

BASIC DANCE

ON A COLLEGE LEVEL

BARBARA METTLER AND JUNE WARNER

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BASIC DANCE ON A COLLEGE LEVEL

WORKSHOP GIVEN AT GODDARD COLLEGE BY BARBARA METTLER

TEACHING MATERIAL

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FOREWORD

This book is offered to teachers everywhere who see in human movement a field of study fundamental to the education of the total person and an area of experience central to his development as an individual and as a member of the group.

The class material, the philosophy upon which this approach to education rests, and all forms and techniques herein mentioned have been developed by Miss Mettler during many years of teaching basic dance to the old and the young: men, women and children of different races and beliefs, different life experience and fields of activity.

The workshop described here was carried out with the aid of Cora Miller, Marcia Eastman, Will Carbo and Willis Ward, members of Miss Mettler's dance group with whom she was on tour. Acknowledgement is due to them for their contribution and especially to Miss Eastman for her description of the workshop setting.

During each of the five classes, a tape recorder was running and Miss Mettler's words in the actual teaching situation are reproduced for this book.

Editing the recorded material consisted primarily of deleting repetition and of adding graphic indications for pauses, emphasis, and so forth, to replace the intonations lost by recasting the experience from one medium to another.

It has been the writer's goal to keep the spirit of Miss Mettler's presentation alive and the recording of her material accurate and throughout the book to make the reader feel he is there at the workshop taking part in the classes.

June Warner
Editor

INTRODUCTION

Barbara Mettler's approach strips dance of all non-essentials and makes it immediately available to the average person as pure movement experience. Here is an account of the success of this approach when presented to a mixed college group.

The students of Goddard College, a small, progressive co-educational college in northern Vermont, participated in the fall of 1953 in a workshop given by Barbara Mettler and members of her dance group.

Actually, "participated" was a mild word for it because, as one of the students there said at the time, "Goddard's gone dance crazy!"

Miss Mettler had been invited to come to Goddard by a student committee which felt that modern dance should be part of their college curriculum and they wanted a week-long workshop to introduce the idea to the other students. Except for several faculty members who took part in the classes, the faculty was not much in evidence and, perhaps, was surprised at the suddenness and violence of this new student enthusiasm.

At Goddard, the students took their learning seriously and with active, almost voracious, eagerness for new ideas. During their stay, Miss Mettler and her group were surrounded at every odd moment, at meals, after classes, and in the evenings by music, art, literature and psychology students all wanting to discuss the philosophy of basic dance and its relationship to their particular field.

Some members of an informal student jazz group were interested in finding new approaches to music and improvisation based on Miss Mettler's creative work. Several impromptu classes were organized so that they could work with Miss Mettler and a member of her dance group, Willis Ward, who was also a musician. Another member of Miss Mettler's group with long experience in teaching children, Cora Miller, gave a class at the college nursery school in which the student teachers as well as the children took part.

However, more important than the intellectual fervor generated was the quality and quantity of free sound and movement joyfully produced. Before the five sessions were over Miss Mettler had from one half to three quarters of the college dancing including boys as well as girls, a few faculty members and their wives, one seven-year-old faculty child, a visiting parent, two overweight boys and a girl with a spastic condition.



ARM DANCE

Lesson I

EXPRESSIVE USE OF SEPARATE BODY PARTS

Individual Exploration of Movement

Separate Body Parts

head	hips
shoulders	knees
elbows	ankles
wrists	toes
fingers	feet
hands	lower legs
lower arms	whole legs
whole arms	trunk
upper body	

Combination of Parts

hands and feet
shoulders and hips
elbows and knees
one arm and one leg

Entire Body

Free Choice of Part

Group Improvisations

Duet: head
Trio: arms
Quartet: legs
Quintet: trunk
Larger Groups: free movement
Entire Class dancing together

Lesson I

EXPRESSIVE USE OF SEPARATE BODY PARTS

introduction

Good afternoon, everyone. You have come here for a creative dance experience and, since every minute is valuable, I want to make the best use of our time. We are going to keep visitors out because that will help you get into the work.

We want to give you as much as we possibly can this week and, of course, that will be partly up to us and partly up to you. You'll get out of the workshop exactly what you put into it and you can put more into it if we have a concentrated atmosphere. That's why we won't have any spectators.

I'm not going to talk much about our work now. Dancing is something to do, not something to talk about. I think all you need to know at the start is that we are going to work in a way which will make it just as easy for the beginners as for the more experienced ones because we are going to build up the creative dance experience right from the bottom.

You probably realize that there are as many different approaches to modern dance as there are modern dancers. We call our approach basic dance because we are concerned with dance as a basic creative activity. We approach dance as an independent medium of expression; we do not derive our dance experience from music or drama. So, when you dance, I am not going to ask you to tell stories in your dancing, I am not going to ask you to express specific emotions, that is all the province of drama. I am not going to ask you to interpret music, I am not going to ask you to interpret anything. I am going to ask you to try to experience body movement as pure movement and to begin to move freely as you never have moved before and to learn how to create lively interesting movement experiences for yourself.

We are not going to approach dance as a "spectator sport." We are not dancing to entertain an audience. We are dancing to create an art experience in movement. Just as we can create an art experience in sound and call it music, or an art experience in color and line and call it design, we can create an art experience in movement and call it dance.

I am not going to give you technical exercises. Technique is something which can be picked up at any time when there is a need for it. I am going to give you creative problems to solve. I suppose you have creative problems in some of your art courses, for instance in design or music. I too am going to give you creative problems. You will grow through them and, if you come regularly this week, you will notice considerable growth through every period.

preparatory
problem:
group spacing

Here is your first problem for today. It is a preparatory one. You see what our dancing area is. Stand up and each one of you find for yourself a spot in this area where you can be alone. Distribute yourselves in such a way as to have room all around you so that you can move freely and so that the space is equally divided among you. If someone were looking down from above he would see a regular spatial pattern. This is a group problem, so solve it...that's right, good. Don't go too close to the walls and don't stand too close to one another. Each person should be by himself and should have a good space around him.

Sit down on the floor...and now lie down on the floor. We in the visiting group have been lying and rolling and crawling on the floor all morning and you must get used to being on the floor too.

complete
relaxation
on floor

Since it's important to know the difference between movement and no movement when you dance, we are going to start this movement class with no movement. No movement means quiet...repose. Be completely relaxed for a moment. Lie on your back. Fling your arms wide. Achieve a loose, free position. Let your legs roll a little apart, don't hold them tightly together. Soften up all of your muscles. Let go. Keep your

palms up. Let your elbows be a little bent. Close your eyes lightly. Let your lips open a little so there is no tightness around the mouth.

It will be better next time if you are not chewing gum. Perhaps if we bring a basket you can get rid of it now. (Laughter from class and Miss Mettler while a member of the visiting group goes around collecting gum). We want to know when we are moving and when we are not moving, and when we are not moving we are not moving even the jaws. You'll never learn to dance if your feet are trying to go in one rhythm while your jaws are going in another.

All right, let everything be soft and loose. The breathing also. Don't hold your breath. Breathe naturally, easily. Try to feel complete relaxation.

free movement
of whole body
on floor

Now when I say "Go" you're going to begin to move just for the sake of moving. Your body is made to move, it is intended to move, it wants to move, and so follow its needs in movement. You may want to stretch and twist and turn and roll around. You are in a kind of sleeping position and stretching movements will feel good. All right, let's try it. Go! Close your eyes, no-one is looking at you and I'm not looking at you either. A little stretching and twisting in any way that feels good. If you touch someone else it doesn't matter. You are a little close and you may touch...keep on going...and rest (claps hands to stop movement).

Try it again. Don't be afraid, don't be timid. Your eyes are closed. Nobody is looking at you. Shut off your brain for a moment and feel how good it is to stretch all the muscles. Here we go! In order to stretch one part of the body you may have to bend another. You may have to twist. You may have to turn over. You may have to lift your legs in the air or your arms. You may have to spread yourself wide...keep on going...keep on going...much, much more movement...and rest.

We are going to try it again - and again - and again until there is lots of movement in this room. And the

purpose of the movement is only to move. Dance is movement. You can't create dance experiences until you are moving and moving freely from within, not like puppets with someone pulling the strings but as live bodies, each moving in its own way, no two alike. No two of you could possibly move in the same way even if you tried, so why try?

Now start to move again and, first of all, let's have quantity of movement, quality doesn't count just yet. Here we go! Lots of movement for the sake of movement...yes!...arms, legs, the whole body expanding contracting, tensing, relaxing, twisting, turning... keep your eyes closed...rest.

separate
body parts

All right. (Miss Mettler laughs) Don't mind if I scold you and threaten. It is so necessary to become free in these first steps. In trying to move your whole body you are frightened to death. Let's try just a part of the body. Come to a sitting position. Any comfortable sitting position. A sitting position in which you can move easily. A relaxed sitting position, an easy sitting position.

It is a rule of the game that you must close your eyes. It is not fair to anyone else, but worst of all it is not fair to yourself if you keep them open. Dance is not a visual experience, it is a motor experience. It is in the muscles and in order to awaken feeling in the muscles it is necessary to close the eyes. Not tightly, not tensely but loosely. If those of you who are on the edge of the group want to turn outward and face the wall, that would do as well as closing the eyes.

head

Now a loose, easy sitting position, everything free, nothing tight. Eyes closed. See in how many different ways you can move your head. That means head and neck. It may even mean head and neck and a little bit of the upper spine because the neck is a part of the spine. All right, experiment with head movement. Your head, nobody else's, not like anyone else's. You may move fast, you may move slowly. Enjoy different paces and directions. All kinds of head movements. Don't be afraid, it's very easy. Twist your head, turn

it, drop it, shake it, move it backward, forward, side-ward, see what it can do...good, that's right...yes...let it hang, let it flop, let it drop...that's all right, everyone was moving that time.

Take a little more of the spine with the head and neck. Let your head draw your spine sometimes forward, sometimes backward, sometimes sideward. Let it draw the whole upper part of the body into the movement. Eyes are closed, mouth is open. The more relaxed the mouth is, the freer the neck movement will be. Here we go...good, now you're getting into it...yes, everyone is in it now...enjoy the quality of head movement, the head can do things that no other part of the body can do...rest.

shoulders

We are going to take different parts of the body and do just what we did with the head. First, the shoulders. All right, your eyes are closed, your mouth is relaxed, and you are going to see in how many different ways you can move your shoulders. Here we go! Follow the movement with your feeling, be aware of what you are doing...keep on going as I talk...when I use the word "feeling" I mean awareness, be aware of the movement, how it feels in the muscles...keep your eyes closed all the time...you can move one shoulder at a time or both together: forward, backward, up and around, fast, slow, jerky, smooth...don't worry about dancing, just enjoy the movement, dance will come of itself, it is there sometimes when we don't even know it...good, that's better...rest.

elbows

You can always find another sitting position if the one you are in is uncomfortable. Now elbows. Put your attention on your elbows and see how much enjoyment you can find in elbow movement. Here we go...elbows are very interesting, they're angular and angles are just as interesting as curves, sometimes more so...good, now you're getting into it...this is an elbow dance, let the elbow lead, put your whole attention on your elbows as if there were nothing to you except this part of the body...keep on trying...keep on trying...rest.

wrists

Yes, each part of the body. Now come wrists. Your eyes are closed. Put your whole attention on your wrists. Here we go, see what you can do with them... this is experimentation, this is exploration...be sure you are moving your wrists; of course with the wrists leading the whole arm can move but this is a wrist dance...the wrists can do very interesting things that nothing else can do...all right, rest.

fingers

Fingers, ten fingers moving just to see how they can move. Try moving your fingers in different ways... move them separately, all together...enjoy moving them...good, keep it up...

hands

Keep on moving your fingers and add the wrists. Now you are dancing with fingers and wrists, the whole hand, this is a hand dance...as much movement as possible, it is most important that you create quantity of movement; first quantity, then begin to feel the quality... don't try to be pretty, don't try to be anything, just be yourself...you have wrists, they are made to move, see how they can move...

lower arms

Add the elbows. Now you are moving fingers and wrists and elbows, the whole lower arm...and there is more movement, there is quite a lot of movement now...

whole arms

Now add the shoulders. Now the whole arm is moving from the shoulder...shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers...

Now add the head...

upper body

Now add the whole spine. You are moving the whole upper body, everything, don't neglect any part: head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers...don't stop, keep on going...yes, move everything from the waist up as much as possible...rest.

I'd like to see that same upper body movement again. Start once more just as you did, fingers, wrists, elbows, and then see how much movement you can create with the whole upper part of your body. Here you go...

fingers...add wrists...add elbows...add shoulders...
add head...add upper body...good, keep it up, it's
improving all the time...keep your eyes closed, feel
it, be aware of what you are doing, sense it, sense it
in your muscles, not so much in the mind, it's in the
muscles...rest.

feet

All right, lie down on your back again. Eyes closed,
upper body relaxed. The arms are wide and free and
the whole upper body is loose and easy. Lift your legs
up in the air. This is foot movement. Your legs are
up in the air and you're going to move your feet, your
ankles and your toes, in as many ways as you can...
separately and together, in relation to each other, any
way you want, but lots of movement...and rest.

legs

We'd better try that problem again - let's have more
movement. Legs up in the air. Move toes and ankles...
and now add the knees...now add the hips so that the
whole lower body is moving...you need not stay on
your back, let the movement of the leg move your en-
tire body around, turn, twist...yes, that's right...
and rest.

hips

Let's come to a standing position. Stand up and,
with your eyes closed, move the legs starting the move-
ment at the hip. If you feel more secure in your balance
with your eyes open, then open them but keep them low-
ered so that you are not aware of the movement of other
people. All right, try it...movement from the hip...
rest.

knees

Now the knees. Put your attention on the knees for
a moment and see how your knees can move...move-
ment of the entire leg led by the knee, dominated by
the knee...you can lift your knees in the air, you can
put them down on the floor, you can lift them both up
in the air at once (laughter from the class) or you can
put them both down on the floor together...you can
turn them in, you can turn them out, you can bend them,
you can stretch them...good, keep it up...knees are
very interesting...all right, rest.

ankles

Now for the ankles - here we go. This is ankle

movement. Oh, your body can make so many different movements. Unlimited! Now, explore the feeling of what ankles can do...keep your eyes down, either closed or lowered...and rest.

toes Now toes. Ten toes, move them in various ways... one after another, or all together...

feet Now toes and ankles, the whole foot, both feet. This is a foot dance...

lower legs Add the knees. Toes, ankles, knees, the whole lower leg moving...

whole legs Add freedom at the hip and you'll have the whole leg moving, both legs moving. A leg dance...and rest.

trunk All right, lie down on the floor again. In the lying position, try moving the trunk. We have worked with the arms, legs, head and all the extremities. Now move that part of the body which excludes arms, legs and head. Any lying position, movements of the trunk, keep your arms and legs relaxed...that's good, keep it up, some of you are getting a lot of movement in the trunk...keep your eyes closed, if you look at other people you are lost and you might as well give up; you'll start to compare yourself to others and there is no comparison, no two people could possibly do this in the same way...all right, rest.

Now come to a standing position and continue to explore trunk movement standing up...forward, backward, sideward, every way...all right, rest.

combinations:
hands and feet We've tried many different parts of the body, so now let's try some combinations. How about hands and feet? Move your hands and your feet in some sort of relationship to each other. Hand movement will include wrists and fingers, foot movement will include ankles and toes. Find ways of moving these parts together at the same time. Don't try to dance, just move in your own way, a way that feels good to you, and then you will be dancing...be simple - be simple! Find the same interest that a child finds in moving hands and feet for the first

time...the thrill of discovering what it feels like to move hands and feet...a baby can do this, can't you?
(Laughter from the class)

shoulders
and hips

All right, try some other relationships. Shoulders and hips. This is hard but try it anyway. I remember the first time I discovered that my shoulders could move. Wonderful feeling! Discover your shoulders for the first time in your life. Make your shoulders belong to you. Your body isn't something you just carry around with you - it's you! Explore, discover, make a discovery of yourself...and rest.

elbows
and knees

This will be an interesting one - elbows and knees. How to do it? Just close your eyes and put your whole awareness into your elbows and your knees. See what they can do in relation to each other...Yes, I think this is probably the most interesting combination of all. Elbows and knees have a particular way of moving: pointed, angular, straight. Don't try to be curved and graceful and balletish. Ballet likes curves, we like curves and straights...rest, that's good.

one arm
and one leg

What other combinations shall we take? Suppose you do a dance with your left arm and your left leg. Get your right arm out of the way somehow and move with the left arm and leg...lots of movement, quantity! ...rest.

entire body

All right, now movement of the entire body. Don't forget anything: head, shoulders, arms, hips, knees, fingers, toes, everything moving...lots of movement...rest, good.

extended range:
around
the room

Now let's extend the range of our movement a little bit. You've been standing in one place - in fact, you've had your feet planted rather firmly on the ground. Let's try moving around the room, moving all parts of the body all the time and moving from place to place. Don't be squeamish about bumping into people (laughter from the class). Try not to bump but, if you do, don't let it destroy your concentration. Part of your dance training is learning to move in relation to other people, and eventually you will learn to move in this room so

that you don't bump even though the room is crowded. For the time being the most important thing is that you create lots of movement.

Now start to move right where you are, trying to make the whole body as alive as possible, then beginning to move from place to place, all around the room, lots of movement...yes...yes, that's good...everywhere in the room, cover the ground, don't stop... (students' approach is timid). Oh, come now! Show what you're made of. You seem to find it a problem that no-one is telling you exactly what to do. I thought that Goddard stood for learning through doing. That's how you're learning here. I'm not lining you up and telling you all to lift your legs so high. I'm telling you to move in any way you want. Create the movement experience for yourself. I don't care how you do it as long as you move and keep moving. Go ahead, get into it! Don't stop to look at anyone else...keep moving... good! That's much better...yes, that's fine. Rest for a moment and then we'll extend the range of our movement a little further.

down to the
floor and
up in the air

As you move around the room, moving all the parts of the body all the time, sometimes make a point of going down to the floor. Just go down to the floor and start rolling or creeping or anything as long as you're on the floor and moving. At other times make a point of going up into the air, off the floor. But be careful! Jumping is something we need to prepare our feet for, so I don't want you to do much of it. You will go around the room, sometimes down to the floor, sometimes up in the air and moving the whole body all the time. Now, here we go!...yes, fine...don't forget arms and legs... be aware of what you're doing...good...yes...yes... and rest.

Now everybody rest, settle down on the floor. You have found out what parts your body has and how they are capable of moving. You know what your instrument of dance is. The body is more than an instrument, it is a whole orchestra. Each part can create qualities of movement which no other part can create. The whole study of dance is learning to become a craftsman in the

expressive use of one's instrument and learning to create more and more esthetically satisfying movement experiences.

free choice
of part

At the beginning of the lesson I said I wasn't going to tell you what to do, but I really have been telling you what to do. I've told you to move your head or your shoulders or some other part. Now I'll give you more freedom. Each of you think for a moment which part of the body you particularly enjoyed moving with, and I'll give you a chance to explore that theme again. Decide whether it's going to be hands or feet or elbows or fingers, or your left ear or your right eyebrow (student laughter). Any part or any combination such as your hands and feet, elbows and head, and so forth.

Decide for yourself what you're going to do and then do it. Do just that and nothing else. It's your own choice, so do it wholeheartedly. Creative activity means putting your whole self into the thing. There is no creative dance if you're half here and half there, somewhere with your mind, somewhere else with your feelings and somewhere else with your body. Be all in what you're doing for just a few minutes.

Take any position you want, sitting, kneeling, standing, lying. Choose the position according to the part you are going to move. Close your eyes, or lower them. This is an improvisation of your own choice. I'm not going to speak for a few minutes in order to give you a chance to concentrate. (Silence, then Miss Mettler breaks in) All right, that's good, group. That was very nice and I congratulate you. It shows that you have grown quite a bit during the last hour.

group
improvisations

Here's the next step: turn to the person nearest you, and be his partner. So far you've been concerned entirely with your own movements. Now I'm going to ask you to be just as free in your own movement but at the same time try to find a relationship to someone else's movement. In creative expression you must be free yourself but your freedom must be in relation to the freedom of others.

duet:
head

We're going back to a restricted part of the body: the head. The two of you are going to move your heads in relation to each other. There are all sorts of ways of establishing a relationship: by doing the same thing, or by doing different things, it doesn't matter which. The main thing is to be aware of what the other person is doing and to make some adjustment to it.

Let's not all have the same position. You can move your heads lying down, sitting up; face to face, back to back; one standing, one lying; lying on your front or on your back; all sorts of positions. The first step is to find a position which you both like and to make that position quite clear.

Do you know exactly what your position is? All right, have good concentration and a feeling of repose. Before you start to move there should be a moment in which there is no movement, when you just pull yourselves together and become aware of each other. Eyes are not important here, they can be lowered, don't stare into your partner's eyes. You must communicate with each other through the sense of movement. And it's not the facial expression that counts, the face isn't important when you are concentrating on the movement of the head.

Let's go on now and see how we can improvise together, making a duet, a head duet...yes, as I said, you can do the same thing or different things, just be aware of what your partner is doing and relate to it.

Stop for a moment. Some of you found it necessary to go from movement expression to verbal expression. If your problem is one of pure movement expression, don't use words. If you must talk, stop the movement and say whatever you have to say, then stop talking and dance. All right, this is verbal expression now. (Student laughter and buzz of conversation about the dance problem) Now - words are out, strictly taboo. From now on it's movement, you are communicating only through movement...

Good, that's better. Now leave your partner and

trio:
arms

arrange yourselves in groups of three so that the couples are all broken up and you are with new people. This will be a dance for arms and hands: an arm trio. It is not enough that you do your best, it is not enough that you find your own expression. If your neighbor is having a hard time finding his expression, you must somehow through your movement make it easier for him. All through movement.

These are principles of creative group movement. It is not important in a trio what any one person does - it is what happens among all three. Here we go. No more words now, let's dance...just feel your way along, it's a matter of feeling...no one person leading, everybody leading...good, it's good, keep it up...

All right, rest. Let me say a few more things. Don't try to make pretty patterns. The pattern is nothing in itself. It's the expression of feeling that counts. What do I mean by "feeling"? I do not mean specific emotions such as fear, hunger, pain or rage. Representation of specific emotion is the province of drama. By "feeling" I mean movement feeling. I mean muscular feeling for the quality of the movement as it awakens some diffuse emotional state which cannot be described in words. Right now we are concerned with group movement feeling. It doesn't matter how pretty the patterns are, if there is no group feeling. The group is a living organism and its movement must be an expression of all three of you.

quartet:
legs

Now try to form groups of four with perfect strangers. You can learn so much by dancing with new people. If they are older or younger, less experienced or more experienced, you can gain by dancing with them.

This will be a dance for legs and feet. As the group becomes larger, the problem becomes a little harder. And legs and feet are not as easy as head and arms. The first step is to find a position where you can dance with your legs. And this time start with a feeling of real repose. Take the position in which you are going to start and let there be a feeling of repose, a moment

of absolutely no movement. When I say "repose" I don't mean that you must relax all your muscles or lie down on the floor. Just let there be a feeling of waiting with nothing, absolutely nothing, happening. Then let the first movement come from the group, not only from one person...keep on dancing, following the feeling together, developing as much group awareness as you can...be simple about it, don't try to create elaborate forms, just start with the feeling and the form will come...find a common feeling through leg movement...all right, rest.

I told you this would be a week of creative growth. That's why I am not giving you any criticisms or evaluations. I am not saying to you, "Let's see what you've done. Is it good or is it bad?" And that's why you must not say "We've got to make a good dance, we must achieve something here this afternoon." No, no, no! Just keep on growing. Growing through these experiences will give you new awarenesses upon which you can build and build and build. You're doing very nicely.

quintet:
trunk

We'll now have slightly larger groups - groups of five, quintets. You will not be able to find only new people with whom to work, but seek out as many new faces as you can. Now, let's subordinate arms and legs and see if by moving the trunk we can make a dance together - a dance for the trunk. Find a starting position. Get your arms and hands out of the way and concentrate on this most important part of the body. All start to move together...let the movement grow...all right, and rest.

larger group:
free movement

This will be the last problem, so sit down for a moment while I describe it to you. We've worked with separate parts of the body, then with the whole body, in place and moving about the room. We've worked alone, in twos, in threes and fours and fives. We won't take time to build up through sixes and sevens and so forth. Rather, I'll make a big jump from five to half the entire group. Each half will number about twelve persons. I'm not going to say arms or legs or any restricted part of the body. Just get together in those

big groups and start to move in any way you wish, finding some sort of relationship to one another through movement. It's a matter of awareness. You'll be moving freely in ways in which you want to move, but you'll be aware all the time of how all the others are moving.

Now this may not be a completely satisfying dance. It's an exercise, an exercise in creative group feeling and it doesn't matter just how it turns out. It's the effort you put into it that will make you grow.

Each group will have half the room in which to work. Find your position...yes, both groups have come into a circle, a circle is probably the most natural group relationship. Stand as quietly and as relaxed as you can, your arms relaxed, everything relaxed. And now begin to move in any way you want to, any part of the body or the whole body, moving freely, each for himself but aware of what all the others are doing...dance together...the movement can grow, it can build if you wish, it can be quite active or it can be very quiet...everybody in the group is moving in his own individual way and at the same time he is trying to relate what he is doing to that which everyone else is doing...keep on going, it's fine...keep it up, anything, anything as long as you feel your movement in relation to the others...keep it up, don't weaken! It's going very well...and rest.

entire class
dancing
together

We'll do the same thing with the entire group, everyone together. Starting individually from all over the room, begin to move in any way you wish, whatever you want to do. If you feel like sinking down to the floor, then sink (student laughter); if you feel like rushing around, then rush. Whatever you feel like doing, do it - just for the enjoyment of moving...keep on dancing for a while, then gradually begin to be aware of what the others are doing and, in any way you can, find some relationship to them. It will no longer be twenty-five isolated persons but a group of twenty-five people dancing freely as individuals bound together through movement feeling...you'll move from place to place without bumping into one another because, if you meet someone, you'll move in relation to him, moving toward or

away from him or around him, dancing with him for a while...yes, be aware of everyone all the time...keep on going, you're doing very well...and rest.

All right, that's your introductory lesson and we'll meet tomorrow for the next one.

Lesson II

ACTIVITY AND PASSIVITY

Individual Movement: Tension - Relaxation

Alternating Tension and Relaxation

gradually
suddenly

Forceful and Forceless Movement

Group Movement: Activity - Passivity

Testing for Passivity in Couples

Leading by the Hand

constant leadership
changing leadership

Free Expression

duet: one active, one passive
trio: one active, two passive
group: one active, others passive

Dramatic Element of Dance

gradual tension, a tension which is so complete that you can't move any
sudden more. When you reach that completely tense state,
relaxation hold your position for a moment and then, all of a sudden,
when I tell you to, let go. I'm going to follow you
with the drum but you're not deriving your experience
from the drum beat; the experience is in you. It is
only to intensify that experience that I use the drum.

Let's try it all together. Here we go, very gradually bringing your whole body in any way you wish into a complete state of tension (sound of continuous rapid drum beat growing steadily louder)...that means tight, that means very tight, so tight that you can't move any more... and when you reach that extreme, hold your position whatever it is and then, all at once...let go! (Loud single drum beat)

Yes, that's good, but you can let go much more completely. You can breathe out and drop or flop in that moment. Let's start again and I'll keep on beating until everyone in the room has reached his limit of tension, but don't feel that you must keep moving as long as I beat; if you are finished before I stop just hold your position.

Try it again...Oh, wait a moment! You're not quite relaxed enough to start with. I'd like to see those fingers softer and those elbows looser. All right, here we go, gradually becoming tighter and tighter and tighter (continuous drum beat as before)... keep on until you can't become any tighter, then hold the position...and let it all go! (Single loud beat) Yes, you should be very soft and loose again.

We're going to do that quite a number of times and each time you do it you are going to find a new movement of tension and a new movement of relaxation. You can think in terms of position if you want to, alternating a position of extreme tension with a position of extreme relaxation. Try out different movements, do something different each time. The pattern is: gradual tension and sudden relaxation.

Here we go again. Try a new movement, something

different from the one you did before...and now a new movement of relaxation! (The drum follows as before.) Yes, finding new movements of relaxation is difficult because the only complete relaxation is lying flat on the floor, but it is possible to achieve great softness and looseness and passivity in other positions.

All right, once more, gradually becoming tighter throughout the whole body, as gradually as you can... and let go!...and once more, tighter, tighter...and let it all out! Rest a moment.

For those of you who are new tonight, let me urge you to keep your eyes closed. This helps you to focus your attention on the experience of movement which is in the kinesthetic sense inside you. The kinesthetic sense makes you aware of occurrences within you, whereas the senses of sight and hearing make you aware of occurrences outside yourself. We are working with the kinesthetic sense which consists of nerve endings within the muscles and joints, so let's close our eyes and, once more, gradually become tighter and tighter... and now suddenly loose!

sudden tension,
gradual
relaxation

That's fairly good. We'll continue, and this time we'll change our starting position. Sit up. Start in the sitting position but vary your position any way you want to, lying down, sitting up again, anything at all, as long as there is plenty of variety. And we'll change the pattern so that you will now become suddenly tense and gradually relaxed. Find a new movement each time. Here we go - tense! (One loud drum beat)... and gradually relax, (continuous drum beat growing gradually softer.)...let it out, become softer and softer, it's a wonderful feeling, see if you can experience deeply these two extremes...and rest a moment.

Now don't think you are supposed to be making pretty patterns. You aren't "supposed" to be anything you aren't. You're "supposed" to be exactly what you are, here and now, trying to find out what it feels like to move and to experience these two extremes of movement. Throw yourself into the problem, exaggerate, don't hold back. When you are tense be really tense,

looser, looser, all the way out this time, just as loose as you can be, soft as butter, air, water...all right, rest.

extreme
relaxation

Now let's take each of these two poles of movement separately. I'm going to ask you to move around the room somehow, anyhow, so close to the extreme of relaxation that you can hardly move at all. Almost over the threshold of inertia. You can flop, drop, droop, sag, drag, slump (the class laughs). Keep moving but be as soft and relaxed as you can possibly be. All right, start...be as passive as if someone or something, some power outside yourself were moving you...you are being moved, you are without force or will...yes, slump, roll, flop, hang, lean...

extreme
tension

Good! That's good! Now the other extreme would be tension. Move with as much tension as you can generate without becoming rigid. Approach the threshold of rigidity but keep on moving...feel the force within you, let your tension express forcefulness...yes, it's hard but you're doing very well...and rest.

There is a difference between creative tension and tension which is a strain, but this will only become clear to you over a period of time. It is not necessary for tension to be cramped and painful, although beginners sometimes experience it this way.

forceful
and forceless
movement

Let's try both extremes again and this time think in terms of forceful and forceless movement. Try moving with extremely forceless movement, no force inside you so that whatever movement you make is caused by some power outside yourself...you are weak and will-less, any breeze could blow you over, anyone who touched you could knock you down...

Yes, now the opposite; forceful movement. Move as if there were a tremendous force within you capable of moving anything which stood in your way...you could move mountains...generate force in the muscles...it's hard, but try it...be a moving force.

Listen, people! Don't pretend. Don't pretend to be

anything or to do anything. Just be yourself and try to create an experience of forceful movement.

Once more, forceless movement. Take plenty of time to get into the feeling of it...

And now forceful movement again. Work at it. Work! I told you it would be hard work. Dancing on a college level is not child's play.

testing for
passivity
in couples

Will you turn to the person next to you and form a partnership? Now it becomes more interesting than ever. One of you is going to test the degree of passivity in the other. Passive means capable of being moved. Active means capable of moving. I'll test Bill. He'll be as passive as he can be and I'll test him carefully. I'll lift his hands, his arms, I'll move his head, I'll push him gently down to the floor, then lift him up (Miss Mettler demonstrates with one of her group)...yes, now the rest of you try it...passive one, be relaxed, put yourself in the other one's power, give over completely...you who are testing, be careful; too much force creates counter-force; inspire confidence, make the person want to be moved by you...you who are being tested, don't resist, you want to be moved...this is the beginning of creative group relationships, try to feel it.

All right, watch for a moment. The experience of passivity is not exactly the same as relaxation, although it is based on it. If I were trying to feel complete relaxation I'd drop to the floor and it would be hard to lift me. Something like this might happen (she demonstrates, becoming a dead weight). That is relaxation but it is not an expression of passivity. If I want to be passive, if I want to be moved, the very lightest touch will pull or push me. Do you see the difference? Don't be a dead weight, be light, be extremely light, but don't anticipate the movement, just respond to it when it comes.

Reverse roles and let the other one be the moving force...yes, that was very nice. You did that very, very well and I think you did well partly because you

didn't talk. The less you talk, the more you can communicate through movement.

leading by
the hand

Find a new partner, and now you are going to move him from place to place. You'll take your partner's hand lightly and, starting carefully, making sure that he's passive, you'll move him around the room. You will be leading and he will be following you. Leaders, be careful, because if you bump into other couples you'll no longer be trusted as a leader and your partner will become tense and unwilling to be led.

Solve these simple problems as well as you can because you are building up to more complex ones. The main difficulty here is that the follower may be a little tense and it is partly up to the leader to relax him. All right, start to move, one leading and one following... you can become a little bolder and more experimental now, see what interesting things you can do with your partner... followers, don't be inert, be passive but don't be a dead weight... yes, continue for a moment... and rest.

changing
leadership

I'm going to let you try something quite difficult for a moment before we continue with another easy problem because I want you to see how interestingly this work can develop. Suppose I ask you to alternate leadership, first one leading and then the other, without interrupting the movement. You might ask how it should be done - according to a previously determined plan that, for instance, one leads for thirty seconds and then the other leads for the same length of time? No, that is not a free creative relationship. You will change leadership at the end of the movement. If I am the leader, I lead through one complete movement, and we both know when it has come to an end (Miss Mettler takes the hand of a student and demonstrates) Then it is your turn and you feel that the moment has come for you to lead. It is not a matter of the clock but of feeling for the movement. A movement can be very, very short and simple or it can be long and complicated in both space and time. Each is a single movement if it represents a single impulse. I suggest that at first your movements be not too long or extended in either time or space. Rather

try to feel simply, "This is a movement". It will be up to the leader especially to feel strongly that he has led through one single movement and that it is now over and completed.

impulse:
rhythm

In dance we want to learn what a movement is and we want to learn to finish one movement before starting another. Movement is not an undifferentiated stream that goes on and on and on. It's a continuous series of separate impulses. The relationship between impulses is what we call rhythm. Feel each impulse as a whole and feel it in its relationship to the impulses which come before and after it and those which occur simultaneously with it. That's rhythmic experience. See if you can feel it tonight in this exercise. Don't be hectic, don't be nervous, take it slowly. All right - go!...easy, slow...know who's leading and who's following; know when the movement has begun and when it has ended... and rest.

Do you have any questions about this last problem? Someone has asked how you can be sure who's leading. That question would indicate that in this couple's movement there was not enough contrast between the leading which is active and the following which is passive. Express either activity or passivity clearly in your movement. Don't forget that underlying activity and passivity is the experience of tension and relaxation. Perhaps your movements were too complicated. Try it again. It's not easy, but it's important and basic to the experience of rhythm. All right, start to move with one of you leading...now continue, alternating leadership...yes...yes...and rest.

That is a more difficult problem than we should expect to meet in our second lesson but I wanted you to see a direction which leads to freer movement and a much finer group relationship than can be achieved by the constant leadership of one person. A creative group relationship depends upon each member leading when it is his time to lead and following when it is his time to follow so that the leadership flows freely among all the members at all times. As we well know in daily life, some people are too active all the time while some

people are too passive all the time. This makes group relationships hard. So learn to feel when it is your time to lead or to follow, not according to personal whim but according to the movement of which you are a part.

free expression
of activity
and passivity

We'll continue now but we'll drop the problem of changing leadership and work for freer expression with one person constantly leading. Will you find a new partner, please? One will be active, the other passive; one the moving force, the other being moved. Instead of holding hands, you will use your whole body freely to express the feeling of activity or passivity. I'll demonstrate with Bill - he will be passive and I will use my arms, legs, head, anything to express forcefulness (she demonstrates).

duet:
one active,
one passive

Now suppose you get a particularly "tough customer" who doesn't respond at all (at this point Bill stiffens and is unresponsive to Miss Mettler's forceful movements until she puts her arm around him and sweeps him bodily along). That's all right too, use any means at your disposal to make the person feel that he is being moved by an outer force. You are not a person, you're just a force. You're like the elements, you must be irresistible (student laughter). You're the wind and the waves, you're an avalanche, anything that can move a person.

You who are being moved, try very hard to be light and flexible and soft and responsive to the slightest breath. If your partner so much as looks at you, fall down! (Students laugh again). Remember that it takes two to make a good relationship here, it takes good leading and good following.

A good leader must be reposeful, not nervous and very, very firm. He must know exactly what he wants. If he doesn't know what he wants his partner certainly won't know. As for the one who is being moved, he must have the will to be moved. Now, leader don't use only arms to express force, don't be a traffic cop and don't be an orchestra leader (Miss Mettler demonstrates and students laugh). Feel the force through your whole

body, beginning at the center...

All right, keep the same partners but reverse roles. And one other warning - avoid imitation. The leader doesn't expect his partner to make the same movements he's making. He is acting upon his partner and expects him to react by responding passively in movement to the force being exerted upon him. This is quite different from imitation. All right - go! be forceful if you've never been forceful in your life before, and if you've never had the courage to follow someone blindly, follow blindly now...rest.

trio:
one active,
two passive

Yes, we'll continue in slightly larger groups. Will you find your way into groups of three? New faces, new people, new experience. Listen carefully. One will be active and two will be passive. The one can treat the two in any way he wants, either handling them together as a unit or separating them and moving them as individuals. By his movement he will pull them together, drive them apart, push them down, lift them up, and so forth.

As you become freer in this work you will throw yourselves around more and more and there is danger of the groups conflicting with one another. So be careful but don't be squeamish about a little jostling, and above all don't let it interfere with your concentration.

Wait a moment, here is an interesting question. I've been asked whether the passive ones should have a relationship only to the leader or also to each other. I would say tonight - only with the leader. That's enough of a problem. All right, one leading and two following - go ahead... and rest.

People! Don't be intellectual about it. Don't stand outside yourself and think, "How interesting, isn't this amusing, I'm doing this and that, I'm really quite funny and isn't it all quite amusing?" No! That's strictly an intellectual approach. That means that you are on the outside of your movement thinking about it instead of on the inside feeling it. In dance we are primarily concerned with feeling and only secondarily with thinking.

Next time I will ask you to check your brains at the door. I'd like to see more depth of feeling here and not so much thinking about yourselves and how you look.

Let's have another one of the three lead - and make it simple. Be a moving force, try to exert real force on the other two. Go ahead (students improvise).

All right, Before the third one has a chance to lead I'd like to say something. You're following instructions very well and you are taking what I say quite literally. Because I said to avoid being a traffic cop, you aren't using your arms at all. Use all parts of the body including the arms. Start again and feel the force in your arms, in your legs, in your back, all over. Tense your muscles! That's what we started with -tension and relaxation . . . more force!

Group:
one active,
others passive

Stop. All right, half of you down at one end of the room and half down at the other. One half will watch while the other half improvises. I'm going to tell you how to watch dance. Watch it with your whole self, not just with your mind and your eyes. Sense it in your muscles, breathe and move with the dancers. Share their experience, reach out for it, give them something, help them to give you an experience.

Now, out of this group which will be dancing, I'll ask one person to be active and all the rest will be passive. The leader can pull or push the group in any way he wants, and the group will respond together. See what you can do in a short improvisation. Leader, start in the middle of the group, in front of it, anywhere. Perhaps in front will be the easiest position for a start. Group, be reposeful. Leader, let your movements be clearly expressive of what you want. Begin . . .

All right, sit down everybody and I will give you a brief criticism of that improvisation. It was a good start on the problem. Probably the moments when you acted upon the group as a whole were the best, and I would suggest to other leaders that they do not do much splitting up of the group. This is a huge group for a beginner to lead and I think you should work to unify it

rather than to break it up .

The second weakness in that improvisation was that there was not enough reposeful finishing of one movement before the next movement was begun. I think you all noticed that. Let each movement live its life completely and actually die before the next one is born. Your movements followed one another too hastily.

A third criticism - leader, you lost your leadership on the turns. When you were facing the group it was fine but when you turned around it was a movement which you felt but which had no meaning for the group; they just waited, not feeling any force exerted on them. You felt the movement but they didn't.

Let's go on. A new leader this time - Jerry. (Students improvise on the same theme, Jerry leading.) All right, here's something to be careful of. The last movement of the improvisation should have its logical conclusion too. Jerry, you didn't allow it to die. You were beginning to quiet down, the group was quieting down and the spectators were quieting down when suddenly, arbitrarily, you interrupted the impulse and for you the movement was over. But a dance experience takes time to die. You can't suddenly jump out of it; you must let the whole dance movement quiet down to nothing and then let there be a moment of stillness, no movement at all. After that you can go about your daily life movements and the dance experience will be left there clearly behind you, not broken or destroyed.

Another leader now, anyone. (Another improvisation takes place). All right, Now, some of the leaders seem to have worked on the assumption that if they made the same movement over and over it would be more forceful. This isn't necessarily so. When repeated like this a movement may be not nearly as forceful as if it were made just once clearly and strongly. If a movement isn't forceful to begin with, no amount of repetition will make it so. Let's work for greater economy of movement and greater clarity.

That's the leader's problem. As far as the group is

SOUND AND MOVEMENT



Lesson III

SOUND IN RELATION TO MOVEMENT

Free Vocal Sounds

Instrumental Sounds

Sounds of Hands and Feet

Everyday Objects used as Instruments

Traditional Instruments

Problems of Accompaniment

Self-accompaniment

Duet: one dancing, one playing

Orchestra

sound following movement
movement following sound

Problems of Pulse and Quality

Free and Repeated Patterns

Individual and Group

Sound and Silence

Lesson III

SOUND IN RELATION TO MOVEMENT

This is our third lesson and I'd like to know how many of you are new tonight (new members raise their hands).

Our first lesson was directed entirely toward new people. An hour and a half was spent in relieving you of the inhibitions which you all bring with you. In that first lesson we found that you actually were afraid to move. You were used to using your bodies only to carry out utilitarian acts or to move under someone else's direction so when I said, "Move just for the sake of moving", you really were frightened. However, you soon got over that.

Tonight we are going to add sound to our movement, which brings a new element into our experience of basic dance. Last night I pointed out that we were touching the field of drama. Tonight we'll touch music and tomorrow we'll touch design. I want you to experience all these directions, that's why we can't take time to go over old material for the people who are here tonight for the first time. We must go ahead, and the new ones will have to be bold and unafraid in trying out new things.

First of all, find a place for yourself where you have room in which to move, then sit down on the floor, then lie down on your backs. We often start movement classes with no movement, complete relaxation, every part of the body relaxed, your breathing easy.

free vocal sounds:
stretching
and yawning

Now I'm going to ask you to do stretching movements such as the body likes to do when you wake up in the morning and at the same time I'm going to ask you to yawn, to yawn audibly so that it can be heard - in fact, to exaggerate yawning sounds. All right, with eyes closed, stretch and yawn yes, but more . . . more . . . louder, freer . . . keep on stretching and yawning in various ways and various positions . . . twist, turn,

writhe, roll over... rock the room with your yawns!

Stop! You're too timid, you're much too timid. This is a problem of sound and movement, this is a problem of music and dance. Don't hold back, stretch and yawn in any way, don't worry about being pretty - let the movements and sounds of stretching just come. Try it again... more sound and more movement... all right, good. That was much better.

relaxing
and sighing

Come to a sitting position--any comfortable, relaxed sitting position. Now we're going to make relaxing movements. You're going to flop and, as you flop, you're going to exhale so that your breath comes out of your lungs in a sort of sighing sound. And then you'll flop in another direction and let the air out in another sighing sound. Flopping movements and sighing sounds, each one different from the one before. Keep on going until I tell you to stop. Go ahead... more movement! Flopping and sighing... keep on going... stop.

You're still timid. Let's all take one great big flop together and let out a tremendous sigh. Here we go in unison - flop and sigh!... and another flop and sigh! Let's hear it this time... and another! ...all right. Now close your eyes and try that again and again in different ways with lots of sound and movement. Go!

That was better. Now I'm going to give you many different sounds and all of them will be so full of movement that you really can't make the sounds without moving. I want you to feel the movement quality in each sound and to express that quality in movement while you make the sound.

groaning

The first sound will be groaning. Remember this is not a drama class. Don't say to yourself, "I'm a person in pain and I will act out a person groaning." No, you are not a person in pain, you are yourself here and now, making sounds which are groaning sounds and trying to express the abstract quality of those sounds in movement. The sounds are either tight or loose, strong or weak, continuous or interrupted, or some other quality. Feel it in movement, express it. Try

it now - groaning sounds, and movements which feel like the quality of the sound...

Yes, you're improving but there is no use going on to the next step until this step is experienced a little more deeply. Once more, everybody with eyes closed - groaning sounds and movements. Throw yourselves into the problem. Go!

grunting

Much better! Now stand up for the next sound which is grunting. Some of these sounds are so close to movement that you can't tell whether it's a movement or a sound. What is a grunt? It is merely a strong movement of the body which forces air out of the lungs. Try different ways of moving and producing grunting sounds. Let the movement go through the whole body: trunk, arms, legs, right out to the fingers and the toes.

Are you troubled by the fact that it isn't a pretty sound? Do you think of dance only in terms of prettiness? These natural sounds which come out of you as you move are the source of your music and dance experience, so be bold and exaggerate them... yes, go down on the floor, up in the air, around the room... lots of movement... it's better, you're becoming a little freer.

growling

Let's take growling sounds and movements. A growl has strong movement qualities inherent in the sound. I'm not asking you to be an animal growling. I'm asking you to experience and express the abstract qualities of a growling sound in movement... keep on going... don't growl at anyone (laughter from the class)... keep it up for a moment more... all right, rest.

roaring

Next sound - roaring. This is a dance class so roar with your whole body; arms, legs, trunk, everything expressing a roar in movement while you roar with your voice... that's much better, but you're thinking too much.

hissing

Now when we take the next sound, hissing, let's make the sound first and then see what your body wants to do in movement. Don't think "What does hissing mean?" Just make the sound and let the movement grow out of it. Go ahead... good... good, that's much better. You

did quite well with that sound.

squeaking

Use the same approach for this sound -squeaking. Make the sound first, then see what your body wants to do and exaggerate the movement. All right - squeaking sounds... stop! A squeaking sound does not mean saying the word "squeak". You've heard squeaks. Reproduce the sound and then move accordingly...

clicking

Clicking sounds and clicking movements. This is a clicking dance. Go ahead...

buzzing

How about buzzing? A buzzing sound experienced through the entire body...

howling

And back to stronger sounds and movements - howling... wait a moment, class! You're getting lost in the sound, you're forgetting the movement. Don't make any sound at all for a moment - just make howling movements with your body. Show the quality of howling in your movement. Try it... yes, no sound at all... now add sound... that's better.

whimpering

Whimpering... these sounds have different rhythms, different paces, different tensions. That's what we're interested in. They could be approached dramatically but we're not approaching them that way. We're approaching them strictly musically... rest.

whispering

Now whispering. The music that's in a whisper and the movement quality that goes with it... try it...

sobbing

Next, sobbing. That has a very definite quality, try to feel it, see what it does to your whole body, exaggerate... sobbing...

laughing

Just the opposite for a moment -laughing. Yes, laugh, but the important thing is the quality of movement in the laugh. There are different kinds of laughter: rocking laughter, shaking laughter, exploding laughter. Try them all. Laugh, and get the movement quality of a laugh in your whole body...

shouting

Yes, here's the last one - shouting sounds and move-

ments. Don't be afraid of it... all right, but for a moment make shouting movements without the sound. See if you can make your movements shout... and now once more shouting sounds and movements. Go ahead... that's better. You've improved, and you're showing more freedom in these problems. Rest a moment.

instrumental
sounds:
hands and feet

After all that vocal sound we'll enjoy some instrumental music. Our original instruments are our hands and our feet. Let's use these instruments to accompany ourselves while we dance: clapping, stamping, snapping our fingers, clicking our fingernails, slapping ourselves, the floor, the walls, each other (laughter), anything at all. Explore and see how many different sounds you can make while you move. Let the sound come out of the movement and be a part of it. Dance freely and make as much sound as you can. This is going to be one of the noisiest dances on record. Begin...

voice,
hands and feet

Very good! Now, for a moment, using the voice, mouth and tongue and teeth, hands and feet, breath and every possible sound maker at your disposal, move freely as you were doing just now and accompany yourself with sound. Very free movement and lots of sound. Go!

group:
repeated pattern

Yes. If you'll come down to this end of the room, we'll do something all together. One person at a time is going to come out in front of the group and be the leader. The leader will create some sound and movement pattern which he can repeat over and over again, moving from one end of the room to the other. As he repeats it, the entire group will follow him doing exactly what he does. Until now I haven't asked you to repeat any of the patterns you have created. This will be a new experience for you. Group, try to feel the quality of the movement and the sound which the leader makes, and do it with the same feeling he has. This is exploration, discovery of various experiences in sound and movement, so each leader should do something different from the one who has led before.

(Four improvisations follow)

All right, We've explored the possibilities of sound with the instruments provided by our own bodies: voice, hands and feet. Now we will go on to use things outside ourselves as instruments.

everyday objects
used as
instruments

I'll divide you into two groups. The members of the first group are going around the room to look for objects which make interesting sounds. By interesting I mean a sound which stimulates your movement imagination: a scratching sound, a slithering sound, a banging, splashing or rattling sound, and so forth. When you have found your sound-maker, you will use it as an instrument, playing it and dancing with it at the same time. Find a pattern which you like and which you can repeat. Move with your instrument as freely as you can, don't play just with your hands. Let the movement of the hands with which you play your instrument be expressed throughout the whole body. Your instrument may be fastened to the wall but you can move freely with it just the same. Only don't do any damage to the equipment. Don't get carried away and start to break dishes because you like the crashing sound! (Class laughs).

traditional
instruments

Members of the other group will each choose one of the traditional instruments which we have brought with us: drums, shakers, cymbals, wood-blocks, and so forth. Dance and play on your instrument, letting the quality of your movement express the quality of the sound which your instrument makes. All right, everybody find an instrument.

(There are percussive sounds, ringing sounds, brushing, clicking and hollow wood sounds, then Miss Mettler's voice breaks in again)

Stop! This is a movement problem. There is a lot of sound to be heard but very little movement to be seen. Let's have more movement. Go!

group pattern:
common pulse

Rest, everyone, and stand by your instrument if it is stationary, or bring it to the center of the room if it is portable. Let's start with a drum, a traditional instrument. We'll hear a pattern which clearly repeat

itself over and over again. Listen to it and, one by one, as you feel a relationship to the pattern, join in, improvising freely in sound and movement. You will all be held together by the common pattern, the common pulse. Don't lose track of that. We'll be dancing in different ways to the same basic pattern. Start, drum... others join in, carefully... now let your movement become freer... dancing freely... rest.

duet:
one dancing,
one playing

Now form couples. One of you will put your instrument down and will represent the movement element in this duet. The other will keep his instrument and be responsible for the sound element. The musician will accompany the dancer, letting the sound follow the movement.

Before you start, the dancer should listen to the sound of the instrument which is going to accompany him so that he becomes familiar with its quality. Then, when he dances, if the sound is sharp and tinny, his movements should be sharp and tinny; if the sound is loose and rattly, his movements should be the same.

Once the dancer has become familiar with the sound of the instrument which is to accompany him, then his movements should lead and the accompanist should follow him slavishly, impulse for impulse, beat for beat.

This may be a new experience for you, a new relationship between sound and movement. Probably you are accustomed to letting the movement come out of the sound. We are going about it in exactly the opposite way. We're starting with the movement and the sound is coming out of the movement as if it were the voice of the dancer. Will you try it?

Rest, class. You've become very free in this work and that is good but we need more discipline. We need to have the accompanist follow more carefully, more responsively, movement for movement. If you are the dancer, don't feel that you must make elaborate, difficult movements. Make just one simple movement and make sure that your accompanist is with you. Then make another, and so on. The movement should lead.

The sound has been too independent and has taken the leadership away from the movement. No, (in answer to a student question) the dancer does not have to look at the musician, he should not look at his accompanist, but the musician must watch the dancer. The same problem, try it again... I notice some of you are using your voices in accompanying, that's fine, keep it up... oh, musicians! Breathe with the dancer, move with the dancer... follow him!

Yes, now reverse roles. The one who has been playing will now dance and he will be accompanied by the instrument which his partner has selected... wonderful! I see musicians moving right along with the dancer... keep on going... fine!

sound
and silence

All come and stand in a big oval, each person with his own instrument. Keep your instruments quiet. Remember what we said about knowing the difference between movement and no movement? Now let's know the difference between sound and no sound. Sound has meaning only in relation to silence and our ear-drums can become calloused when there is constant, meaningless sound in the air.

orchestra:
sound following
movement

The next problem is going to be very interesting - not easy, but fun. Sit in a circle, not so close together that you can't play your instruments freely. A moment ago we had one person dancing and one person accompanying. Now we are going to have one person dancing and the whole group accompanying. That means that the musicians must give a great deal of attention to the movement as it occurs so that, impulse for impulse, beat for beat, the sound is right with the movement.

You may start out, if you wish, by all sounding every movement. Later on, when you have had some experience, that won't be necessary. Some will sound some movements and some will sound others, according to the quality of the instrument you are playing.

Let's have one person in the center ready to move. The dancer will be economical in his movements. They will be simple and clear, and the movements will have

definite qualities such as slow or fast, smooth or jerky, rough or smooth. The musicians will watch the dancer to see when each impulse is coming and everyone will be right with the dancer. Accompanists should start softly and carefully...

Yes, that was very good both as to dancing and accompanying. The dance was clear, easy to follow, and the sound was better than I had expected it to be. Perhaps with the next one the musicians can be even more discriminating and wait to see what kind of instrumental sound is called for by the movement. Unless the quality of your instrument suits the quality of the movement, don't play. And vary the intensity of the sound, sometimes louder, sometimes softer. Another dancer in the center...

Yes, that was pretty good. The musicians became excited because the pace of the dance was fast but it was not difficult to follow. Be sure you sit in such a way as to be able to move with the dancer.

We'll have another dancer, and work for better quality in sound... all right. Dancers, be sure the beginning and ending of your movement is quite clear.

Still another dancer come into the middle and now the orchestra can become a little freer, perhaps building the sound into a free pattern if the movement seems to suggest one; but be prepared always for a change in the movement and don't start leading the dancer...

It's good, very good. Dancers, remember that with all those different instruments in the orchestra you can have a wide variety of qualities in your movement: qualities of swinging, ringing, shaking, crashing, scratching, undulating. And, orchestra, more care in following. If you don't feel the quality, wait until you do, before you start to play your instrument. The music should be the voice of the dancer.

qualities
of sound:
movement
following sound

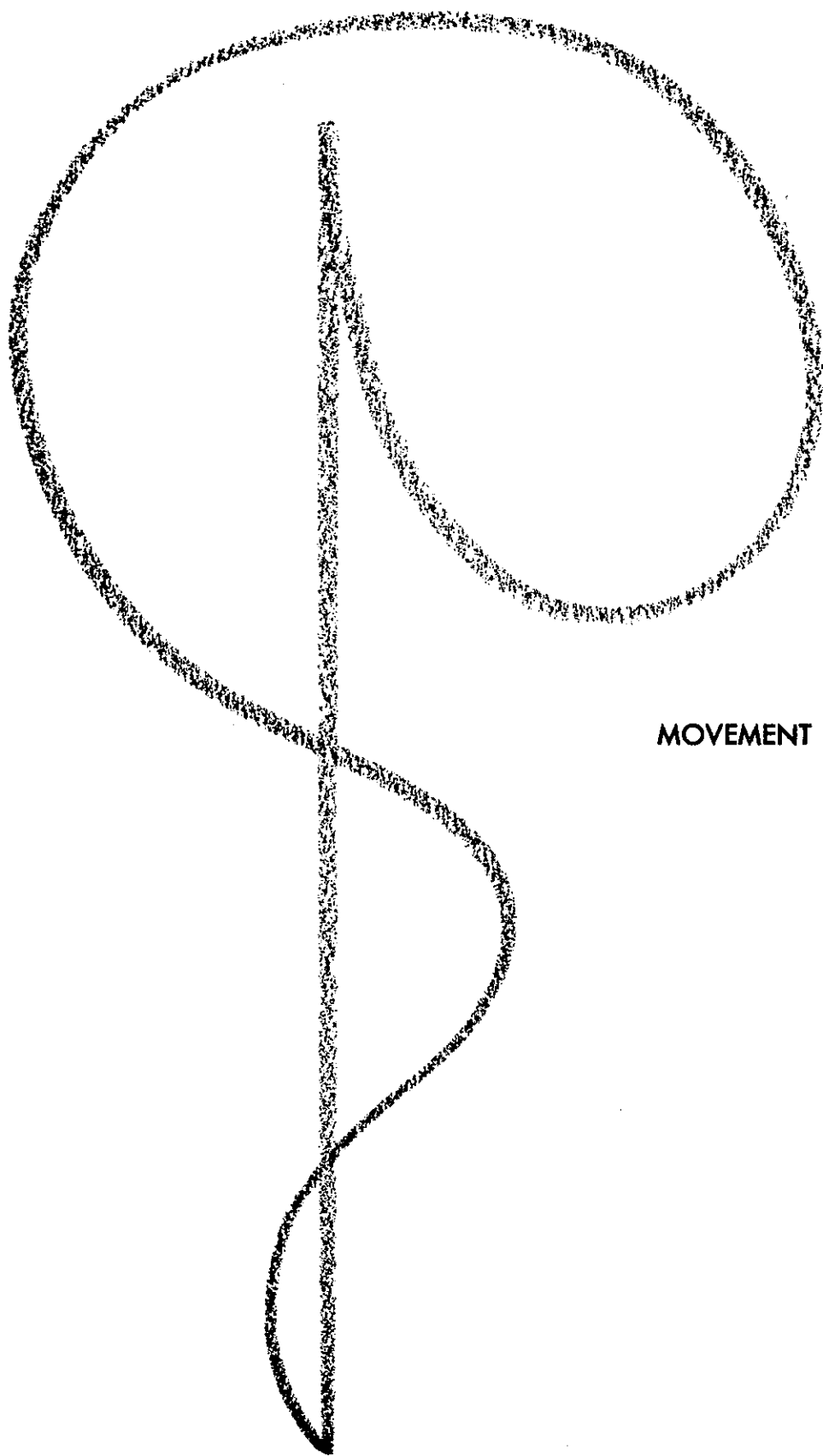
For a moment, let's work only with instruments. Whoever has rattles, play them while the rest of us close our eyes and listen... now, everyone move for a moment with that sound...

Now let's hear the strings, move to that sound, that particular quality. And the one who is playing it, play it as no other instrument can be played.

Something different now - a tambourine. Feel that quality in your movement...

All right, fine. Sit down for just a moment, everyone. I've tried to open up many areas of experience in sound for you today. The sounds which the body can make, that means the voice, the hands, the feet. The sounds you discovered in the objects around the room. The traditional instruments. Then we worked with emphasis on pulse or emphasis on quality. The sound coming out of the movement or the movement coming out of the sound. Then you made your own music as you danced and you made music for someone else who was dancing.

You've experienced the beginning of a whole new world of sound and movement as they are really united within you, and we've accomplished a lot. That's all for this evening.



MOVEMENT DRAWING

Lesson IV

MOVEMENT AND VISUAL DESIGN

Preparation: Free Movement

lying
sitting
kneeling
standing
moving from place to place
up in the air, down on the floor

Basic Qualities of Movement

Force Qualities

strong, weak
gradual, sudden

Time Qualities

slow, fast
regular, irregular

Space Qualities

large, small
curved, straight
vertical, horizontal

Visual Experience of Movement

Impulse

Movement Drawing

Lesson IV

MOVEMENT AND VISUAL DESIGN

This is our next to the last lesson and before we begin I'd like to know if you have any questions.

(Student question) "Yes, why can't you stay here permanently? "

(Miss Mettler laughs) Well, we've had a grand time here and we'd love to give you more of our work. You must continue to work by yourselves with the material we've given you after we've gone. You're already doing that, aren't you? You're dancing together outside of class, I hear. That's good, keep it up.

The first two days we worked with pure movement. The third day, yesterday, we used sound, and tonight we're going on to sight: using the eye in relation to movement. Just as movement creates sound and music, it also creates visual experience and design. That's what we're going to work on.

preparation:
free movement,
lying

Find yourself a place in the room where you have lots of space. Before we go into specific problems of design, we'll limber up with some free movement. On this, your fourth evening, you all know how to move just for the enjoyment of moving. Keep your eyes closed and begin to move in any way that feels good... keep on going for a little while... remember continuity, one movement flowing into the next, but each movement with its own beginning and ending... all right, rest. Return to relaxation. Your repose is just as important as your activity.

Let's talk about feeling for a moment. During previous lessons I've emphasized quantity of movement, tonight I'm going to emphasize awareness. Let's call it sensing the movement, sensing it in your muscles. Movement experience begins with a feeling in your muscles and joints. Put your whole attention on that feel-

ing. And now try moving again, moving the whole body in different ways, feeling the quality of each movement...

Better go slowly so that you have time really to sense your movement. I'm sure that by now you aren't doing learned movements, let each movement grow spontaneously out of your natural desire to move... don't be gymnastic about it, gymnastics means doing the movement for the sake of muscular development... acrobatics means doing the movement for the sake of technical display... dance means doing it for the expression of feeling...

sitting

All right, continue, but do not remain in the lying position. Come to a sitting position, go back and forth between the sitting and lying positions...

kneeling

And now extend the range of your movement by using the kneeling position too. Add movements in the kneeling position. Different kinds of movement using all the parts of the body...

And relax again for a moment. Always relax between movement experiences. That's much better. You're learning how to work. The main difficulty at first is learning how to approach these problems. It's a new field and when you travel in a new land it takes time to find your way around. But you're learning, and I think you are getting a lot out of it tonight.

standing

Now come to a standing position and continue to move freely, sharpening your senses to the feeling of your movement. Start in the standing position but vary your position, sometimes kneeling, sometimes sitting, sometimes lying. All right, start...

Yes, you're doing so well that I am going to help you with some additional comments. You can approach this problem in one of two ways: either by trying out as many different movements as possible, or by following the feeling of a single movement. Either way is all right. The main thing is that you try to sense the quality of the movement.

moving from
place to place

We'll continue, extending our range by moving from place to place. Let your movement take you around the room so that you are not only moving the parts of the body in relation to one another but you are also moving the body as a whole through space.

up in the air
and down to
the floor

Begin to move... slow or fast, large or small movements, sometimes going down to the floor, sometimes going up in the air, sometimes around the room... cover a little more ground now, be a little more active, open up your movement, be a little livelier... and rest.

basic qualities
of movement

Now, instead of letting you move in any way you feel like moving, I'm going to indicate certain qualities which I want you to experience and express. These will be movement qualities. These qualities are determined by force and time and space. Dance is the only art that is equally concerned with force and time and space. Drama, the art of action, is primarily concerned with force. The art of sound, music, is more concerned with time, and the visual arts are more concerned with space. Dance is equally concerned with all three, although one or another of these elements may be dominant at one time.

force:
strong
and weak

First of all, you are going to put your attention on force qualities and I am going to ask you to contrast strong and weak movement. Strong movement requires a lot of force, weak movement requires little.

Take any position, standing, sitting or lying, and begin to make strong movements... sense the quality in your muscles... strong movement, very strong, exaggerate it... yes, that's all right.

Now, just the opposite - weak, very weak movements, no strength at all... yes, that's good, rest.

Now make strong and weak movements again, contrasting the two in any way you wish, trying out first one and then the other.

sudden
and gradual

Now two other qualities which have more to do with force than with time or space. I'll call these sudden

and gradual, or interrupted and continuous. Make sudden movements, very sudden, each impulse interrupted...

Now just the opposite: continuous, uninterrupted, the energy not suddenly but gradually released...

Yes, good. Now sudden again...

And gradual... you're doing very nicely tonight.

time:
slow and fast

We'll take qualities which have to do with time: slow and fast. Start with slow movement. This is a dance of slowness... move as slowly as possible...

Yes, now some fast movements, as fast as possible ... faster... very fast...

And slow again... slow... slow... very good!

regular and
irregular

Two more time qualities to contrast: let's call them regular and irregular. Regular means every movement lasting the same length of time as every other one. It doesn't matter whether the movements are slow or fast, but they must be of equal duration. As regular as the tides, as regular as a clock. And exhale on each movement. Exhale audibly, sing your movement. If you will sound each movement with your breath and voice, it will help you feel your time patterns, Try it...

Now irregular movement. Don't think of irregularity as a distortion of regularity. No, one is just as basic as the other, just as alive, just as rhythmic. Irregular rhythm is just as natural as regular rhythm. Try it... no two movements lasting the same length of time...

And now regular again...

And once more irregular... all right, sit down and rest for a moment. Let me repeat that irregular movement is just as natural as regular movement. We do not first learn regular movement and then approach irregularity as a deviation from that. Both are equally basic. The irregular quality is freer, the regular is more fixed, so it just depends on which expression you want.

space:
large and small

Stand up and we'll go on to spatial qualities. The first will have to do with range, dimension, size. A movement can be large or small depending upon whether it occupies a lot of space or a little space. Let's make large movements, the largest, most space-consuming movements you can make. Go ahead...

And the opposite: little, tiny movements that occupy very little space. Small movements with the whole body and with different parts of the body...

And again, huge movements... rest. That was fine. Wonderful work!

curved
and straight

Here are two more spatial qualities: curved and straight. First, curved movement. No straight lines, no angles, all rounded, curved movement. Experience it through the whole body...

All right - angular, straight movement...

And curved again, for contrast... rest. That's good. Catch your breath and we'll go right along.

vertical and
horizontal

Two more spatial qualities: vertical and horizontal. First, vertical movement...

Now horizontal... sit down and rest again.

visual awareness
of spatial pattern

Now you will move more freely. I won't dictate any quality of movement but, as you move, try to visualize your movement, be aware of the visual pattern. Don't be on the outside of yourself looking in. If that were the problem, I'd say let's get a mirror and look at ourselves. That isn't what I mean at all. Keep your eyes closed and, as you move, be aware of the spatial pattern which your movements are creating. The spatial pattern of movement is visible, so visualize it from within.

Let's try it, moving freely, being aware of the spatial pattern... make that pattern clear, very clear, know whether the movement is curved or straight, large or small, vertical or horizontal... and rest.

some reposeful position. Let the movement be simple because I am going to want you to repeat it. Here we go...

Yes, your movement should have a clear beginning and a clear ending position but these positions are subordinate to the movement. We do not think of movement as something which occurs between positions. Rather we think of position as an outgrowth of movement.

Let's repeat the movement, whatever it was. Now try to be aware of the movement's exact shape, whether it is curved or straight, large or small. Make the same movement but give it a clear shape in space, visualizing it as you do it. Go!

All right, now that you know what we're working for - clear spatial patterns - make another movement and, as you create it, do so with the aim of making it just as clear as possible, feeling that you are drawing or carving a fine form out of the space around you. Keep it simple... yes, that's pretty good. Sit down and I'll tell you how we are going on from here.

The movement you just made had a clear pattern. It didn't start from the outside, it didn't start in the eye. It began in the muscles, as a feeling in the body. But it came out as a pattern which your eye could see. The eye is an organ which perceives patterns, it doesn't create them. Your movement pattern was created inside you.

movement
drawing

I'm going to give each one of you a piece of paper and some charcoal, and I'd like to have you take this same movement which you've just done and do it over and over with emphasis on the spatial pattern. When you really have the feeling for the movement, take a piece of charcoal in your fingers and do the movement with the charcoal on the paper, using your whole body as much as possible. Do it over and over, drawing the design over and over, then look at it and ask yourself whether your drawing has the same feeling as the movement itself.

It is a matter of feeling. You're not a photographer trying to reproduce the movement from the outside. You're expressing the inner feeling of the movement. After your movement is down on paper, you may somehow want to improve your drawing to make it look more the way the movement felt, pleasing to the eye just as the movement is pleasing to the kinesthetic sense. When you have done that, if you wish, you may turn the paper over and make a final impression of your movement on the clean side. Then we'll ask you to show both the movement and the design.

Start to work and I'll keep on talking as you draw... it will be a good idea to close your eyes when you begin to draw to make sure you have a clear feeling for the movement in your muscles. Then swing out freely on the paper. Express the whole quality of the movement, even its force pattern if you can. The lines of your drawing can be strong or weak, they can move swiftly or slowly, they can be continuous or interrupted... yes, now you can begin to enjoy working with the design itself...

Good. If everyone has finished, bring the drawings here. I want to see them all.

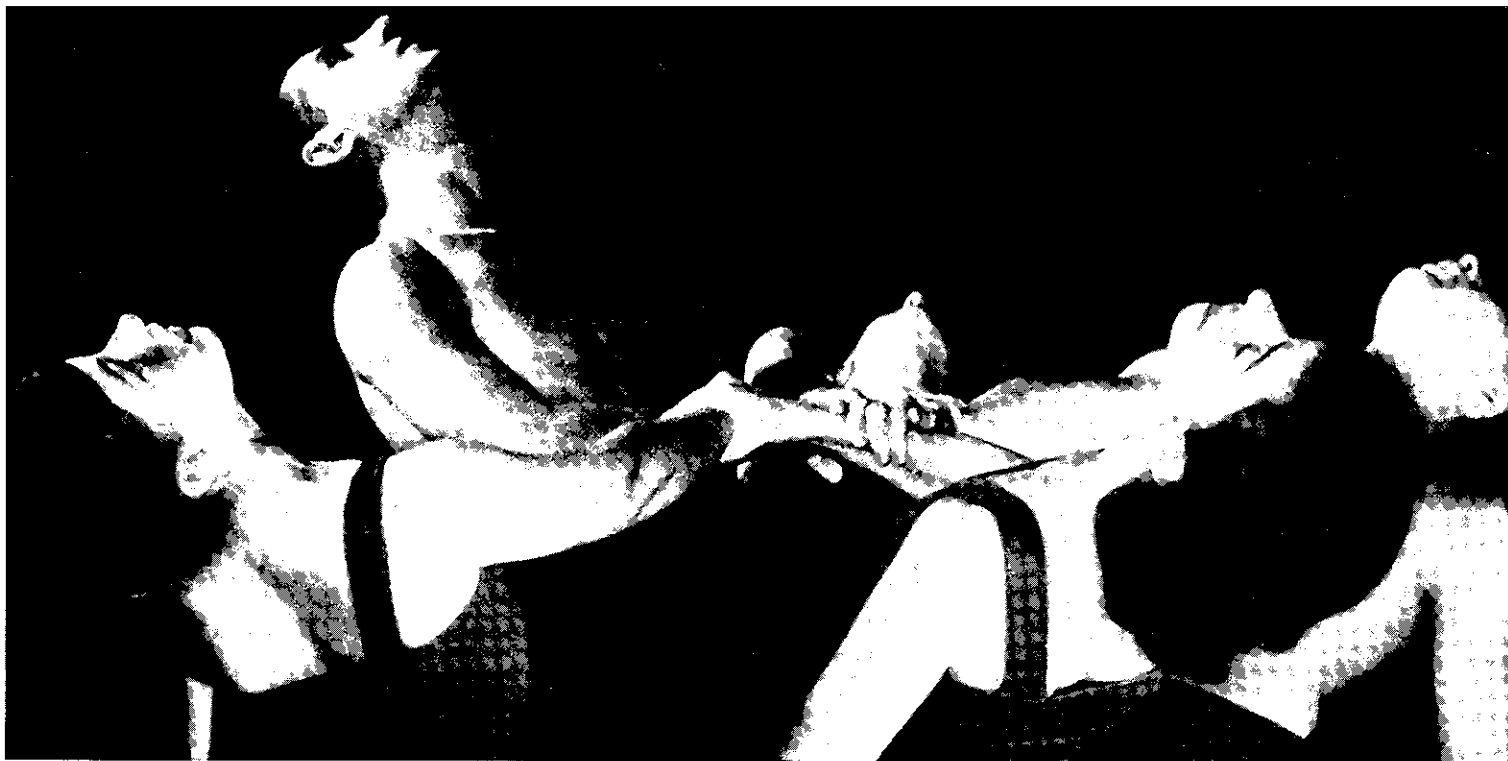
Let's show the design and the movement, each person in turn. The spectators should remember that the drawing represents the feeling of the spatial pattern of the movement. Don't look for a diagram showing just where the dancer's left foot or right arm is. All right, first person...

Yes, that was clear. If the movement impulse is whole, the design will be a whole.

(Class continues with each student showing his design and movement)

You can see that this is a bridge from dance to visual design. From here you can go anywhere in the visual arts. Perhaps now you will see more movement in paintings, and perhaps you will put more movement into your designs when you paint and draw.

That's all for this evening, and we'll have our last class in this workshop tomorrow.



GROUP EXPRESSION

Lesson V

CREATIVE GROUP EXPRESSION

Individual Preparation

Some Basic Movement Experiences

wiggle	rock
wriggle	sway
writhe	swing
squirm	spring
roll	undulate
stretch	flop
bend	collapse
twist	fall
turn	creep
shake	crawl
rise - sink	walk
expand - contract	run
push - pull	skip

Free Movement Expression

Individual

Duet

Identical Movement (duet, trio, circle)

With Leader

Without Leader

Lesson V

CREATIVE GROUP EXPRESSION

Since this is our last meeting, we're going to emphasize group expression. We've had some creative group problems but much of the work has been directed toward freeing you as individuals. Today, after limbering up with some individual problems, we'll go more deeply into creative group expression.

Lie down on the floor and relax, as you now know how to do. Sprawl on your back, fling your arms and legs wide, loosen up all your muscles, close your eyes, breathe easily... faces relaxed, no movement, no tension in any part of the body.

some basic
movement
experiences:
wiggle

Now I'm going to give you some basic movements to do. I'll call each movement by name and you can try it out in your own way. The first movement is wiggling. Close your eyes and move in whatever way that word suggests. Wiggle... rest, that's good.

wriggle

Now try wriggling - not wiggling but wriggling. See what the difference is between the two. Don't go to the dictionary, let your muscle sense tell you. Try it out... wriggle.

writhe

All right, here's a stronger one - writhe. Try to experience that. There's lots of movement in it, experience it in your own way... use your whole body, writhe in different ways.

squirm

Here's a somewhat similar one - squirm... squirm... that's good... rest.

roll

Now I'm going to ask you to roll, but not just in one way. Try different ways of rolling. Anything goes as long as it feels like rolling... a rolling movement... yes!

These are movement themes. Someone watching

our classes once asked, "Don't you have any themes in your dancing?" She was looking for literary themes, expecting us to tell stories in movement. We certainly do have themes, but they are movement themes, not literary themes, because this is a dance class not a literature class.

- creep The next movement theme is creeping. Make creeping movements, anything that feels like creeping to you.
- crawl Is there a difference between creeping and crawling? Try crawling and see... crawl... yes, that's fine. If the floor wasn't swept before, it is now (class laughs).
- rock Let's start the next movement theme in a sitting position. You don't have to remain in this position. After you get started, vary your position in any way you wish: lying, kneeling, standing, anything. Make rocking movements... rocking... a feeling of rocking.
- sway Swaying... swaying is similar to rocking...
- swing And swinging. Swinging is a pleasant movement to make. Try all sorts of swinging movements: arms, legs, trunk, everything swinging... keep on going, swing in all directions... let your swing carry you around the room and lift you up into the air... let your movement be very swingy... a swinging dance.
- stretch Now stretching movements... all kinds of stretching movement... every direction... every part of the body.
- bend Try bending... everything that feels like a bend to you... bend this way and that way... good, you're getting fine movements.
- twist Next, twisting movements, a twisting theme... twist with different parts of the body: trunk, arms, legs, head... and twist with the body as a whole...
- turn Now let those twisting movements develop into turning movements, all kinds of turns... turns around the room... turns in place... and rest.

That was fine. Very, very good. Catch your breath for a moment, there will be lots more. All of this is material you can work on after we've gone. You can improvise on these themes over and over again, individually or in groups. I'm glad you are planning to continue to work by yourselves.

- shake Well, let's loosen up now with some shaking movements. Shake! This is a shaking dance... exaggerate... shake everything...
- spring And bouncing, springing movements... bounce and spring... lots of elasticity... a really rubbery quality in your movement... all right, rest.
- undulate Now try undulating. Undulating movements are wave-like movements.
- flop Now some flopping movements. Flop! Over and over again... use your breath, exhale as you flop, it gives you better relaxation... let the air out of your lungs... flop!
- collapse Collapsing movements. Let the air out with each movement. Collapse! and collapse again... keep on collapsing... all right, rest.
- rise
and sink We'll take rising and sinking movements. That's the theme of your dance - rising and sinking... good!
- expand
and contract Expanding and contracting... get the feeling through your whole body.
- push and pull Pushing and pulling... yes... and rest.
- walk All right, stand up and we'll do some walking movements, any kind of walk you'd like to do... all kinds of walking movements... be sure you are walking, don't go into a skip or a run... walk in every possible way... strange ways, odd ways, new ways... forward, backward, sideward, around... regular, irregular.
- run Try running... different ways of running... this is

a running dance... no two people running in the same way... keep on going... enjoy the movement... use your voices... rest.

Some of you were using your voices very freely as you moved and that makes me happy. I wish you'd do more of it. Let the air come out of your lungs: pant and puff, sing and hum. Hum your own melody, of course, not something you've learned from someone else.

skip

Now skipping movements, and sound the movement with your breath and voice... skip all over the room... let's hear skipping sounds... that's fine!

We should have been sounding all these movements so remember, when you're continuing this work after we leave, use your breath and your voices to accompany all your movements. When you stretch, make stretching sounds, when you make undulating movements make undulating sounds, and so forth. It's a great help in developing movement feeling.

fall

Now make one falling movement and stay on the floor in a resting position... relax there for a moment.

free movement
expression:
individual

I have been dictating movements to you, but now we'll forget all the movements I've given you and we'll just move freely - in other words, we'll just dance. Stand up and each one of you dance in your own way... any kind of movement, slow, fast, large, small... don't stand and watch others. Start moving and, if you feel like singing while you dance, do it. If you feel like sounding your movement in some other way, do it. Don't do what you think will look pretty, don't do what you think is expected of you. Do what you feel like doing, just what you want to do here and now. Start slowly, it may help you get into the feeling... keep on going... this is your own movement, your dance for today.

Yes, now the next problem will not be particularly easy but you are ready for it and, if you approach it simply and with feeling, you'll have no trouble.

Find another partner and try it again. This time give freely, don't hold back, don't be stingy, give your partner something to work with... all right, sit down and rest.

identical
movement,
with leader
(duet)

Good. Some of you are putting yourself into the work very well and you're getting a lot out of it. Now we'll start to discipline our group expression a little. Stand up, find another partner. This time you won't be quite so free because one of you is going to lead the other. It won't be the same kind of leadership we had the other night. This is different. Today the leader expects to be imitated. He is responsible for the movements of the duet. Whatever movement he makes, his partner will make exactly the same movement at the same time.

The leader will begin to move carefully, movement for movement, fully aware of what he is doing, shaping each movement as clearly as he can. Meantime his partner is making the same movement, not waiting to see what is coming but doing it simultaneously. The one who is leading must sense whether or not the follower is following, he must make his transitions carefully; and the one who is following must breathe with the leader so that he can pick up the movement immediately. Now decide who's going to lead, then start to work on the problem...

Stop! It's not quite so easy as you're making it. Although the relationship is a kind of mirror relationship, it is not merely a visual problem. Don't just imitate the outer form of the movement. Start with the feeling and the form will come. If you will exhale as you make each movement, you will get a better feeling for the impulse...

That was excellent. Try it again with the other person leading this time. Start with plenty of repose. Leaders, remember that if your partner is having trouble following you it may very well be your fault.

All right, change partners. Decide who's to lead and this time there will be no discussion at all. Just

start to move. If you're talking you won't be dancing, you can't do both at the same time. Go ahead... it's much better... it's getting much, much better, there are some lovely things coming this time...

Yes, that was more like it! Now you probably found that, if your partner was feeling the movement with you, you could sometimes make a sudden movement but only if it was so inevitable that it was the only logical thing to do.

Same partners, change leaders. Begin to feel how the movement carries you both, how there is a logical development of movement which you must follow, which even the leader must follow. The leader is not superimposing his will on his partner. You are both subservient to the law of the movement. All right, begin to move and move as if you were one person... it's a beautiful thing when both are feeling the movement together... you're improving very fast... let the movement carry you... that's coming nicely.

identical
movement
without leader
(duet)

Stay with the same partner. I'm going to give you a problem now which is infinitely more difficult but I think you will be able to handle it. I'd like to have you both move in exactly the same way at exactly the same time, making the same movement- but there won't be any leader. The movement will just happen.

Here is a clue to this problem: try to establish a relaxed, reposeful feeling together before you start. Then wait. Wait as long as necessary until something seems to indicate what movement should occur. If something is started which doesn't seem to be working very well, just stop and wait for a new impulse, but don't break your concentration. Try it...

Have you had any success so far? It seems to me you plunged into it a little hastily. Talk over the problem together for a moment and, if you feel your partner was leading, give him a good scolding (class laughs) because he isn't supposed to lead, neither one of you is leading.

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identical
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Let's start again, keeping the same partners. Take your time about starting, then keep on dancing together... rest. Now talk it over to see why you had failure or success.

identical
movement,
with leader
(trio)

Get together in groups of three, and the more unfamiliar you are with the other members of your trio, the better. We'll go back to the leading and following theme. Start facing one another and decide who's going to be the leader. Then let that one carefully begin to lead, with the other two following, making the same movement at the same time. The movement should be identical and there should be complete unity of feeling. Start...

Yes, if you want to use your voices in accompaniment, that's all right, or sounds of hand-clapping, stamping and so forth... keep on going... rest. Yes, I thought those were fine dances, they were all coming along nicely. The leader should explore different kinds of movement - movements which a group of three can make. This is a trio, and a trio is not like a duet or an individual dance. Sense what a trio can do which no other group can.

Now try another leader in the same group... good... don't forget to feel each movement as a separate impulse, that's what creates rhythm.

Let the third member of the trio lead now... oh, leaders! Think of your followers, think of your followers! Give them a chance to get into it, make it easy for them ... good.

identical
movement
without leader
(trio)

How would it be if you tried to move in these trios without a leader, just as you did in the duets? Start with repose and concentration. Try to find together a movement which you all feel together and which you can create together, then go on from there. Try it...

Stop! Sit down on the floor for a moment. I think it is important here to point out your responsibility to the other members of your group. It takes a lot of effort to get into the feeling of the movement and, if your fel-

low-members are in it, even though you may want to interrupt it, you haven't the right to do so because you would be throwing away something that is not yours alone. The movement experience belongs to all three.

We are now in an area which has to do with the deepest problems of group relationship. I wish you'd try to measure up to the challenge of seeing how much responsibility you can show toward your group. It isn't enough that you do your best, you must make it easy for your partners to do their best too. There are some beautiful improvisations coming and I want you to keep on working hard at them.

identical
movement,
with leader
(circle)

Now let's form groups of five. Since there's an extra person, one group of six will be all right. Stand facing one another and you will find yourselves in a circle. This is going to be a circle dance.

We will have a leader, because it is easier that way. The goal of our group work is the leaderless group, but we need to experience a lot of leading and following before we can dance together freely without a leader.

All right, decide who is going to be the leader and then make your circle dance. Go!... yes, bring your group dance to a conclusion just as you learned to conclude your individual dances... when your last movement has ended, let there be a moment of quiet, no movement, before you come out of your dance.

Three of those dances were fine but the fourth group talked instead of moving and did not get into the problem at all. Let's continue in the same groups with a different leader. More concentration this time and no words...

identical
movement,
without leader
(circle)

Yes, that was better. We ought to do a few more leadership dances before we try a leaderless group, but we don't have time since this is our last lesson, so we'll try a circle dance in these same groups with no one leading. Actually, this means that everyone is leading because everyone is responsible for the progress of the dance. It will be hard, but don't worry. Do the best you can. Take an easy, reposeful starting position

and, after a moment, try to feel what movement impulse is developing. Follow that impulse, everyone moving together. Go!

Yes, that was very nice. You weren't clear as to whether you should bring your dance to a conclusion yourselves or wait for me to stop you, so the endings were not secure. But the dances themselves were excellent. Each group danced very well.

I'd like to say a word about the leaderless group. Our group at my studio makes all its dances this way. We don't have one person making dances for the others. We have a cooperative relationship within the group. You began to feel something of that kind of relationship here in your last problem. You have done extremely well in a very short time. A leaderless group isn't something which you can achieve right away. We are trained throughout our lives to do what other people tell us to do, to move under the direction of our leaders. Now there are many situations in which a leader is desirable and we sometimes dance at our studio with one person leading. But the most exciting group experiences come when you get beyond the leading-and-following stage and are able to work together as you began to work at the end of this period.

It is important for you to go on with this work after we leave. Don't think that you have to have a leader or that you have to have someone making dances for you in order to have dance experiences. You can do a great deal without a leader or a teacher, and I hope you will.

Well, we've had a fine time, and we've enjoyed it very much. I think you've accomplished a great deal and it's quite amazing that in only five days you have come to the point where you can make some lovely group movements as you did at the end of this session. Keep in touch with us and keep on working.

(End of Workshop)

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