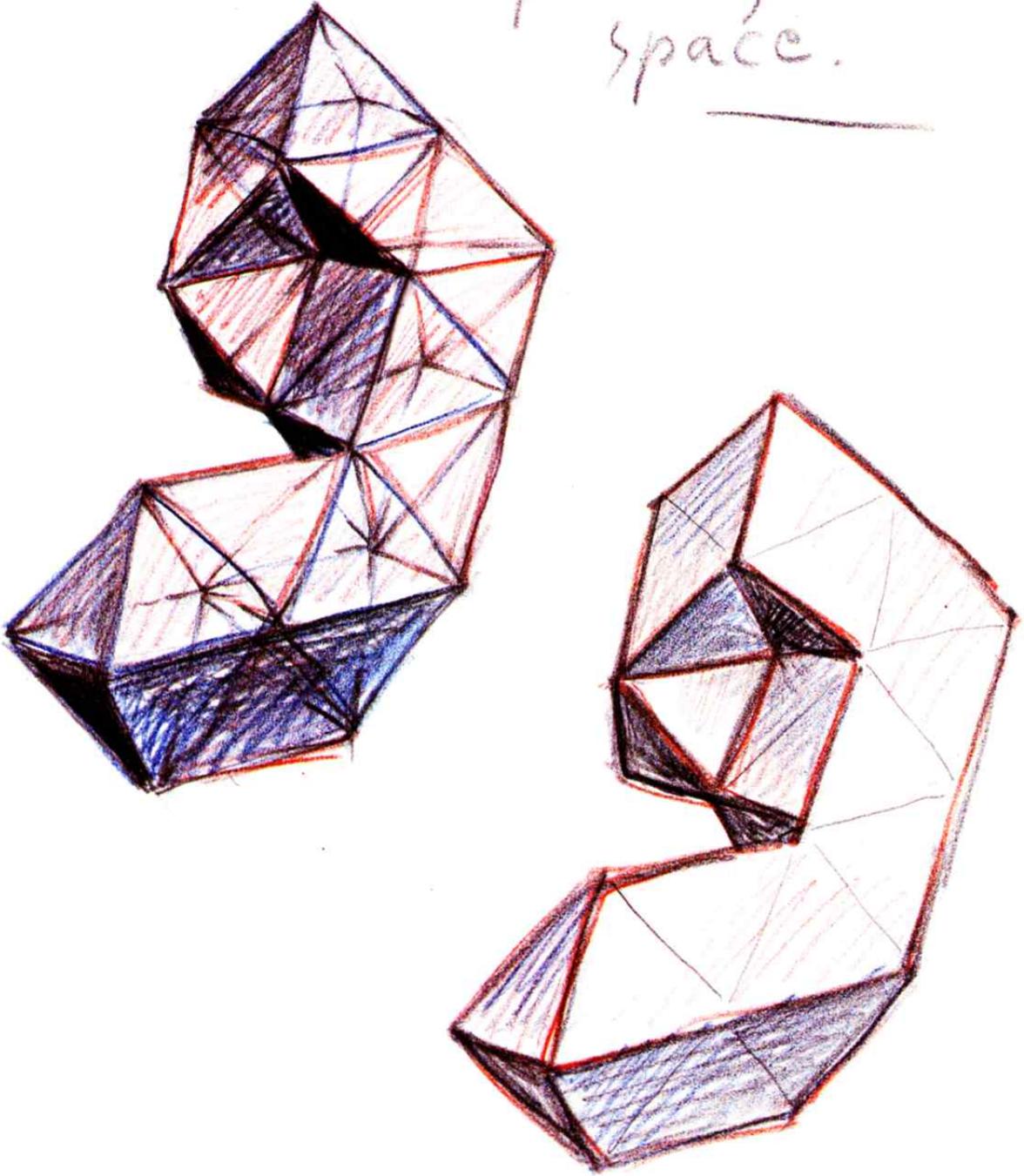


The airoctahedron
contains this
piece of space, derives
from an opening* of

* in the opening the diagonals press centrally outward, while the universal (12 or 18) is evolving towards the sphere form. The tetrahedron appears at the cuboctahedron which invert forces are the result of its cubic nucleus four-fold turning over diagonals.

the octahedron (that means a turning outside of the bordering tetrahedron) On the way of this opening (before the cuboct. is perfected) the tetrahedron appears - and with it, the double tetrahedron

A piece of
space.



Space is extensive } that is a Duality.
Space is intensive }

Space creates purposefully and playfully.
Space's activities are doing and dancing.

Space is eternal – here and now
that is Unity

The 4th dimension can be made accessible through the investigation of movement. The 4th dimension is the relation to the centre, to unity. It is tangible and can be experimentally experienced. It contains magnetic forces, even if its ways don't always lead via intuition and art. On the contrary, the reconciliation of intellect and instinct is its great deed – the open door.

Peripheral and axial flux of energies and thus expansion and rotation are primary contrasts of movement, just as warm and cold – or bright and dark – are of heat and colour. . .

In movement there is the act of circumvention – a spiral or lemniscatic pressing in-and outward, and the act of irradiation – breaking through towards inward and outward as in an implosion and explosion.

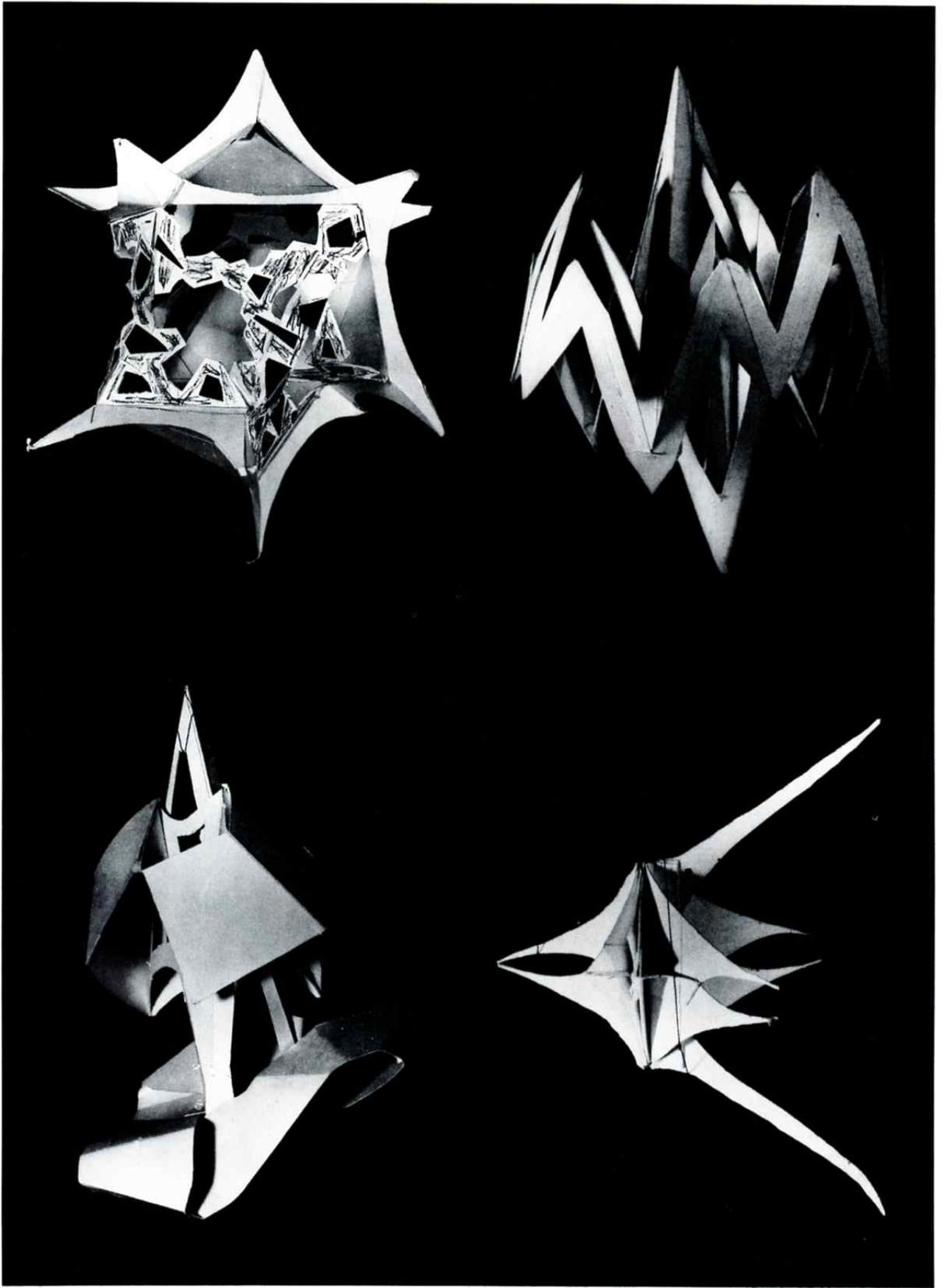
In addition to these there is equilibrium which can only be kept when in a state of alertness.

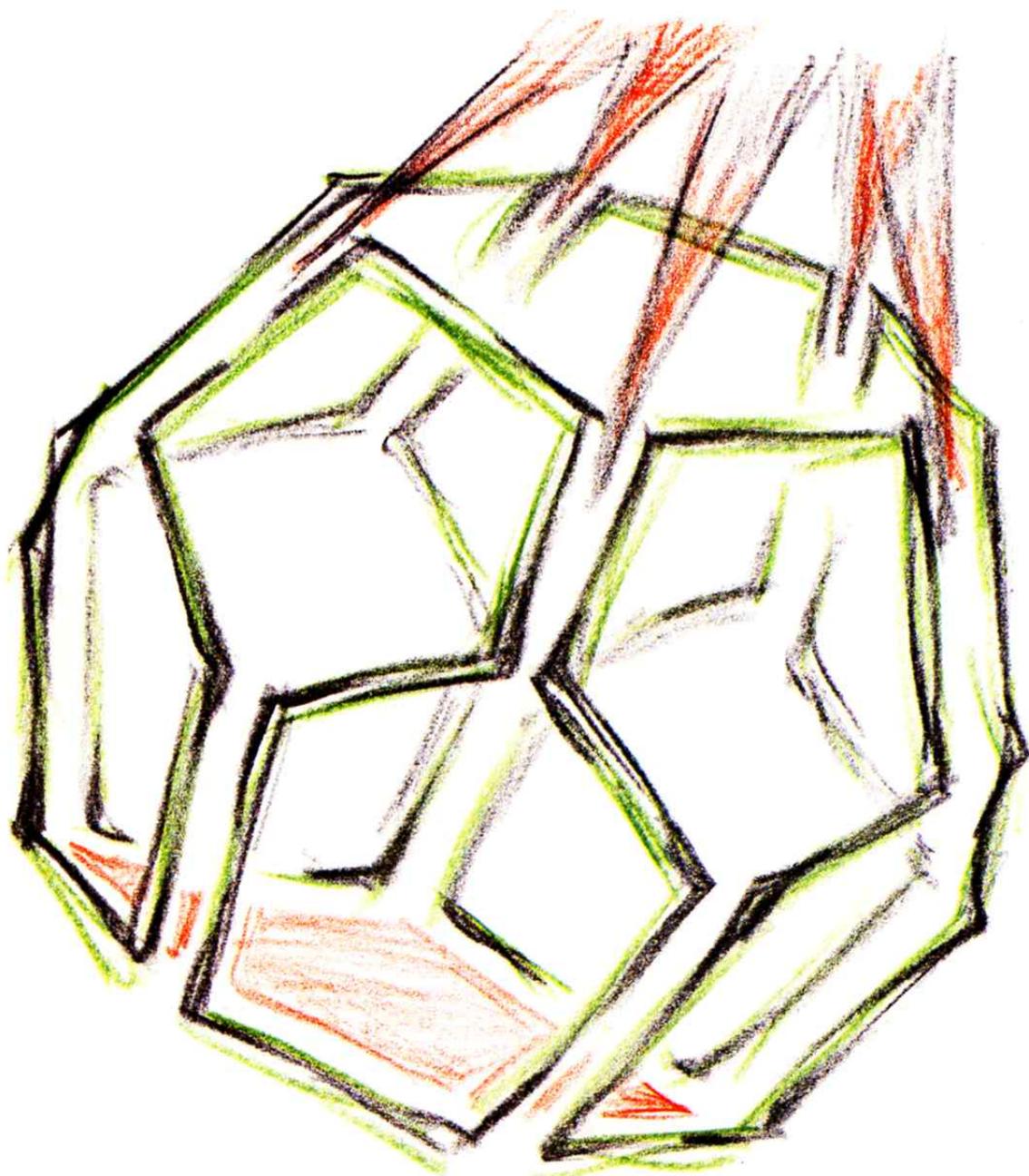
Two cultural deeds of man are: the invention of the borer
the invention of the loop
and he is striving to maintain a balance between the peripheral and axial flux of energies.

The view as related to the periphery is realised by the circuits of a movement form, i.e. by sequences along the edges of the space model.

The view as related to the centre is realised by the rays of a movement form, i.e. by sequences penetrating the central area of the space model.

The lemniscatic band circle of a movement form combines the two view points as illustrated by edge and ray, and leads to a unified view by its very nature: there is no separation between inside and outside and only one surface with one continuous edge.

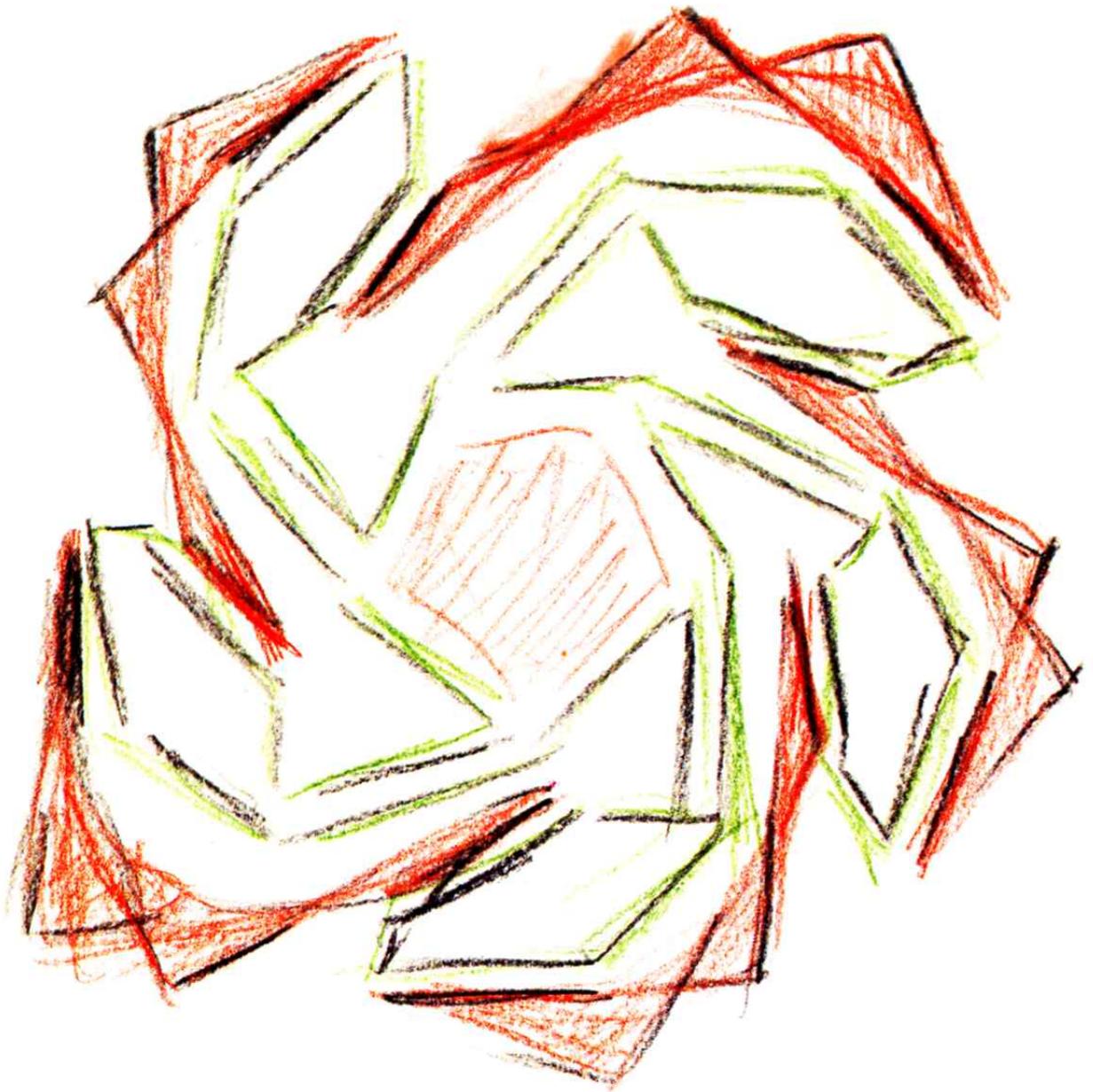


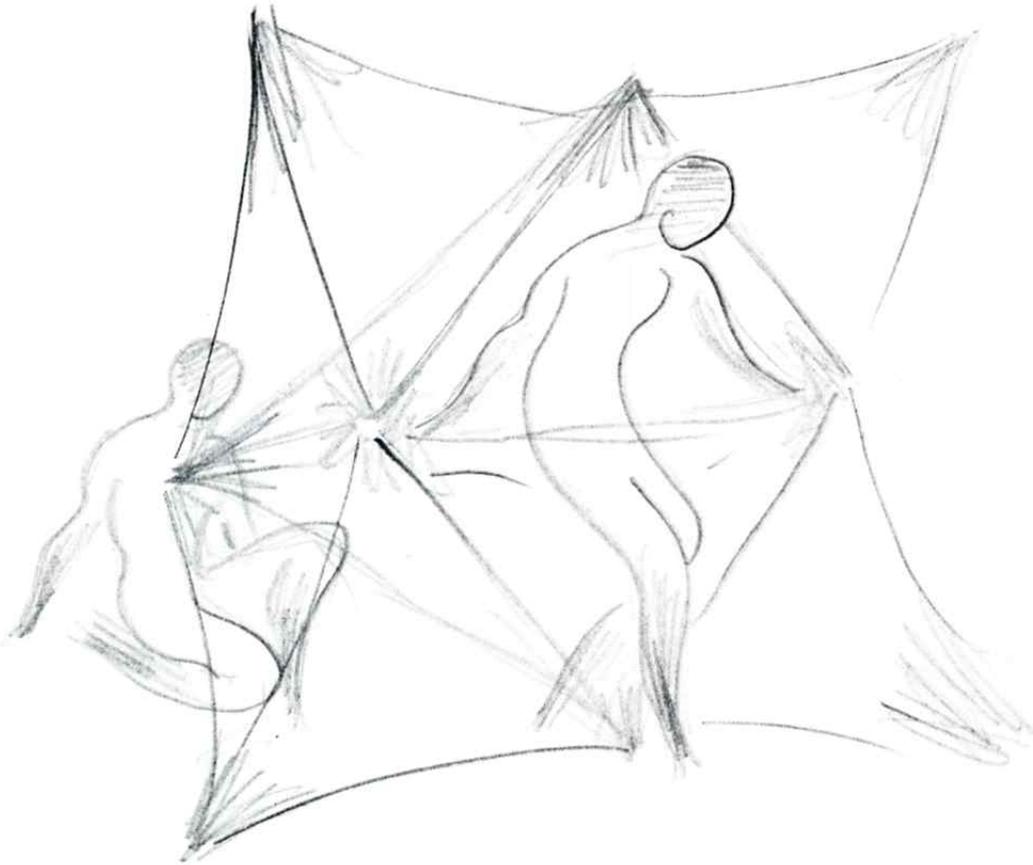
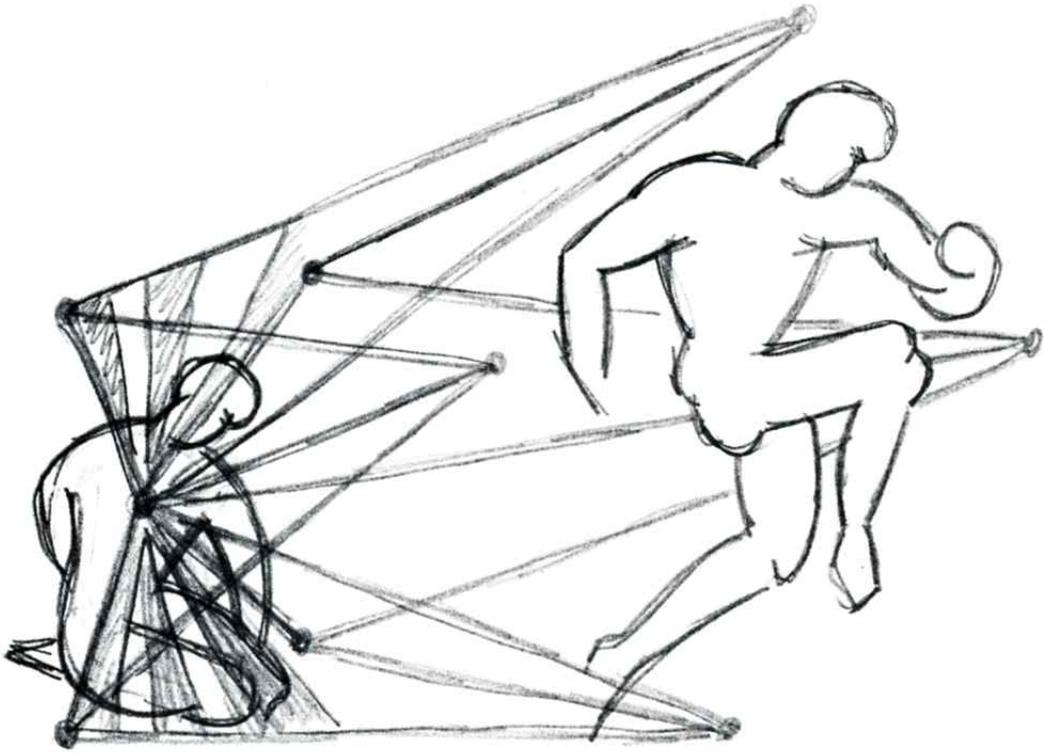


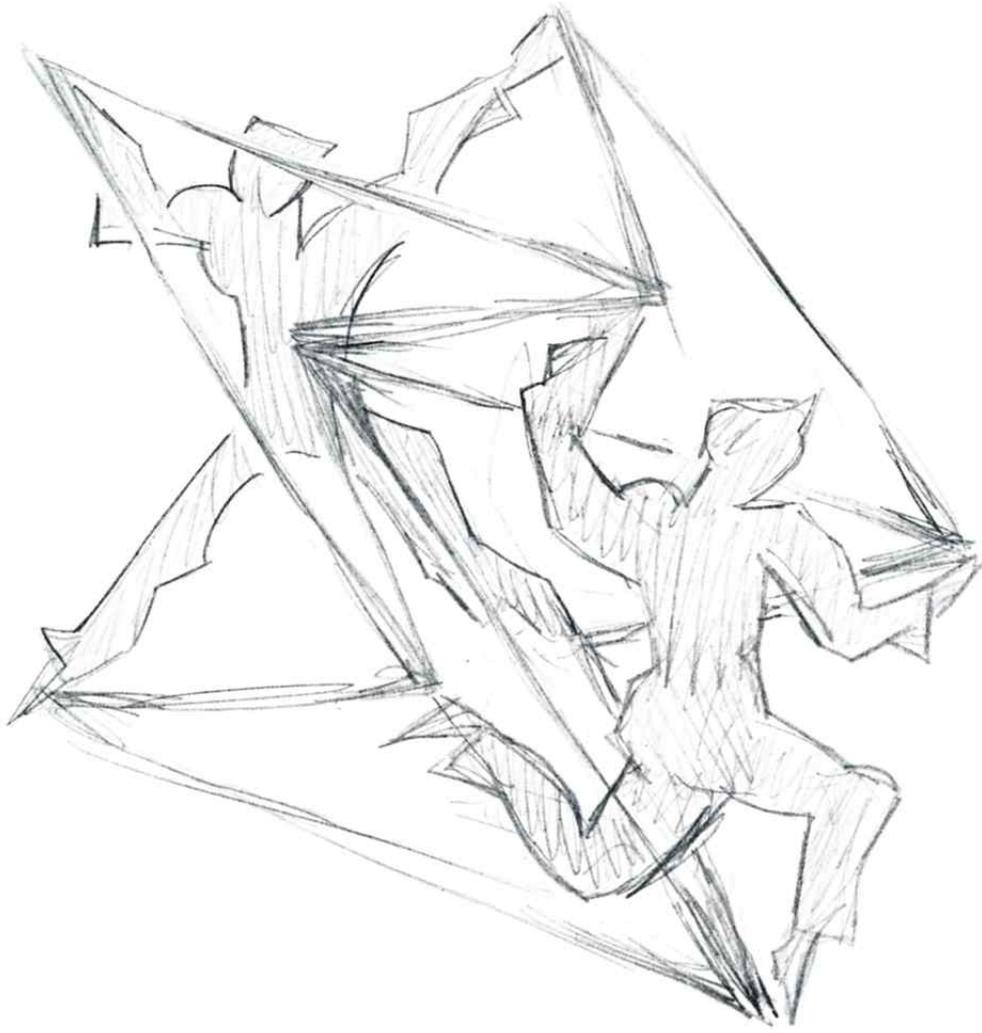
It is possible to realise the dynamic energy of a plastic thing, such as an object or an organic substance, by studying its uninterrupted contour. This may circumscribe moving or stationary organisms as well as solid or hollow bodies.

There are single bodies and groups of bodies forming concentrated energy clusters.

There are also convoluting chains of interconnected bodies along which the energy flows as well as bundles of rays. On the one hand these condense energy in a corner which protrudes into space and at the same time surrounds a cavity. On the other hand they thrust forward into space releasing and dispersing energy in an ever widening angle.

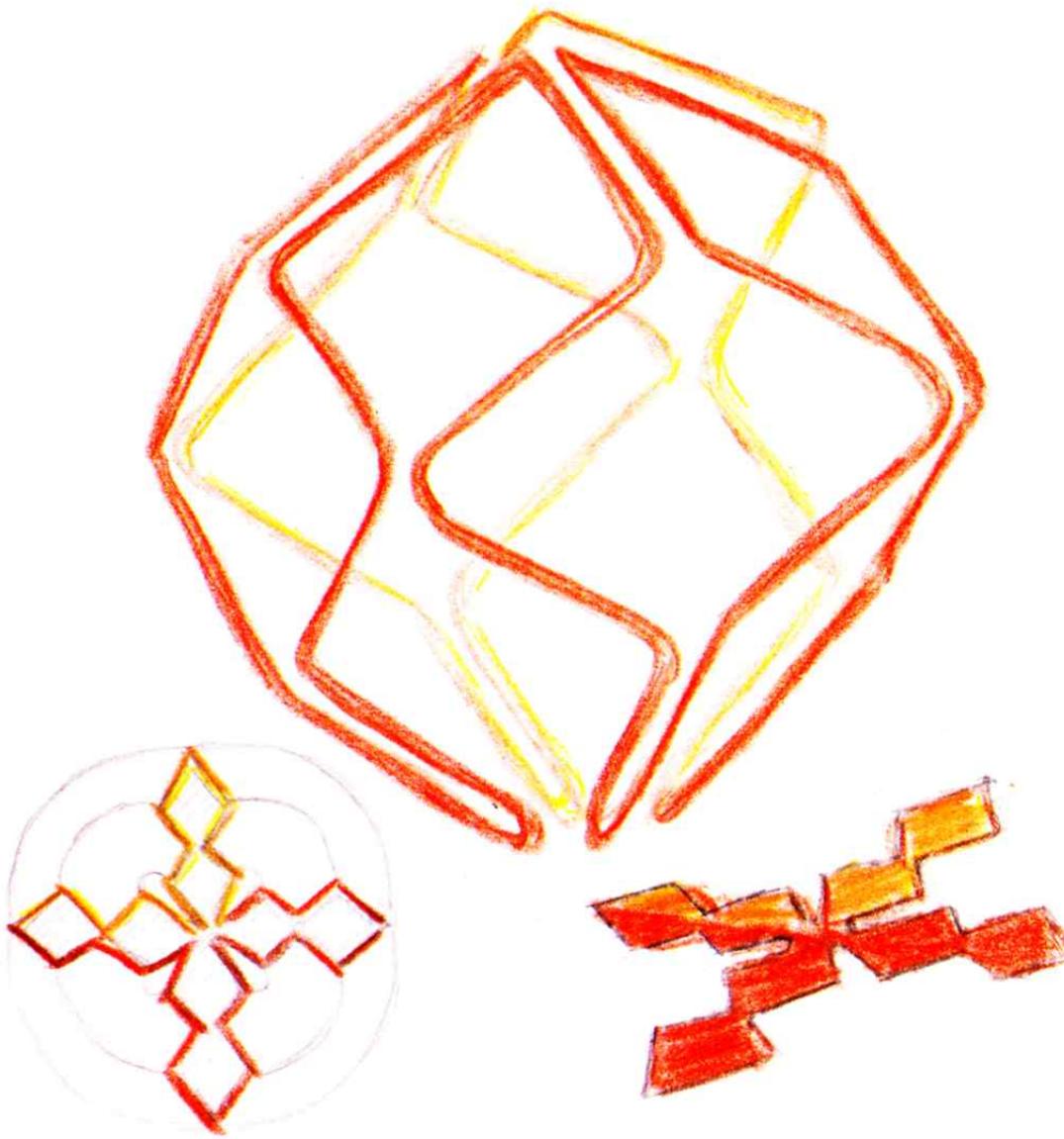






Scientific laws of nature as well as the revelations of religions are both "phenomena" of our (dancing) mind and both are subject to change... A fundamental and common tendency can be seen in both; to find lawfulness. Science seeks it through the domain or on the basis of sense-data, and religion through the domain or on the basis of imagination. It is a great question of debate whether imagination-data (intuitive awareness) are not perhaps only the other side of sense-data (intellectual knowledge) but that the two elements are present in both phenomena; no science without intuition and no religion without knowledge...

Single individuals have found and find their way through the thicket of scientific and religious skirmishing and despair under the auspices of beauty and art... To see beauty of life and to love this beauty could perhaps contribute to the willingness to conserve it and to protect it.



When unfolded, the plastic contour shows its coherent flow of movement and the manifold stages of changing energy as it spreads into a plane and finally dissolves into the infinity of a circle, (or, in reverse conglomerates into a point).

It shows a process rather than single pictures or sequences of pictures. It is a becoming which is characterised by related actions undergoing metamorphoses (as in dance), and by rhythmological possibilities (as used in music).

The structure of the contour can be viewed from without or from within. In each case its spatial pattern will appear differently but its dynamic energy can only be truly grasped by assimilating it from within.

Dance and dance exercise – seen and practised – connect us with the source of existence. Space – power – life existed before the first eddie of energy was materialised; space – power – life will exist when all stars and universes are burnt out.
Space – power – life is eternally young.



STILLNESS AND STIR

*a short extract
from poetic musings*

Stir emerges from Stillness
Stillness follows Stir
Both are endlessly variable

Untouched by time and space
Untouched by the urge to be effective
Bereft of waves of strength
Stillness is without emotion
Stillness is without presentiment and reflection
Stillness is without longing for change or unfolding
With no content – even dreamless

Without feeling or thought for beginning or ending
Stillness is without greatness or smallness
Without nearness or remoteness
Stillness to which every Stir is strange
An everlasting never ending motionless Stillness
Like an invisible circle around the nameless

And then the Stillness of expectation
The charged Stillness
The Stillness of intent
Of withholding and deciding

Space which enshrouds Stillness
Mighty forms which dream of Stillness
And Stillness contained in tenderness and grace
Stillness enceinte with raging speed
Suspense before precipitation
Stillness in the hope of fulfilled eternities
Slow growth of strength generating Stillness
Stillness preparing a powerful thrust
A tugging, a hovering, a trembling

Stillness surrounding images and feelings
Stillness eager to penetrate deep pits
Possessed by will of destruction
Of gentle joy dreaming Stillness
Stillness longing to awake
To be touched by Stir
Shaken
Carried
Pushed
Flung out of itself...

Stir, raging, blustering, spreading Stir
Stir seemingly intolerant of Stillness
Stir, Stir unceasing Stir

Stir which hastens through immeasurable spaces
Which knows no rest
To which every speed is too slow
Stir which raves
Stir as instantaneous explosion
Without introduction or echo
Stir as sparkle, as lightening
Stir which changes, unfolds
Which constantly increases
With vigorous impulse
Pace
Expansion
Power of impact

Then again
Stir which surges ferociously
As if longing for Stillness
Stir which dies...

Stir which seeks to build forms
Stir which seeks to flow
Gently waving, gliding
Or with striking blows
Constantly diverging
Stir which attracts
Stir which repels
Stir which bursts forth biting
Stir which vaults like a rainbow
Stir which germinates and proliferates in darkness
Stir which gives light and burns
Stir in need of Stillness

Stir and Stillness conversing in dance
Led by Stillness
In mild soft patterns
Whipped up by Stir
Painfully foundering in respite

Stir and Stillness together in the proportions
Of graceful form
Of a bold unfolding
Then heaviness of Stillness
And threatening Stir
A clumsy giant
Wild Stir with quivering
Stillness in the rumbling of an avalanche
Steep rising Stir in a water-billow
Stillness seeking to hold the glassy crest
While Stir with its load must rush into the valley

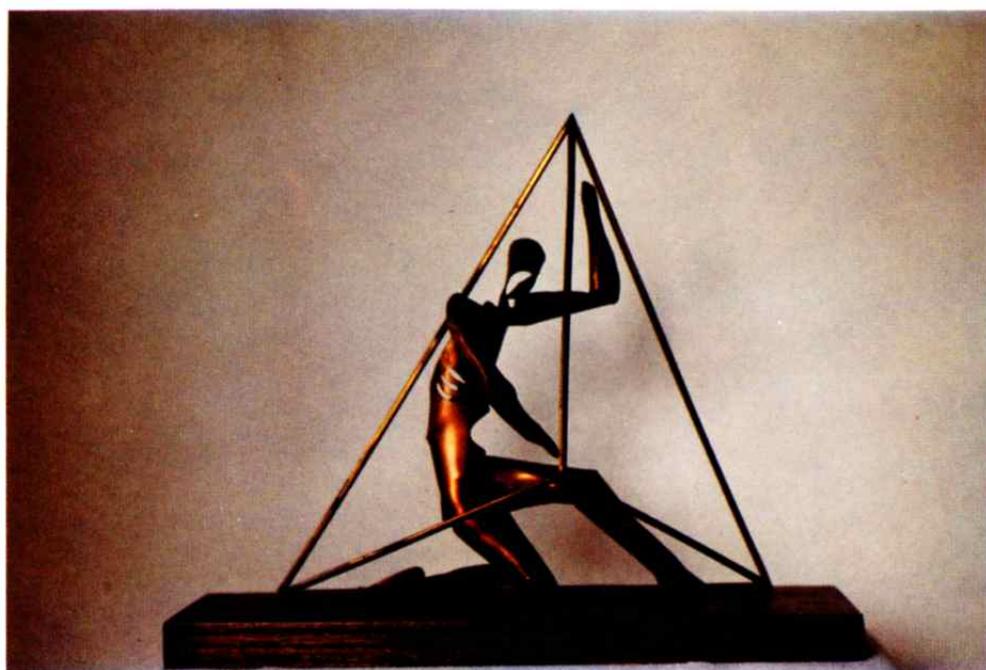
Stir in heart and mind
Ardour to create
To perceive
Chaotic twirling Stir
Stir in the rhythmic throbbing of regularity
Stir in measured flight
Stir in the roundness of a whorl
Stir in the contortion of a twist

Stillness in the limbs
Alternating Stir's pounding steps
Stillness in the sustainment of hovering glide
Stillness in the symmetry of a whirl-forged circle
Stillness in the resistance of a wring
Creating rebounding elasticity

Stir in the crystal
In its sparkling
In its growth
Stillness in the surfaces of a gem
In its hard quietude

Stillness in the resting animal
Stir gently active in the pulsing blood
Stir in the sucking power of the tree
In its branches in its buds
Stillness, dreaming Stillness
Dreaming of the Stir to come
In the kernel of the fruit, in the germ, in the embryo

Stir in battle
And sudden Stillness of death in the slain
Hard Stillness
Soft Stillness
Stir in desire
Stir in hatred
In desire and hatred Stillness
Together with Stir
Together in space, together in time
Stillness and Stir.



To
20th July
Carpool Crossing
1948.



1/1

I



2/6

II



3/11

III



4/4

IV



5/9

V



6/2

VI



7/9
II



9/12
IV



9/15
II



10/11
X



11/7
II



11/5
X



11/1
I





THE ART OF MOVEMENT

*from a List of Tasks in
The Poetry of Movement
based on Dream Situations*

Vision is not enough. It must be a promise, a vow, from which the realisation of the action breaks out irresistably.
The actions are those to which the matter of the body willingly submits.

Appearing out of the dark, the nothing.
All things and people are astonishing appearances – out of the nothing.
Power of life and action comes out of this hidden homeland, creating “presence”.

The words of a line are learnt from a book. But they must be relegated first into the unknown to gain the power of presence when they are finally pronounced.

Speech is a garment, a vestment of the wordless pre-conception of the meaning of the word.
Meaning exists only in contrast to meaninglessness. Knowledge grows out of the unknown.

The crown and the sole exchange their function in the diaphragm. Right respiration and right speech are functions of this uncertain part of the body.

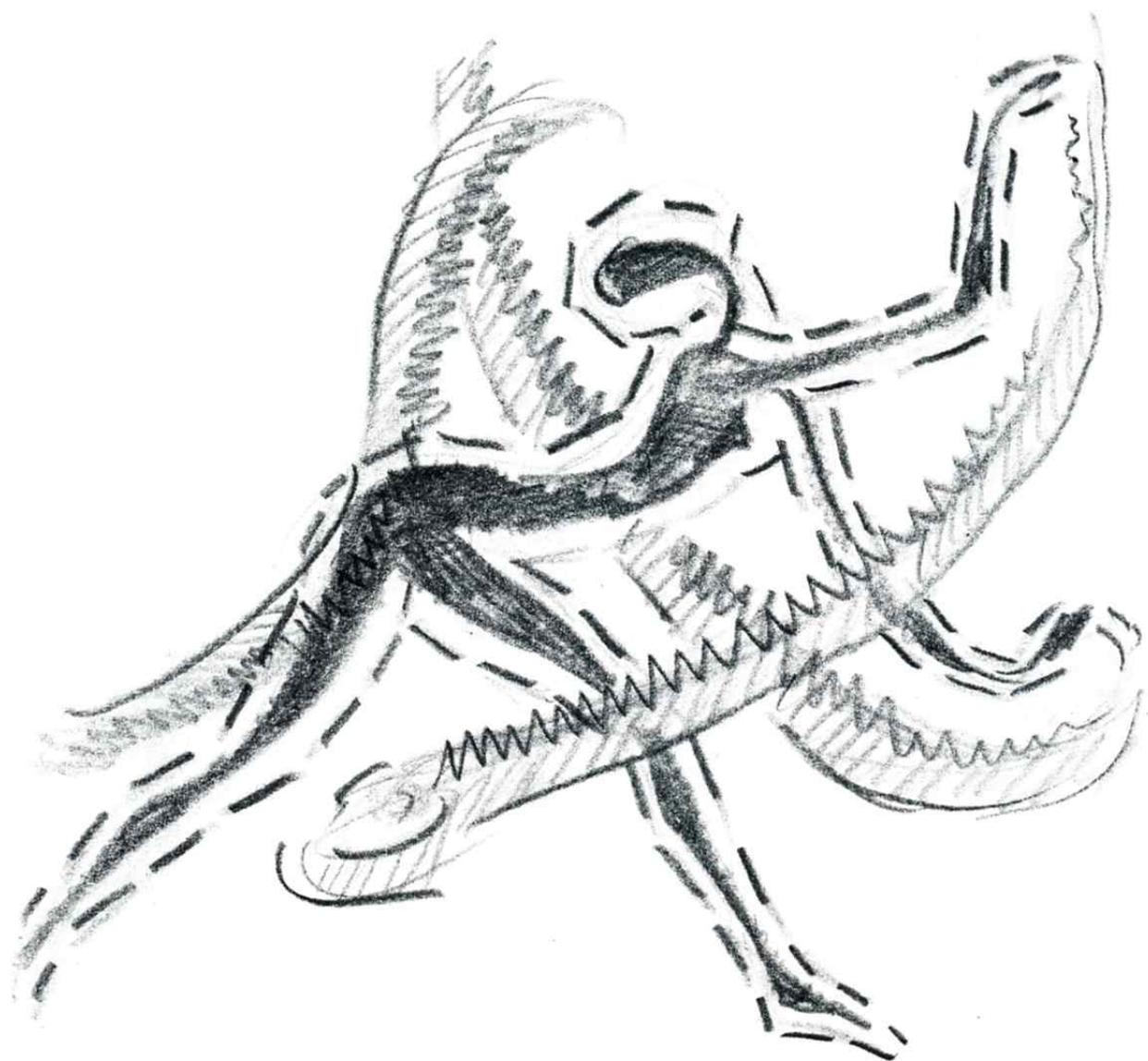
– The word is born – Air and earth are mated –

Poverty. Acceptance of that which life brings. Acceptance of work, without servile drudging, without haste and fight considered as useless. Poverty is not misery, not suffering. It is contentment. is reading the book of life, simple enjoyment of existence. – A strong heart and a clear forehead. –

Life is like a symphony
The Efforts of a human being
Resurging
From the unforgotten depth of nothingness
Into presence
Answer to the chords and voices
Of the flaming surroundings
or of its soft smouldering.

Words, dances and play
are a world apart
in which
Some cadences of the great symphony
Are transfigured and glorified
In the Arts.







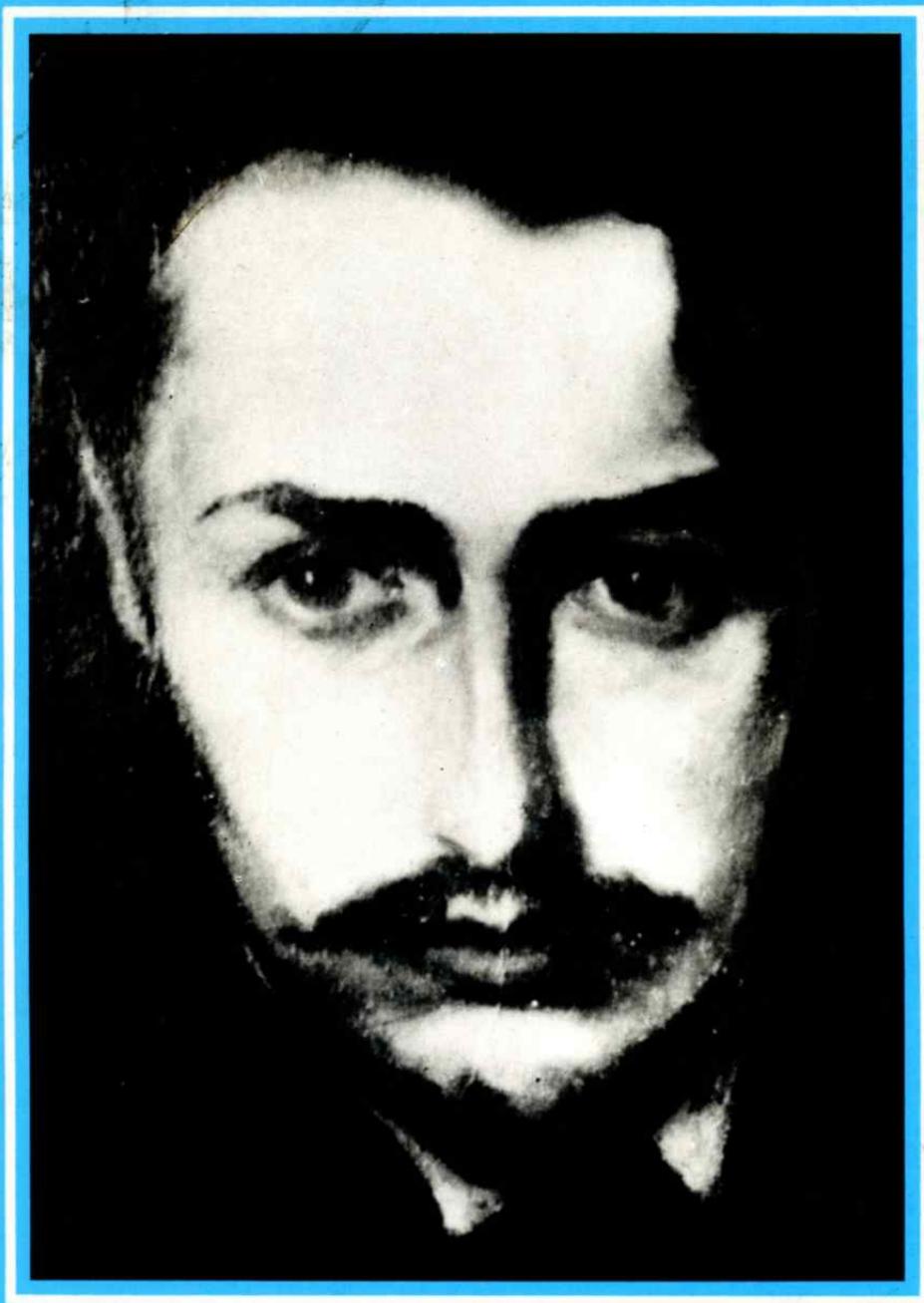
We need to know a little less and understand a little more.

LIST OF PICTORIAL IMAGES

The majority of these sketches and drawings, including the space models, here photographically represented, came into being during the years 1938 to 1940 when Laban had first arrived in England. He had then set out to re-create some of his lost study notes and to assemble the necessary material for the continuation of his inquiry into the phenomenon of movement.

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11	figure coiled up in crystalline space	27	worksheet with notes on harmonic relations
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	<i>bottom</i> opposites	30, 31	rough sketches of a dancing figure in 6 typical attitudes of tetrahedral tension
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	<i>bottom</i> photo of a model showing a similar process	33 <i>top</i>	photo of a model of Laban's "movement indicator"
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	expression of each member		contained in its original
	in high, medium and low	67	plastic form
	levels		visual image of fluidity of
53	sketches for a dance		space
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	(between 1916 and 1922)		of the figures from the
54	coastline in South England		sketched series on pages
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	cavity of a lemniscatic		figure resting (1948)
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56	figure in a web of		obtained through
	circumventing and		simultaneous progression
	irradiating energies		along a peripheral and a
57 <i>top</i>	energy in work (drawing		transversal 12-link circuit
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Selfportrait, oil, around 1899